



Detail of A sketch of the northern parts of New Jersey, 1781, by John Hills,

Picture Source: Library of Congress, Geography and Map Div.

42nd or Royal Highland Regiment's Occupation of Piscataway, New Jersey, Jan 4 - May 10, 1777

Lt. Gen. Charles, Earl Cornwallis' Orders to Position the Army after Battle of Princeton, New Jersey, Jan. 4, 1777

Head Quarters Jersey Brunswick 4th Jan^{ry}. 1777...

The Troops are to Form at their Alarm Post half an hour before day break & to remain Under arms till Sun Rise,

The 2nd Battalion of British Grenadiers after they have form'd in the Morning are to March & form with the L^t. Infantry Upon the Heights Near the Light Infantry post,

2nd Battalion Hessian Grenadiers are to March from their Alarm post in front of the Barracks & take a Central Position between the Hessian Battalion Civering Brunswick and the British Grenadiers & L^t Infantry so as Civering the Baggage to be able to Reinforce Either,

L^t. Colo. [Thomas] Stirling to March the 42nd Regiment to Morrow Morning 2 hours before day light & Form Upon the Heights Opposite to the Bridge so as to be able to Support the Troops on Either Side of the [Rariton] River if an Attack Should be made,

The Men to keep their Arms Near them and are Never to Quit their Accoutrements,

If Three Guns are Fired at the Barracks the Troops are Immediately to Stand to their Arms & take post at the Alarm Posts Assign'd to them, these Orders to be Observ'd without being Repeat'd

a Captain 2 Subalterns & 50 Grenadiers to Mount the Main Guard & to take Charge of M^r [Rebel Maj. Gen. Charles] Lee as Formerly they will have an Allowance for this duty & Retailing the Details with the Hessians,

Constant patrols are to be sent from the Different Guards.

During the Night, A Field Officer of British for Brunswick, A Field Officer of the Guards for their own posts & a Field Officer of the 2nd Brigade for theirs. These 3 Field Officers to Communicate with each Other. The Commanding Officer of the Artillery to have 3 Guns in front of the Barracks in case of an Alarm but not to be Fired till he Receives Orders.

Lord Cornwallis is Thoroughly Sensible of the Great Fatigue which the Troops have Suffer'd yet he Flatters himself if a Glorious Opportunity Should Offer of Attacking the Rebels they will Exert Themselves on that Occasion, & Not Thinking an Unexpected March a Hardship, Horses Harnesses & Every Necessary for the Artillery Ammunition to be kept in Constant Readiness, Brigadiers [Edward] Mathew & [Hon. Alexander] Leslie will post each Guard & Piquets as they shall think Necessary for the Security of their posts...

Source and Note: *William Howe orderly book*, Great Britain. Army, 1776-1778, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Mich. The Brunswick barracks stood on George Street and across Paterson Street. The 42nd Gren. Co. was still in Rhode Island at this time.

Excerpt Letter from Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling to Gen. Lord John Murray, Col., 42nd Regt. Giving the Status of the Regiment and Some of the Officers, Piscataway, New Jersey, Jan. 5-Mar. 13, 1777

Dated Piscataqua in the Jerseys 3 Miles from Brunswick
on the road leading to Amboy 13th March 1777

My Lord...

I wrote your Lordship lately with a monthly return, when I mentioned most of our Transactions this winter, we have been Stationed here since the 5th Jan^y an open scattered Cantoonment some of the companies a Mile from others, yet we have sustained ourselves against several attempts of the Rebels to Suprize us, the 1st Feb 200 men were out with part of the troops from Brunswick a Foraging [at Benjamin Drake's farm], a Large body of the Rebels attacked them in three columns and had it not been for the gallant conduct of our 200 men all the Waggon must have been cut off, but they covered them and gave the Rebels so warm a reception tho' above 500 men they were fain to take to their heels, the Rebels acknowledged with 170 killed the greatest Number of which fell by our men, the 7th of that Month 300 of them attacked our Quarters and endeavored to cut of our provision Waggon, we repulsed them, on the 23^d they attacked our Piquets with as little advantage on their side, we driving them off, & followed them a Couple of Miles, and on the 1st of this Month 5 or 600 of them came hoping to Suprize us in a Snow Storm, but were Mistaken, we Drove them as formerly, and they acknowledge with having a L^t Co^l who is since dead of his wound, and a cap^t wounded with believed 40 & 50 killed and wounded, Since that we have been quiet and I am hopefull they are satisfied nothing is to won at our hands for our Men are Exceedingly Harrassed having never Strip[p]ed since the Middle of December, but lye in their cloaths all night with their accoutrements on, and their arms lying by them & the first shot from the Piquets is a signal for every man to turn out, & never I saw men readier or more resolute, on every occasion, but these fatigues are getting the better of us, an ugly fever has gotten in among us, which carrys them off in 8 days, in the last Fortnight 12 men have died of it, and some of our best men, we anxiously for the openly the campagne in hopes that Change of air & ease/ for that would be Ease in comparison of what we now undergo/ may bring us some relief; There is no appearance of the Rebels – Succumbing, a Determined Spirit of Rebellion kept up by their Leaders, seems to be rooted in their hearts, and they hope to weary Brittain out of it, most of their army is composed of Country people and there mostly Irish.

I am glad the Scotch cloathing is coming I was afraid it was taken, I have not heard one word from the Agents since Reg^t arrival in America if they are not more punctual, I shall enter a complaint against them, your Lordship will please give them direction, and lett me know whither you are to send out

the small Mounting for last year or allow money as was done at Glasgow, the Reg^t is in want of no knapsacks, having provided themselves compleately before we came out – Cap^t [John] Smith Lieu^t H. [Harry] Munro & [Robert] Franklin & Ensign [John] Campbell, are exchanged but none of the men; I hope your Lop: will send an active Officer with the men to compleat us, if the 2 [Additional] companies does not come, L^t [Valentine] Chisolm is very ill, nor do I Expect much Service out of L^t H.[Harry] Munro, L^t Peter [Patrick] Graham is recovering, but will be long e'er he gets the use of his Arm.

I have the honor to be

[Thomas Stirling]

Source and Note: Lord John Murray Papers. “Lops” is shorthand for Lordships. “Scotch cloathing” consisted of Bonnets and Diced Hose every year and Belted Plaids every other year.



Detail from Wax Sculpture Portrait of Maj. William Murray, circa 1773-1774, by Samuel Percy, Dublin

Picture Source: *National Gallery of Scotland* at

<https://www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/3362/william-murray-1737-1778-soldier>

Excerpt Letter from Maj. William Murray, Commander, 1st (Provisional) Battalion, 42nd Regt., to Gen. Lord John Murray, Col., 42nd Regt., Reporting the Arrival of the Regiment, Piscataway, New Jersey, Jan. 4, 1777

Dated Piscataqua New Jersey, 13th March 1777

My Lord.

I rec^d both your Lops: [Lordships] letters the one of the 30th of Dec^r the other of the 4th Jan^y two days ago, I wrote y^r Lop: after the affair of Fort Washington, and sent it by the Transport that brought me over from Greenock, she being ordered to Sail for London at that time, but by y^r Lops: not receiving that letter I suppose she was drove to the West Indies. After the taking of Fort Washington [Nov. 16, 1776] we went to the Jerseys, under the command of my [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis and was so much employed with long marches both advancing and retreating, and at the same time such a distance from New York, that I miss^d the opportunity of writing by the Pacquets.

The affair of the Hessians allowing themselves to be surprized at Trenton, which occasioned the Army in the Jerseys to contract their Quarters, your Lop: will have had accounts of long before this, your Lordships Reg^t marched to this place, on the 4th Jan^y having Marched 35 miles on a Stretch, where we have remained ever since, it is a very Small Scattered village consisting of about Twenty houses at Such a distance from one another, that our Quarters extends for above a Mile, in this Situation with the Enemy within a few miles of us, we are so exposed, that neither officer nor Soldier has attempted to Strip any night since we came here, The Enemy Generally pays us a visit every eight or tenth day, but we are so

alert that we drive them off, faster than they advanced, We have been Likewise employed on Foraging parties, and once or Twice fell in with the Enemy, but always beat them off, with a Small loss on our side,

As our present Situation is very uncomfortable we long very much for the Commencement of the Campaigne.

I am the Second oldest Major in the Army, I am therefore in hopes of getting Something before the next campaigne is over. The Reg^t is tolerably healthy considering the great Fatigues they have gone through, and how very young they are.

The English Cloathing arrived Safe, and every Method is taken to keep the men warm and Comfortable.

W.

Source and Note: *Lord John Murray Papers*. New Jersey is frequently called "*the Jerseys*" because it was originally the two colonies of East Jersey and West Jersey.

**Lt. Gen. Charles, Earl Cornwallis' Orders for Foraging Parties to be Covered
by a Battalion of the 42nd Regt., Brunswick, New Jersey, Jan. 9 and 16, 1777**

Head Quarters Jersey Brunswick 9th January 1777...

All the Waggon belonging to the Army to go a Foraging to Morrow they will be Conducted to the place by a Deputy Commissary,

A Battalion of the 42nd. Reg^t. to Cover the Forage & Escort them back to their Cantonments...

Head Quarters Jersey Brunswick 16th January 1777...

General Orders,

The Provien [provision] Train Commissary Waggon & all the Waggon belonging to the British & Hessian troops, to Assemble to Morrow Morning at 6 o'Clock Upon the road leading to Amboy Opposite to [Brig.] General [Hon. Alexander] Leslie's Quarters, The Whole are to Collect Forage under Cover of the 2nd. Battalion of Light Infantry & the Battⁿ. of the 42nd. & are then to Proceed with the Forage to Amboy & to Return from thence with a Supply of Provisions for the Army no baggage of any kind is to be brought from Amboy (by this Convoy) except Cloathing for the Troops and Barrack Necessaries, The 16th Dragoons to forage with their own Horses Under this Covering party,

Source: Order Book of the 1st Regt. of Foot Guards called *William Howe orderly book*, Great Britain. Army, 1776-1778, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Mich.

**Excerpt of Letter from Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling, 42nd Regt., to his Brother, Sir William
Stirling of Ardoch, Discussing 42nd Regt. at Piscataway, New Jersey, Jan 10, 1777**

New York, Jan^y 10th 1777

...took that opportunity of coming here to settle some business for two days and return tomorrow to join my Reg^t lyes at a straggling village called Piscataqua 3 mile on this side of the Raritan River from Brunswick, and must make a dash to get at them as the road is infested with Rebels unless I happen to get an Escort going that way. Never has a Reg^t been so badly used as ours first in attaching us with Foreigners on the Frontiers and then campaigning so late without clothing shoes, hose or any necessities, lying out all night and repeated night marches, our Waggon are constantly loaded and the Reg^t under arms every morning two hours before daybreak to prevent our being attacked or cut off in our scattered cantonments, I am really quite worn out but must go through with it tho there is no appearance of relaxation of our fatigues till the end of the next Campaign...

Source: NRS, *Papers of the Family of Stirling Home Drummond Moray of Abercairny* at GD 24/1/458/6.

**Rev. Abraham Beach's Account of 42nd Regt. Barracks in St. James Church,
Piscataway, Jan. 1777**

After Independence was declared by the Congress, it was deemed High Treason for any person to pray for the King and Government, as directed by the Liturgy... In these circumstances, I thought it advisable rather to shut the church for the present, than to violate the Declaration I subscribed before the Bishop at my ordination, the oath of allegiance I then took, and the natural feelings of my own mind. My churches were accordingly shut from the 7th of July to the 8th of December; since which time I have officiated altogether at New Brunswick, the church at Piscataqua being at present occupied as a barrack for part of the forty-second Regiment.

Sources: *Annals of the American Episcopal Pulpit Or Commemorative Notices of Distinguished Clergymen of the Episcopal Church in the United States*, William Buell Sprague, D.D., Robert Carter & Brothers, New York, 1859, p. 259 and "The Colonial Clergy of the Middle Colonies, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, 1628-1776," Frederick Lewis Weis, in *American Antiquarian Society*, Oct. 1956, p. 176

Extract of a Letter from an Officer of the 42nd Regt. Describing Post at Piscataway, Jan. 15, 1777

Extract of an letter from an Officer in the 42d regiment to his Friend in Glasgow, dated Piscataway, a village two miles from Brunswick, Jan. 15. 1777.

4. Our regiment should have been snug in winter quarters at Burlington; but he unfortunate affair of the post at Trenton being surprised, occasioned our closing into the center of the line of communication.

Source: *Aberdeen Journal*, Mar. 17, 1777, p. 4.



Detail showing Routes from Brunswick to Amboy from "A sketch of the northern parts of New Jersey," 1781, by John Hills

Map Source: Library of Congress Geography and Map Div.

Foraging Skirmish, Woodbridge, New Jersey, Jan. 23, 1777



Lt. Col. Robert Prescott, 1776, by John Bogle

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from Nat. Portrait Gallery, London

Journal of Corp. Thomas Sullivan, 49th Regt., Records the Actions of a 42nd Regt. Detachment in a Skirmish, Near Woodbridge, New Jersey, Jan. 23, 1777

January 23^d. The 28th. and 35th. Battalions with a detachment of the Royal Highlanders, under the command of Lieu^t. Colonel [Robert] Prescott [28th Regt.], went to cover the provision waggons, being near half-way between Brunswick and Amboy, where a large Party of the Rebels advanced from the woods upon them, with three Pieces of cannon. The Highlanders being drawn up on an Eminence, attacked the Enemy in the edge of a wood and advanced to them in front; on the other side the 28th Battallion [sic] advanced under a heavy fire from the Enemy, and engaged their Flanking Party, which they drove to their main body. The Highlanders observing that the Rebels would not advance out of the wood, made a charge upon them, which was always a terror to the Rebels, and put them to an immediate Rout. The Enemy could never endure to stand for any time to the bayonet, but if the King's Troops kept at a distance, they stood firing with Musquetry long enough.

The 28th. Battallion had one man killed; and a Captain and 15 men wounded; the Highlanders had but a few men wounded.

The Enemy had four men killed in the wood, besides their wounded which they carried off, except 3 that were taken prisoners.

Source: *From Redcoat to Rebel, the Thomas Sullivan Journal*, Ed. Joseph Lee Boyle, Heritage Books, Bowie (Md.), 1997, p. 103.

News Account of Foraging Skirmish, Near Woodbridge, New Jersey, Jan. 23, 1777

NEW-YORK, January 27...

A Skirmish has happened in the Jerseys between a foraging Party of the King's Troops and a large Body of the Rebels, in which it is reported, we have lost several Waggons, but no authentic Particulars are come to hand.

Source: *New York Gazette and Weekly Mercury*, Jan. 27, 1777, p. 3.



Detail of Portrait of John Hancock, 1770-1772, by John Singleton Copley

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from *Massachusetts Historical Society*

**Excerpt of Letter from Rebel Commander, Gen. George Washington to John Hancock,
President, Continental Congress, Describing the Foraging Skirmish, Woodbridge, New Jersey,
Jan. 23, 1777**

To The President of Congress, Head Quarters, Morris Town, January 26, 1777.

Sir...

On the 23d., a party of 400 of our Men under Col [Mordecai] Buckner [6th Va. Regt.] fell in with two Regiments of the Enemy, conveying a Number of Waggons from Brunswick to Amboy. Our advanced party under [Lt.] Colo. [Richard] Parker engaged them with great Bravery, upwards of twenty Minutes, during which time the Colo Commandant was killed and the second in Command Mortally wounded. The people living near the Field of Action, say, their killed and wounded were considerable. We only lost two men who were made prisoners. Had Col Buckner come up with the main body, Colo. Parker and the other Officers think we should have put them to the rout, as their confusion was very great, and their ground disadvantageous. I have ordered Buckner under Arrest and shall bring him to tryal, to answer for so extraordinary a piece of Conduct... I have the honor &ca.

Source: *The writings of George Washington from the original manuscript sources: Volume 7*, Electronic Text Center, University of Virginia Lib.

Rebel Newspaper Account of Foraging Skirmish, Woodbridge, New Jersey, Jan. 23, 1777

BOSTON, February 20.

Extract of a Letter from a Gentleman of Character at Morris-Town, to his Friend here, dated Jan. 30.

"We had a very extraordinary skirmish with the enemy the 23d. A large number of waggons under an escort of 600 men, consisting of the 28th and 37th [35th] regiments, with 2 pieces of cannon, were proceeding from Brunswick to Amboy, were perceived by the 6th Virginia regiment, who were an out-post, consisting of 400 men, commanded by Col. [Mordecai] Buckner. The Lieut. Col. ([Richard] Parker) was dispatched with an advanced party of 600, who posted themselves most advantageously. The enemy advanced in a column ten in front, when they came up within a hundred yards, parker gave them a well-levelled fire, by which their Commandant, Col. Preston [Lt. Col. Robert Prescott, 28th Regt.] was killed [incorrect]. – They kept up an incessant blaze for 20 minutes, when parker finding himself unsupported, retreated. The enemy had 25 killed on the spot,

and 40 wounded [British source: 1 killed, 1 Off. and about 18 enlisted wounded]; they carried off their killed and wounded, except 13, who were left, and were afterwards dressed by a surgeon of ours; besides the Colonel killed, the second in command was shot through the body, and carried off speechless; they had 1 Captain killed, and 1 wounded. These particulars we have from the people living near the spot, and from a corporal of the 3d regiment of guards, who deserted from them 2 days ago. Colonel Buckner, who got pannic-strick, and left his Lieut. Colonel unsupported, is under an arrest, and will be tried for his life. - - What under this little affair is so extraordinary is, that we had not a single man either killed or wounded [British source: 4 Killed, unknown wounded carried off and 3 captured]; such wretched shooters are British soldiers. The enemy are closely watched in Brunswick. They have got to living, officers as well as men, on salt provisions, and find it extremely difficult to get forage. That you may judge what a clever way we are in, take a memorandum of five or six days [as follows]...

18th. 1 of the 42d regiment, and 2 light infantry, and 3 rangers deserted...

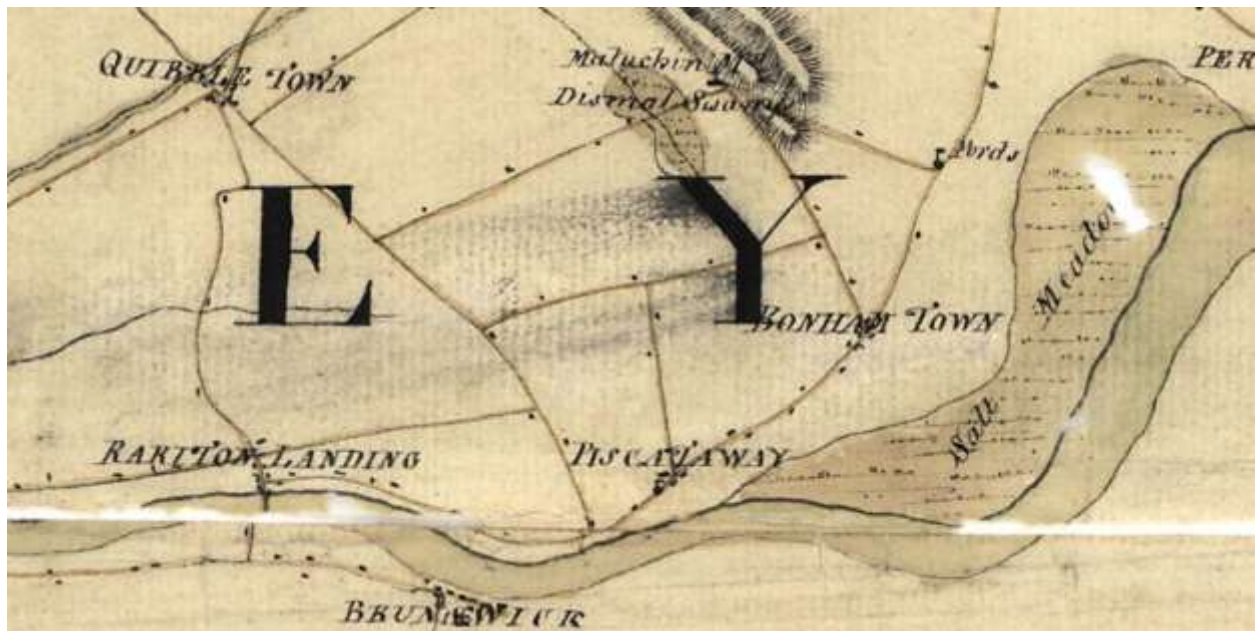
Source: *Freeman's Journal or New-Hampshire Gazette* (Portsmouth), Feb. 25, 1777, p. 1.

Incorrect News Account of Captured Highlanders, Morristown, New Jersey, Feb. 1, 1777

Extract of letter from Morris Town, dated Feb. 1, 1777...

- [Jan.] 27th. One of 71st and one Ranger were taken.
- 28th. Two Highlanders were taken.
- 29th. A serjeant-major of 2d Battalion of 71st deserted.
- 30th. Seven Highlanders were taken.
- 31st. A Serjeant of 42d deserted...

Source and Note: *Boston Gazette*, Mar. 3, 1777, p. 3. The 42nd Regt. muster reports covering this period taken in Philadelphia in Feb. and Mar. 1778 do not show any sergeants marked as deserted.



Detail showing Metuchen from "A sketch of the northern parts of New Jersey," 1781, by John Hills

Picture Source: Library of Congress Geography and Map Div.

Foraging Skirmish at Benjamin Drake's Farm, Metuchen, New Jersey, Feb. 1, 1777



Detail of Portrait of Sir William Erskine of Torrie, 1st Bart, early 1800's

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from UK National Portrait Gallery

Excerpt of Letter from Brig. Gen. Sir William Erskine of Torrie, (Lt. Col., 1st Battalion, 71st or Fraser's Highland Regt.) to Sir John Halkett of Pitferrane, Describing the Skirmish at Benjamin Drake's Farm, Metuchen, New Jersey, Feb. 1, 1777

My d^r Sir John

I flatter myself you are to glad to hear from me tho it's only to tell you how I am – since I wrote to you last no material Change has happend either in our situation or the Rebels only continual skirmishing for Cattle and forage I went out the other day [near Metuchen, N.J., Feb. 1] with a [1st] Battalion of Light Infantry one of [1st Bn.] Brittish Grenadiers one of Hessian do [ditto, i.e. Grenadiers] a Battⁿ of the 42nd and some Light Horse in all about 1100 men I heard of the Enemy in force but having many Waggon's to cover that were sent out for forrage they curb'd my genius for attacking them

The country was extremely difficult and they knew every step of it – They being about double our Number felt bold came out of the woods attackd us on our March on four different places seeing the Waggon's safe I got my men soon in a proper position to receive them and give them a hearty licking the 42nd suffer'd most they treated the Rebels very roughly which occasiond a letter to be sent me by a Flag of Truce setting forth my Barbarity giving no Quarter &c &c this I suppose will appear against me in their Philadelphia news paper I answered it I don't imagine you ever held me for a very cruel man...

I'm very much yours &c

Will Erskine

Brunswick in the Jerseys

Feb^{ry}: y^e 12th 77...

Source: "Letters from Sir William Erskine 71st Fraser Highland Regiment to Sir John Halkett Bt" in the National Library of Scotland, *Pitferrane Papers* at GB233/MS 6406-6511, pp. 28-30.

Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling's Account of Brevet-Maj. Duncan M^cPherson's 200-man Detachment of the 42nd Regt. in the Skirmish at Benjamin Drake's Farm, Metuchen, New Jersey, Feb. 1, 1777

Dated Pisquata in Jersey near Brunswick Feb: 10th 1777

I have the pleasure to inform your Lordship that the behavior of the Reg't has been very Gallant and Spirited, though the whole of this severe Campaign which I may say is not ended yet, as we have been on actual Service to this time, without knowing what winter Quarters is, we are now Cantooned in a Scattered Village two Miles from any part of the Army, which makes it a very Alert post, none of us ever

throwing of our Cloaths. Ten days ago 200 of the Reg^t was out on a Foraging party with some of the rest of the Army, and by their Spirited behavior, saved the waggons of the Party, repulsed a Large body of the Enemy, and killed a good many of them, in short their resolution & bravery has been conspicuous, on the 27th Aug^t 16th Sept^r 16th Nov^r and every other occasion, when they had an opportunity to Distinguish themselves, on the latter in Particular, never did Troops go upon a more hazardous affair, or fulfill what was Expected of them with more Determined Resolution than your Reg^t to the Astonishment and Admiration of the whole Army...

N.B...

At Pisquatua in D^o [New Jersey] 1st Feb. 77 3 private killed 12 d^o wounded...

Source and Note: *Lord John Murray Papers*. Brig. Gen. Sir William Erskine's letter dated Feb. 12, 1777, below, refers to the 200 man detachment under Maj. M^cPherson as a battalion. The soldiers who died were Pvt. Murdoch M^cLeod of Lt. Col. Stirling's Co. and Pvs. John Cameron and Alexander Grant of Brevet-Maj. Grant's. The identification of these companies does not indicate an order of battle for the skirmish, as the men of the detachment were likely drawn from the entire regiment. *The History of Metuchen*, by the Federal Writers' Project, 1941, lists only one Drake family during the period of the Revolution. Benjamin Drake had a farm on the west side of the Woodbridge Road.

Excerpt of Letter from Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling to Gen. Lord John Murray, Col., 42nd Regt., Giving Brief Account of Action at Benjamin Drake's Farm, Metuchen, New Jersey, Feb. 1, 1777

Dated Piscataqua in the Jerseys 3 Miles from Brunswick
on the road leading to Amboy 13th March 1777

My Lord...

I wrote your Lordship lately with a monthly return, when I mentioned most of our Transactions this winter, we have been Stationed here since the 5th Jan^y an open scattered Cantoontment some of the companies a Mile from others, yet we have sustained ourselves against several attempts of the Rebels to Suprize us, the 1st Feb 200 men were out with part of the troops from Brunswick a Foraging, a Large body of the Rebels attacked them in three columns and had it not been for the gallant conduct of our 200 men all the Waggons must have been cut off, but they covered them and gave the Rebels so warm a reception tho' above 500 men they were fain to take to their heels, the Rebels acknowledged with 170 killed the greatest Number of which fell by our men... I have the honor to be

[Thomas Stirling]

Source: *Lord John Murray Papers*.

Chap. James M^cLagan's Account of Brevet-Maj. Duncan M^cPherson's 200-man Detachment of 42nd Regt. in the Skirmish at Benjamin Drake's Farm, New Jersey, Feb. 1, 1777

Dated Piscataway 31st May. 1777

My Lord...

Foraging Parties had many Skirmishes with the Enemy in almost all of which the latter had the worst of it, on the first of Feb: [Brig. Gen.] S^r W^m Erskine Commanded a party of this kind, wherein were above 200 of your Lops: [Lordship's] Reg^t being a little Separated from the Rest, a Column of 500 Rebels approached them in front & 500 more Attempted to Seize the Forrage in their rear the former 500 being yet at Some distance the Highlanders commanded by [Brevet] Major [Duncan] M^cPherson seeing them at hand, wheeled about & gave them a very Smart Fire, which killed many and put the rest to Flight, a corps of Hessians at some distance viewing the Shots-man, (of whom they are very fond / engaged with Such numbers, flew to their assistance, and fired on the Enemys left Flank as they were Flying, when the rest of the rebels saw this Column flee, they all fled together. S^r W^m Erskine who at some distance saw this smart brush, came up to the 42^d when it was over and after saluting the Officers, turned to the men and said

“Indeed my Lads ye have fought very well: But were na ye glad to see us coming to your assistance!
however ye beat them yoursels before we came, By my Soul ye’re very fine Bodies...”

I have the honor to be with the highest Esteem. My Lord

Your Lops: most obe^d & most humble Servant

James M^cLagan

the R^t Hon^{ble} Lord John Murray

Source and Note: *Lord John Murray Papers*. M^cLagan’s use of the term “Shots-man” mimics the Hessians’
pronunciation of Scotsman.

**Excerpt of Letter by William Ann Douglas (Later “of Strathendry”) to His Uncle, W. Douglas,
With Third-hand Account of 42nd Regt. Detachment at Benjamin Drake’s Farm, New Jersey,
Feb. 1, 1777**

London 21st July 1777

D^r Uncle

...There is a letter in town from L^t Col: [Thomas] Stirling of the 42 which mentions that being on a
foraging party with [Brig. Gen.] Sir W^m Erskine they were surrounded by two or three thousand Rebels
Sir W^m formed them into a Square with the two field pieces loaded with grape in the center as soon as the
Rebels came near them they made a Show of surrendering till the Rebels were within about 15 yards
when they opened to right & left fired their Field pieces & small Arms & advanced sword in hand which
method of Attack not agreeing with the Yankees they went of as fast as they could run & left a vast
number dead upon the Field, the Highlanders lost none this account I had from a person who saw the
person who saw & read the letter & who had the letter to carry to [William Wildman] L^d Barrington you
may either believe it or not as you think best. Compliments to all Friends, from D^r Uncle

Your Aff^d Nephew

W.A. Douglas

Source: NRS, Excerpt of Letter from W.A. Douglas letter to His Uncle W. Douglas, *Papers of the Douglas family of
Strathendry*, Fife at GD446/42, item 5.

**Journal of Engineer Extraordinary and Capt. Lt. Archibald Robertson
Describes Actions of the 42nd Regt., Benjamin Drake’s Farm, New Jersey, Feb. 1, 1777**

February 1st went this morning on a foraging party with [Brig. Gen.] Sir William Erskine towards
Metuchen. Our Party consisted of Lieutenant Colonel [Hon. William] Hartcourt [16th Drag.], about 20
mounted, and the other Dragoons foraging, Lieutenant Colonel [William] Meadows 1st Battalion
Grenadiers, Lieutenant Colonel [Robert] Abercrombie, 1st Battalion Light Infantry and part of a Battalion
of Hessian Grenadiers, the whole amounting to between 8 and 900 men. We likewise fell in with a Party
of the 42^d of 180 men [commanded by Brevet-Maj. Duncan M^cPherson] who were foraging so that the
whole was upwards of 1,000. When the Waggons were nearly all loaded About ½ after two o’clock we
were Attacked by a Body of the Rebels consisting of about 4 or 500 who made a push at the Head of the
Waggons where the 42^d drew up in the Road and kept up a very hot fire for upwards of 10 minutes, when
Sir William Ordered the Hessian Grenadiers to advance towards the Rear and Flank of the Rebels, who
upon seeing them forming immediately gave way and ran, the 42^d pursuing. The 1st Battalion Grenadiers
advanced likewise on the right of the Hessians towards the Woods where the Rebels retreated, but all of a
Sudden a Column of the Rebels appeared within 250 Yards coming to us over a rising Ground in Front.
They began to form with great Steadiness but upon a Cannon or two being fired and some firing from the
Grenadiers they immediately run away. At the same time other two Columns advanced towards the Right
of the Grenadiers where the Light Infantry were drawn up and they very soon dissipated and run excep^t
popping from behind Rails. At last the whole went off. From their Appearance I suppose them upwards of

2000. They left between 30 and 40 dead on the spot besides a Number of Wounded they had taken away. The 42^d kill'd 15 of them. Our loss on the whole was 30 Killed and Wounded; amongst the Killed 1 Officer and 6 private. We returned home without the loss of Horse or Waggon. By accounts since received the Rebel's had about 180 Killed and Wounded.

Source: *Archibald Robertson, Lieutenant-General Royal Engineers, His Diaries and Sketches in America*, Ed. Harry Miller Lydenberg, New York Public Library, New York, 1930, pp. 123-124.

**Corp. Thomas Sullivan's Account of the Skirmish at Benjamin Drakes Farm, Near Metuchen,
New Jersey, Feb. 1, 1777**

February 1st. A Squadron of Light Dragoons, 1st Battalion Light Infantry, 1st Battalion of British Grenadiers, a Battalion of Hessian Grenadiers, and a Company of Colonel [Cortlandt] Skinners Provincials [New Jersey Volunteers], the whole under [Brig. Gen.] Sir William Erskine, went to Forage towards Spangtown [Spanktown]. When they had y^e. Waggons almost loaded, a large Party of the Enemy advanced out of the woods, and attacked five Companies of the Light Infantry, that were apart with a division of the waggons to cover the Forragers. A detachment of the Royal Highlanders a few minutes before that, relieved the Horse that were upon the Flank. Notwithstanding the Enemy appearing far superior in Numbers, the Light Infantry and Highlanders engaged them, but they were so numerous, that they began to gain upon the Light Infantry and a very hot attack ensued. The rest of the Troops were about a mile off with the remainder of the waggons so that it was some time before the engaged troops could get any assistance.

The hessian Grenadiers were the first that came to their relief with 3 Pieces of Cannon, which they played very briskly upon the Rebels Flank; which occasioned them to make a sudden retreat. The Light Infantry's loss was about 30 men killed and wounded; the Highlanders about as many. The Light Dragoons had five men wounded.

Many of the Forragers threw their Forrage on the Road and others got none. The Hessians drove 150 Head of cattle besides Sheep and Hogs home to Brunswick.

Source: *From Redcoat to Rebel, the Thomas Sullivan Journal*, Ed. Joseph Lee Boyle, Heritage Books, Bowie (Md.), 1997, pp. 103-104. Corp. Sullivan was in the 49th Regt. in the 2nd Brigade.



Maj. Gen. John Sullivan, 1873, by A. Tenney

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from New Hampshire State House

Exaggerated Newspaper Account of Royal Highlanders at the

Engagement at Benjamin Drake's Farm, Metuchen, New Jersey, Feb. 1, 1777

NEW-YORK, February 10

...On Saturday the 1st Instant, a smart Skirmish happened at Springfield in New-Jersey, between a Party of near 4000 Rebels, under the Command of [Maj. Gen. John] *Sullivan*, and the 42d Regiment (the famous and gallant Highlanders) under [Brig. Gen.] Sir William Erskine. The Rebels were attempting to possess a Hill, which would have given them a considerable Advantage. Sir William, perceiving their Design, directed his Highlanders to dispute the ground. They advanced with their usual Ardor and Intrepidity upon the Enemy, notwithstanding the great Disparity of their Numbers, and came instantly to close Quarters with them. The Spirit of these heroes was not to be matched by the Rebels, and accordingly, they soon gave up the Point and retired with the utmost Precipitation, leaving behind them above Two Hundred and Fifty Men killed upon the Spot. The Bravery and Conduct of Sir William Erskine and this Regiment have been only equalled by Col. [Charles] Mawhood and the gallant 17th. The Loss, on the Part of the Troops amounted only to 18 killed and wounded.

Source: *New-York Gazette and the Weekly Mercury*, Feb. 10, 1777. This article was also published in *The Morning Post and Daily Advertiser* (London) on Mar. 22, 1777, p. 2. The 42nd Regt. is being compared to the heroic conduct of the 17th Regt. under Lt. Col. Charles Mawhood at the Battle of Princeton on Jan. 2, 1777.

British News Account of 42nd Regt. at Benjamin Drake's Farm, Metuchen, New Jersey, Feb. 1, 1777

Extract of a letter from an officer, dated Perth Amboy, Feb. 12.

"You must have heard of many skirmishes; that of the first of February, in which the rebels were defeated by the 42d regiment, was the most remarkable; we had only one officer killed. Perth Amboy and Brunswick are the only posts we maintain in the Jerseys. As the rebels are entirely around us, we cannot go beyond our advance centres with safety, consequently can have no supply of fresh provisions. We are much crowded in our quarters; all we wish is, that the season was a little more advanced, that we might take the field."

Source: *London Evening-Post*, Mar. 29-Apr. 1, 1777, p. 4.

Extract of News Account of 42nd Regt. at Benjamin Drake's Farm, Metuchen, New Jersey, Feb. 1, 1777

...an Account of several Advantages by Parties composed of British and Hessian Troops employed in escorting Convoys in the Jerseys, over large Bodies of the Rebels, by which they had been attacked: Particularly, that a Party of the 42d., which was escorting some Forage Waggon from Brunswick, having been attacked by a great Number of the Rebels, [Brig. Gen.] Sir William Erskine marched out with a Detachment to their Relief, and taking a Position which placed the Rebels between two Fires, obliged them to retreat in great Confusion, leaving between 3 and 400 dead upon the Spot.

Source: *Derby Mercury*, Mar. 21, 1777 quoted in *Facts and Inventions: Selections from the Journalism of James Boswell*, Ed. Paul Tankard, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2014, footnote 359, p. 199



Detail of Portrait of Col. Charles Scott, 1907, by Paul Sawyier

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from Kentucky Historical Society

**Excerpt of Letter from Rebel Gen. George Washington's to Congress With
Account of the Skirmish at Benjamin Drake's Farm, Metuchen, New Jersey, Feb. 1, 1777**

Head Quarters Morris town 5th Feb^y 1777

Sir...

Nothing of Consequence has happened since I wrote you last, except a Skirmish on the 1st of this Month five or six miles from Brunswick landing, between our advanced parties about 700 in the whole and upwards of two thousand of the Enemy under [Brig. Gen.] S^r William Erskine. The Heat of the Engagement was between Col^o [Charles] Scott of the 5th Virginia Reg^t who with about 100 Men, beat back two hund^d of the British Grenadiers, several other Officers behaved with great Spirit, but there is some Reason to Suspect that Col^o Andrew Ward who commanded our main Body did not behave altogether as he ought.

I have ordered a Court upon him, that the Matter may be fairly canvassed, and that he may stand condemned or acquitted by the Evidence of those who were present...

Source and Note: *George Washington Papers at the Library of Congress, 1741-1799*: Series 4. General Correspondence. 1697-1799, Images 24-26. Col. Scott was later the fourth governor of Kentucky.

Magazine Account of Skirmish at Benjamin Drake's Farm, Metuchen, New Jersey, Feb. 1, 1777

Maj.-Gen. [James] Robertson, who left New York the 18th of February... gives an account of several advantages gained by parties composed of British and Hessian troops, employed in escorting convoys in the Jerseys, over large bodies of the rebels, by which they had been attacked: particularly, that a party of the 42d, which was escorting some forage waggons from Brunswick, having been attacked by a great number of the rebels, [Brig. Gen.] Sir William Erskine marched out with a detachment to their relief, and taking a position which placed the rebels between two fires, obliged them to retreat in great confusion, leaving between 3 and 400 dead upon the spot...

Source: *Scots Magazine*, March 1777. This article again refers to the skirmish at Drake's Farm.

**London News Account Includes Inflated Casualty Report for the 42nd Regt. Detachment,
Benjamin Drake's Farm, Metuchen, New Jersey, Feb. 1, 1777**

LONDON...

However silent government was, on the loss which the 42d regiment sustained in their attack on the American convoy, it is well known, that 70 Highlanders were killed, and 200 wounded, among whom were several officers; and notwithstanding the *barbarity* these troops exercised to those that submitted it is equally known, that they only obeyed orders from hence; which was (and is to be the subsequent conduct of the regulars) not to take a single prisoner, as many inconveniences arise from humanity.

Source and Note: *London Evening Post*, Mar. 22-25, 1777, p. 4. Lt. Col. Stirling's casualty report to Lord John Murray read "...At Pisquatus in D^o [New Jersey] 1st Feb. 77 3 private killed 12 d^o wounded..."

**Maj. Gen. James Robertson's Account of the 42nd Regt. Detachment,
Benjamin Drake's Farm, Metuchen, New Jersey, Feb. 1, 1777**

Major-General [James] Robertson, who left New York the 18th of February, and by whom the letter of which the above is an Extract has been received, gives Account of several Advantages gained by Parties composed of British and Hessian Troops, employed in escorting Convoys in the Jerseys, over bodies of the Rebels, by which they had been attacked: Particularly, that a Party of the 42d, which was escorting some Forage Waggons from Brunswick, having been attacked by a great Number of the Rebels, [Brig. Gen.] Sir William Erskine marched out with a Detachment to their Relief, and taking a Position which placed the Rebels between Two Fires, obliged them to retreat in great Confusion, leaving between Three and Four Hundred upon the Spot...

Source: *London Gazette*, Mar. 18-22, 1777, p. 1.

**News Correspondent Challenges Maj. Gen. James Robertson's Account of the 42nd Regt.
Detachment Casualties, Benjamin Drake's Farm, Metuchen, New Jersey, Feb. 1, 1777**

A Correspondent thinks there is something *waggish* in General Robertson's Account of the Battle of the Waggons, as published in last Saturday's [Mar. 22] Gazette: He informs us that a small Party of the 42d Regiment put to Flight a large Body of the Rebels, after killing near four hundred upon the Spot; but he does not so much as mention the least Loss sustained by the Regiment, either in killed or wounded. We never doubted the *Prowess* of Highlanders; but till now we did not imagine they were altogether *Musket Proof*. One Thing, however, is observable, – that the General's Name is not spelt in the English Manner.

Source: *Public Advertiser* (London), Mar. 29, 1777, p. 3.

**Extract of a Letter Describing 42nd Regt. Engaged at Benjamin Drake's Farm,
Metuchen, New Jersey, Feb. 1, 1777**

Extract of a Letter from GLASGOW, March 9.

"I received a Letter by an Acquaintance this Day, who has just now come from Greenock, and he brings along with him an Extract of a Letter from New-York, dated Feb. 3, brought by one of the Transports Yesterday Morning returned to Clyde.

"This Letter says, "The Rebels, after their Successes on December 26, and Jan. 3, turned forward, secure, and slighted every Danger they were in of being attacked.

"The Weather turning very cold, and the Rebels being obliged to lie in Tents, (their Camp being six Miles from Brunswick) some few of their private Men, and one Serjeant, deserted to our Army. General [Sir William] Howe got Information from them of the Strength, Number, and exact Arrangement of their Army.

"He called a Council of war on the 28th of January, and it was agreed that the Attack should be made on the 29th. [Feb.1; no Jan. 29 in 1777]

“The whole Army having taken a Refreshment, they set out at Five in the Morning, and the 42d Regiment attacked one of their Outposts by Day-break. This Regiment made more use of their Swords than their Fire-Arms in this Skirmish, they killed many and took almost the whole of the rest Prisoners. The Rebels did not yet perceive the Strength of those who came against them, and sent an advanced Party to support the Attack: and, by this Time, the general Alarm was beating through their Camp.

“While the 42d Regiment were thus engaged, two British Regiments passed them on either Side, and these two Regiments made the Enemies Breast-works, unperceived, while their Camp was secure, and the 42d Regiment destroying and securing the Party they had passed. Some British, and all the German Troops they had with them, stopped about a Mile and a Half behind, while two Divisions of Horse guarded both Wings. Now the Work began; and the advance Parties, leaping over into the Trenches, stood, and fought with the greatest Vigour against the Rebels, as they came up to defend their Works, not understanding that our Soldiers had got within them.

“The Slaughter was very great among the Rebels; but very few of them were taken Prisoners, save those the 42d Regiment had taken, owing to the positive Orders of the Commander in Chief not to pursue them out of their Camp.

“There were not above 30 of our Army killed, and 107 wounded, during the whole Engagement; about 500 of the Rebels were taken Prisoners, and a great Havock made among the rest. All the Rebel Cannon and provisions were taken; and had it not been for the Caution of Gen. Howe against Ambuscades, that Army must have been totally destroyed.

“We sent out Parties two or Three Miles from the Rebel Camp, who brought in a few Prisoners, most of them wounded Men. We staid there that Night, and returned to Brunswick next Day.” – *Gen. Even. Post.*

Source: *Derby Mercury*, Mar. 14, 1777, p. 2.

Rebel Officer’s Account of the Skirmish of Benjamin Drake’s Farm, Metuchen, New Jersey, Feb. 1, 1777

Extract of a letter from an Officer of Distinction dated at Chatham, between Morris-Town and Elizabeth –Town, New Jersey, Feb. 3, 1777...

“On the 1st inst. 3000 of the enemy, under command of [Brig. Gen.] Sir William Erskine, came out of Brunswick to forage. They had 8 pieces of cannon. Several of our scouting parties joined, to the amount of 600 men, under the command of Col. [Charles] Scot, of the 5th Virginia regiment. A disposition was made to attack the enemy. Col. Scot, with 90 Virginians on the right, attacked 200 British Grenadiers, and drove them to their cannon. The other parties not marching so briskly up to the attack, the Col. was engaged ten minutes by himself, and 300 fresh men being sent against him, was obliged to give way, and formed again 300 yards of the enemy. By this time, two other divisions had got up with the

Source: *London Evening Post*, Apr. 29, 1777, p. 4.

Exchange of Letters between Rebel Brig. Gen. Adam Stephen and Brig. Gen. Sir William Erskine Regarding Cruelty with Prisoners at the Engagement at Benjamin Drake’s Farm, Metuchen, New Jersey, Feb. 1, 1777.

WILLIAMSBURGH, March 7...

Mess. Dixon & Hunter

Gentlemen,

CHATHAM (N. Jersey) Feb. 15, 1777.

GENERAL Stephen’s brigade has engaged the enemy’s strong foraging parties three several times lately, and, with sustaining but little loss, did them some considerable damage. On the first instant they treated some of our wounded, who had the misfortune to fall into their hands, with the most savage

barbarity: In consequence of that the General wrote a letter to Sir William Erskine, a copy of which, and Sir William's answer, have done myself the pleasure to enclose you. We lost that day two gallant officers, Adjutant Kelly of the 5th Virginia regiment, and Lieutenant Gregory of the 6th. Our hickory hearts, as usual, behaved like heroes. Ninety of them, under the command of the brave Col. [Charles] Scott, beat, at fair cutting, 230 of their best troops.

I am, very respectfully, Your obedient servant,
ROBERT FORSYTH, B. Major to Gen. Stephen

Copy of a letter sent to Sir WILLIAM ERSKINE, complaining of the savage cruelty of the BRITISH troops.

SIR,

It is told us, that Sir William Erskine commanded the British troops covering the foraging party at Drake's farm, on Saturday the 1st instant...

Is it possible that a Gentleman! an officer so eminently distinguished for his bravery and experience! should allow the troops under his command to murder the wounded after the manner of savages! Until this time, it was universally allowed, that humanity was a certain concomitant of valour. It now appears, that Britons, unhappily divested of many excellent qualities peculiar to their ancestors, are become strangers to humanity, and deaf to the entreaties of the brave, after the misfortune of having fallen wounded into their power. Mr. Kelly, a brave officer in my brigade, and five other Virginians, slightly wounded in the muscular parts, had their bodies mangled, and their brains beat out, by the troops of his Britannic Majesty, on Saturday the 1st instant.

The cruelties exercised on the worth Gen. [Hugh] Mercer, near to Princetown, on the 3d of January, were equally barbarous. It gives great pain to a generous mind, Sir William, to see you tarnish the laurels so honourably obtained last war, by permitting such savage barbarity in the troops under your command. Such conduct, Sir, will inspire the Americans with a hatred to Britons, so inveterate and insurmountable, that they never will form an alliance, or the least connection with them.

I can assure you, Sir, that the savages, after General [William] Braddock's [1755] defeat, notwithstanding the great influence of the French over them, could not be prevailed on to butcher the wounded in the manner your troops have done, until they were first made drunk. I do not know, Sir William, that your troops gave you that trouble: So far does British cruelty, now a days, surpass that of the savages.

In spite of all the British agents sent amongst the different nations, we have beat the Indians into good humour, and they offer their service. it is their custom, in war, to scalp, take out the hearts, and mangle the bodies of their enemies. This is shocking to the humanity natural to the white inhabitants of America. However, if the British officers do not restrain their soldiers from glutting their cruelties with the wanton destruction of the wounded, the United States, contrary to their natural disposition, will be compelled to employ a body of ferocious savages, who can, with an unrelenting heart, eat the flesh, and drink the blood of their enemies. I well remember, that in the year 1763 Lieut. Gordon of the Royal Americans and eight more of the British soldiers were roasted alive, and eaten up by the fierce savages, that now offer their services.

The Americans have hitherto treated the wounded and prisoners of the British troops with the civility and tenderness natural to a brave and generous people; but should the inhuman cruelty of you men compel the American army to retaliate, let it be remembered that the British officers stand answerable to the world, and to posterity, for the many dreadful consequences. I am, Sir, with due respect,

Your most humble servant

ADAM STEPHEN, B.G. United States

The ANSWER

"SIR,

Brunswick, Feb. 10, 1777

I RECEIVED your letter of the 4th instant; and am extremely obliged to you for the good opinion you seem to have had of my past character; but as much hurt at the unmerited charge you lay against me at present.

It is unnecessary for me to answer minutely every paragraph of your letter, which is wrote in a style and language I have not been accustomed to. I only beg leave to inform you, that I have never countenanced an act of barbarity in my lifetime, nor can I think any Gentlemen in the British service equal to it. We, on the contrary, wish to treat prisoners with lenity, and take all possible care of the wounded that fall into our hands, as humanity will always meet with the approbation of every officer in the army.

However, I may mention, that it is not to be wondered at if our soldiers are a little exasperated, considering the many cruelties that have been of late committed on them and their * officers, *even unarmed*, passing singly from quarter to quarter. I am, Sir, with respect,

Your most obedient humble servant

WILLIAM ERSKINE, Brigadier and Q.M.G.

**Several officers in the rear of an escort were surprized by a party of the militia, and surrendered to them, but soon after clapped spurs to their horses, and fled; upon which the militia fired immediately, and killed three of them, amongst whom was Major Phillips. This is the cruelty alluded to in Sir William's letter."*

Source: *Virginia Gazette*, Dixon and Hunter, Marc. 7, 1777, p. 7. Brev. Brig. Gen. Sir William Erskine was the senior British Officer at Drake's Farm.



Detail of Pastel of Lt. Gen. Charles, Earl Cornwallis, 1782, by Daniel Gardner

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from *Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation*

Lt. Gen. Charles, Earl Cornwallis' Orders to Provide an Extra Ration of Rum to a Detachment of 200 of the 42nd Highlanders, Engaged at Skirmish at Benjamin Drake's Farm, Metuchen, New Jersey, Feb. 3, 1777

Head Quarters Brunswick 3rd February 1777...

In Consequence of the Good behaviour of the Troops on the 1st Ins^t & the Bad Weather the Men are this day to receive an Extra Gill of Rum, The Commanding Officers of Corps are to Send to the Commissary for it...

Source and Note: Order Book of the 1st Regt. of Foot Guards called *William Howe orderly book*, Great Britain. Army, 1776-1778, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Mich. The order refers to the Battle of Drake's Farm where foragers under Brig. Gen. Sir. William Erskine (including a detachment of the 42nd Regt.) repelled a large rebel party near Metuchen on Feb. 1, 1777.

General Order Notes the 3rd British Grenadier Battalion, Including the 42nd Grenadier Company, had Arrived at New York from Rhode Island, Feb. 5, 1777

Head Quarters New-York
Feb^y 5th 1777...

The Flank Corps, and 3^d Brig^{de}. lately arriv'd from Rhode Island, will take up all their recover'd Men found in New York and order them to join their Regiments immediately.

Source and Note: *Orderly Book of General Sir William Howe, Kept By Major Stephen Kemble, Deputy Adjutant General, 29 January 1777 - 20 June 1777*, New York State Library, Manuscripts and History Library, Accession Number 6744. The 42nd Grenadier Company as part of the 3rd British Grenadier Battalion is covered in this order as part of the "Flank Corps."

Journal of Engineer Extraordinary and Capt. Lt. Archibald Robertson Describes Actions of One Battalion of the 42nd Regt. During Foraging Party, Quibbletown (Now New Market), New Jersey, Feb. 8, 1777

8th Went on a Strong foraging Party to Quibble Town. The Guards covered us towards Bound Brook, 2 Battalions of Grenadiers and 1 Light Infantry march'd the Quibble Town Road above the landing, all the Waggon with the 49th and 5th Regiments march'd the Middle Road and 1 Battalion 42nd covered the Right Flank. The advanced partys had some skirmishing in which the Rebels had 6 men kill'd. On our Return they likewise Attack'd our rear. On the whole we only had 4 men wounded. [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis, [Maj.] General [James] Grant, Brigadier Generals [Hon. Alexander] Leslie, [Edward] Mathews, and [Sir William] Erskine were all out this day. Likewise Major General [John] Vaughan who foraged on our Right the same day from Amboy.

Source: *Archibald Robertson, Lieutenant-General Royal Engineers, His Diaries and Sketches in America*, Ed. Harry Miller Lydenberg, New York Public Library, New York, 1930, p. 124.

Hessian Jäger Capt. Johann Ewald's Account of Foraging Expedition with a Battalion of the 42nd Regt., Quibbletown, New Jersey, Feb. 8, 1777

At daybreak on the 8th [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis set out. I formed the advanced guard with fifty jägers, supported by four hundred light infantry. behind them followed four hundred Scots, one hundred dragoons, a number of light 6-pounders, four hundred English grenadiers, two Hessian grenadier battalions, the foragers and the wagons, and four hundred Englishmen drawn from several regiments.

The road leading from Raritan Landing to Quibbletown ran continuously through the woods, in which three devastated plantations were situated. At the first plantation I ran into an enemy post of riflemen who withdrew after stubborn resistance, of whom several were killed and captured on their retreat. We followed this party so swiftly that we arrived with them before Quibbletown at the same time. The place lies on two hills, between which a creek winds through a ravine that is spanned by two bridges. The stone walls around the gardens as well as the houses on both sides of the ravine were occupied by enemy riflemen, who abandoned the village after strong resistance when artillery was brought up, and withdrew into the nearest wood on the other side of the village.

The place was occupied at once by the light infantry and the Scots, and a battery was erected on the hill on this side. I occupied the stone walls between the village and the wood with the jägers, where I skirmished steadily with the enemy as long as foraging continued...

Toward three o'clock in the afternoon the foraging was completed and I received orders to retreat, which, in full view of the enemy, was very disagreeable...

The enemy hung on our rear until we reached our outposts...

Source: *Diary of the American War, A Hessian Journal, Captain Johann Ewald, Field Jäger Corps*, Trans. and Ed. Justin P. Tustin, Yale Univ. Press, New Haven, 1979, p. 53.

Excerpts of a Letter No. 45 from Gen. Sir William Howe, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Describing the Return of Troops from Rhode Island Including the 42nd Grenadier Company, New York, Feb. 12, 1777

N^o 45

New York 12 February 1777

My Lord,

The Disposition of the Troops in this Quarter having undergone little Alteration since my last Dispatch of the 17th January, I have only to advise your Lordship of the Return of a Brigade of British and some Companies of Grenadiers and Light Infantry from Rhode Island, to strengthen [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis's Corps in Jersey, in order to enable His Lordship, with more Security to the Posts of Brunswick and Amboy, to make a Movement, when the Weather proves favorable against the Enemy, still remaining at Morristown.

Lieutenant General [Henry] Clinton being gone to England, [Lt. Gen. Hugh] Lord Percy has succeeded to the Command at Rhode Island...

I have the Honor to be, Your Lordship's
most faithful and most Obedient Servant

Right Hon^{ble} Lord George Germain
&^c &^c &^c

W. Howe

Source: *Records of the British Colonial Office Class 5, Part 5: The American Revolution, 1772-1784*, Ed. Randolph Boehm, University Publications Inc., Frederick, MD, 1972, pp. 234-237 from TNA, *Colonial Office: Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1776-1777* at CO5/94. The 42nd Grenadier Co. was one of the returning units as part of the 3rd British Grenadier Battalion.

Corp. Thomas Sullivan's Accounts of Rebel Attack on the 42nd Regt. Pickets at Piscataway and 1st Lt. Infantry Battalion Foraging Near Bound Brook, New Jersey, Feb. 12 and 21, 1777

Feb. 12th. A Detachment of 200 men of the Enemy engaged an advanced Picquet of the 42^d. regiment, consisting only of a Subaltern and 20 men: The Picquet kept them in play for some time, untill they were almost surrounded: But one man of the Picquet informed two Companies of the Battallion that were Quartered at a small distance from the Place, of their danger, who immediately got under Arms and joined the Picquet, which in junction beat the Enemy with Loss. The Highlanders had but one man of the Picquet wounded.

Feb. 21st. The 17th Light Dragoons, 1st Battallion of Light Infantry [with the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co.], 1st Battallion of British Grenadiers, and Minnigrodes Battallion of Hessian Grenadiers, with the Field Pieces of the Battallions, under the Command of Quarter master general Sir William Erskine, went to Forrage towards Bound-Brook, where they defeated a large Body of the Enemy with 200 Head of Cattle, some Sheep, and a great Quantity of all sorts of Forrage, without much loss. Sir William Erskine behaved upon this and every like occasion with great Courage and perserverance.

Source and Note: *From Redcoat to Rebel, the Thomas Sullivan Journal*, Ed. Joseph Lee Boyle, Heritage Books, Bowie (Md.), 1997, pp. 105-105. Corp. Sullivan was in the 49th Regt. in the 2nd Brigade.



Detail of A map, Middlesex County.1781, by John Hills,

Picture Source: Library of Congress, Geography and Map Div.

42nd Grenadier Company Skirmish, Spanktown (now Rahway), New Jersey, Feb. 23, 1777

Lt. John Peebles' Account of a Skirmish of the 42nd Grenadier Company (3rd Brit. Gren. Battalion), Spanktown, New Jersey, Feb. 23-Mar. 11, 1777

23^d Feb^{ry} a fine clear frosty morn^g not so cold The Troops from Rhode Island went ashore early this morning – viz^t 3^d Light Infantry & Gren^s & 3^d Brigade, & marched into the Country with a few field pieces & a train of waggons to bring forrage, the whole under the Command of Col^o [Charles] Mawhood [17th Regt.] when we had got a few miles beyond Woodbridge Colo: [Mungo] Campbell of the 52^d, was detach'd with 4 or 500 men to the left to make a Sweep into the Country, he got 4 Comp^{vs} of Gr^{ts} with him, having ask'd for ours to be one of them, & I was order'd with 20 men to be the advance guard. – when we had marched about a mile & a half to the Westward, I discover'd a body of the Rebels on a hill which I acquainted Colo: Campbell of, Very well says he I'll manœvre them, he accordingly gave orders for the Detachment to form & desir'd me to move on the edge of a wood in our front, as we came forward the Rebels disappeared, & I kept moving on thinking the whole detachment were coming after, but it seems they made a turn to the left while I went on in the tract of the Enemy, & soon after saw a body of them go in to a wood where they halted, I sent a Corp^l. to Colo: Campbell to acquaint him of their situation, but the detachm^t being a good way off at this time he was long a coming back – the Rebels

seeing my small party drawn up & nobody near them sent out about 30 or 40 to bring us on to engage, I went up & met them & receiv'd their fire from behind a fence. I moved on to a fence in front & order'd my men to fire, which we continued to do at each other for a few minutes when they gave way. I believe at seeing the Detachm^t coming up for I don't think we hit above 3 or 4 of them. I had two wounded: when the Detachm^t came near I mov'd off to the left where a party of them were driving off some Cattle & sheep &: some straglers firing at us, I then form'd & gave them a platoon [volley] & two or 3 rounds after, which made them take to their heels, Colo: Campbell sent up & order'd me to retire back to the detachm^t. which I accordingly did, they having withdrawn towards the left, he form'd his troops again in a field in the rear & to the left withall, & moving on still more to the left we saw another body of the Rebels coming down thro a Swamp & making straight for a wood, Colo: Campbell hurried us on, I suppose to get betwixt the wood & them, but they got into the wood before we could get within shot of them, he then order'd me up to a fence at the edge of the wood with my little party which were reduced now to 14 or 15, we went up to the fence under the beginning of their fire, we posted ourselves there & kept up as much fire as we could two Grenad^r comp^{ys} 42^d & 28th came up to our support but began their fire at too great a distance; when they got up to the fence they soon found themselves gall'd by a fire on their right, & those in our Front being all posted behind trees almost flank'd the 42^d Comp^y, in this Situation the men are dropping down fast when they (the 2 Comp^{ys}) got orders to retire which I hear'd nothing off. I remain'd at my post till I had not one man left near me, except Jn^o Carr lying wounded, & fired away all my Cartridges, when seeing the Rascals coming pretty close up I took to my heels & ran back to the Comp^y under a heavy fire which thank God I escaped, as I fortunately did all the rest of the day – in this affair we had the worst of it for want of that support we had reason to expect from the rear, where the 52^d Reg^t were drawn up but did not move on tho' Col^o Campbell says he left orders for them so to do, but it seems in the interim Colo: Mawhood had sent orders for them to retire or move to the right, however they came down at last together with some others & gave a heavy volley into the wood which cleared it of the Rebels, Colo: Mawhoods division were drawn towards this scene of Action but what they had to do in their thether I can't say – the Rebels being now gone off we got the wounded bro^t up to the road taken some care of & put into Waggons. The Enemy seeing a disposition to march back showed themselves again in our rear which occasion'd a counter march to oppose them, but on our facing them they retired with firing a few shot, we moved on again, the men much fatigued & harrassed a great many of them quite knock'd up; shortly after we got into the main road the Rebels appear'd in our rear & rear flanks & harrass'd the Grenad^{rs} that form'd the rear guard very much. we were at last obliged to halt & fire some Cannon amongst them which set them a scampering, as we came near Woodbridge we found a large body of them in a wood posted to oppose us in front. upon discovering: them we fired a few pieces of Cannon into the wood and then formed a line in front which moved on to the wood & pour'd in their fire, which made the Rebels quicken their steps to their right, to which they began to move when this front line moved on to charge them. they fired some scattering shots in going off which did little hurt, we then got into the road again & moved on without further molestation & got into to Amboy between 7 & 8 oclock much fatigued ...

Monday 24th Feb^{ry} ...In the affair of yesterday we have lost 69 killed & wounded & 6 missing, our Comp^y has 2 Serj^{ts} 1 Corp^l & 20 wounded & 1 killed, 2 Dr^{ts} missing; went ashore in Even^g & saw the wounded men several of them in a very dangerous way poor fellows, what pity it is to throw away such men as these on such shabby ill managed occasions. Cap^t [Charles] Gr [Graham] & I call'd on Col^o M'Donald to thank him for his civility & attention to the wounded men of our Comp^y Colo: Campbell sent for Cap^t Graham to speak to him, to talk over the affair of yesterday & to let him know where the fault lay of our not being supported

Tuesday 25th Feb^{ry} ...had a review of arms which are not in good order yet. The men much fatigued with Sunday Geo: Munro one of our wounded died this morn^g...

Wednesday 26th ...went ashore & saw our wounded men dress'd, most of them very bad wounds indeed, [John] Carr W^m M^cIntosh & [William] Miller & Srj^t [Angus] M^cpherson I am afraid wont live – wrote to [Lt.] Col^o [Thomas] Stirling a sketch of our Sundays affair, sent it by L^t Freeman who goes to Brunswick this night –

Thursday 27th Feb^{ry}...Colo: Campbell sent for Cap^t Graham & I this morning to acquaint us that the Gen^l required some enquiry to be made why the Grenad^{rs} were not supported in the affair of Sunday & to ask us all that we knew concerning that, which can be very little, as it must be best known to Colo: Campbell & Major [Francis Richmond] Humphries [52nd Regt.] what orders were given & rec^d, it being pretty clear I think, that for want of that support we expect^d from the Column in the Rear we lost most of our men & allowed the Rebels to escape better than they deserved ... I hear a Court of Enquiry is sitting – By which it appears that Major Humphries had received an order from Col^o Mawhood not to advance, but was not communicated to Col^o Campbell till it was too late – W^m Millar died this morn^g.

Sunday 2nd March..I went ashore & visited the Hospital. Several of the wounded men very bad, of M^cIntosh & Carr I have very little hopes poor fellows, I never saw men more patient & resign^d than they are – Din's ashore at the tavern with a party made up of those who were most engaged the 23^d Colo: Campbell [Capt.] Sir Ja^s Murray [57th Regt.], & the off^{rs} 28 & 42^d Gren^r Comp^{ys} & talk^d over the affair of that day wherein it was concluded that if the 52^d had advanced we would have made a very little affair of it...

Monday 10th March... Visited the Hospital The Wounded are all doing well except W^m M^cIntosh who is just dying – Jn^o Carr holds it out suprizingly, all the rest are in a good way...

Tuesday 11th March. W^m M^cIntosh died this morning...

Source: *Peebles' Journal* Entry for Feb. 23- Mar. 2, 1777 and published in *John Peebles' American War*, Ed. Ira D. Gruber, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg (Pa.), 1998, pp. 95-100 and 102.

Capt. Sir James Murray's Account of 42nd Grenadier Company Skirmish at Spanktown, New Jersey, Feb. 23, 1777

Amboy, N. Jersies
Feb^{ry} 25th, 1777.

... We have been here about a fortnight... The next expedition proved a little more serious and upon the whole I think unfortunately so. We had received it seems some information about the disposition of the enemy's quarters 10 or 11 miles from this, in consequence of which it was resolved to make an attempt in hopes of surrounding them. Nothing could be more judiciously planned, but they had unluckily received better information of our intentions, and had their waggons ready loaded and their men under arms accordingly, with every other preparation to fight or fly, almost as soon as we began our march. This was betwixt 8 and 9, the 3rd Brigade, the 3rd Bln of Grenadaers and (ours) the 3rd Light Infantry, in all between 1400 and 1600 men, under the command of Col. [Charles] Mawhood [17th Regt.]. We proceeded 6 or 8 miles without opposition, our army was then divided into two bodies, the 42^d and two other companies of Grenadiers, 4 Companies of the 37th Regiment, and the 52nd aided and assisted by the 57th Com^y of Lt. Infantry; took one road across a small brook upon the left, under the command of Col. [Mungo] Campbell [52nd Regt.]. The rest went on with Col. Mawhood in order to surprize, surround and extirpate the Rebel Army. The design was good and the intention laudable. We first discovered a pretty large body of them. After a little of the usual prelude, firing betwixt the advanced parties, we were ordered to withdraw. In a few minutes our attention was awakened with a rattling of small arms upon our right, which we soon discovered to be our other Division driving the enemy before them. This was the signal for us to advance, which we did with all expedition inclining to the left in order to cut off their retreat. The Grenadiers and soon after my Company pushed into a wood which they occupied in great numbers, and ought to have been supported by the 52 and 37th Regiment; by some mistake or other, the blame of which the Commanding Officers concerned endeavour to throw upon one another, they did not advance; so that the Rebels not only got off without any difficulty, but annoyed the Highlanders in particular, very much exactly from the quarter which these reg^{ts} ought to have covered. In this situation we were ordered to retreat, though I dare say that we could have beat them, but it was certainly not a sufficient object at that time to recompense the loss of men which so small a body must necessarily have

sustained in pushing them any further. The fire was prodigiously heavy at one time but *p.* favour of some pretty large trees, which by a good deal of practise we have learnt to make a proper use of, my Company suffered very little. I was only unfortunate in having one of the officers most dreadfully wounded and two men, (one) of them I fear very dangerously. The Highland Grenadiers lost 24. The 52nd coming up soon after, we advanced again into the wood upon which, after two (or) three pretty smart fires, the enemy thought proper to decamp, and I believe with very little loss. After this exploit we rejoined the *great army*, and the day being pretty far advanced, directed our steps towards Amboy. We had hardly proceeded a couple of mile, when we were agreeable surprised with the intelligence that the gentlemen were modestly attempting to cut off our retreat, and that they had marched round in great bodies and posted themselves directly in our way home. They followed our rear at the same time in small parties keeping up a constant fire from all quarters. In this manner we advanced to the fatal spot where they seemed to await us with great deliberation. They could not be less than 1,000 in a wood upon the right hand of the road. You may believe by this time the men were pretty much fatigued; it is impossible to conceive what life and spirits was communicated to the breasts of every one upon the first appearance of the attack. The rascals gave way almost instantaneously, we followed them as far as was necessary, returned and continued our march homewards. Tho' I enjoyed this affair upon the whole, at least equal to a fox chase, I was a good deal vexed at one time when we might have made it I think a good deal more compleat. Three of our Companies advanced upon the right, were making directly for a pass by which the enemy were getting off; when they were ordered back, the battalions somehow or other not being ready to support them. The remaining part of the day was by no means agreeable. We had marched at least 28 or 30 miles over fences woods and ditches every step up to the ankles in mud or snow, and some part of it at a run. My Company in particular had not halted a single instant since we left the parade, *et qui pis etait* ["and what is worse"] we had not had a morsel that day. Night came on, the men fainting every instant from the fatigue they had undergone, we had not waggons or horses sufficient to carry them or the wounded, and the firing continued upon all sides. In this situation we halted for some time got everything properly arranged, and about eight o'clock made our entry into the city of Amboy; sat down to supper and after the second glass of Madeira, we were just as well as if we had only been at a review, and thus we soldiers live. Very few I believe, could have been returned fit for service next day. We lost upon the whole of the day 1 officer killed, 3 wounded, 60 men killed and wounded, and a few missing. This makes seven officers out of nineteen which have been wounded in the battaillon in which I have the honour to serve; in the course of six months by no means the most active of the twelve...

We are still on board, but in daily expectation of being sent to Brunswick, in order to join the other two Battalions with which we are to be incorporated 3 comp^{ys} in each; or perhaps till the opening of the campaign we shall join the 42nd at a place called Piscataway...

Source and Notes: *Letters from America, 1773 to 1780*, Ed. Eric Robson, Manchester University Press, 1951, pp. 37-42. Sir James was Captain of the 57th Light Inf. Co. in the 3rd Lt. Inf. Bn.

Mr. William Dunlap's Account of 42nd Grenadier Company Skirmish, Spanktown, Feb 23, 1777

The family returned to Perth Amboy, and remained during that winter surrounded by our English friends, and a medley of Highlanders, Hessians, and other German troops of every description ...Amboy was thronged with troops, my father's house filled with officers, his kitchen and out-houses with their servants and soldiers. The grenadiers and light infantry of the army arrived in transport ships from Rhode Island, and lay off in the stream. They were landed on a fine, clear winter's day, and with all the "pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war," I saw them march into the rebellious country adjacent, attended by a long train of wagons to procure forage. I walked out of the village, to see the last of the brilliant show, and tried to keep up with a tall grenadier of the 42d, whose height and beauty particularly attracted my attention. I returned and placed myself at a garret window, which commanded a view of the roads leading on the left to Brunswick, on the right to Woodbridge, that I might catch another view of the long procession, which I saw passing over the hill, and vanishing as it moved on towards the nearest village. I

have a confused recollection that my thoughts that day were occupied altogether by the proud display I had witnessed, and the events which might be passing in the interior; and the sound of distant musketry gave activity to these thoughts—my mind was on the stretch. I took my way up the road by which the army had passed, and I met a wounded man returning, assisted by a less injured comrade. A little further on stragglers were met returning, more or less hurt, and evincing pain. I next met the gigantic grenadier of the 42d – his musket on his left shoulder, his right hand bound up – he walked fast, but he no longer looked like the hero I had admired. I turned about and followed him. It was soon known that the militia had assembled, and were skirmishing with the *regulars*. In the evening it was known that this gallant military array were returning, their baggage wagons loaded with the wounded instead of the booty they went in search of. By the fireside I heard the heavy rumbling of the wagons over the frozen earth, and the groans of those who were borne to the hospitals. I had now seen something of war.

Source: *A History of the American Theatre*, by William Dunlap, J. & J. Harper, New York, 1832, Google Books, pp. 236-237.

News Account of 42nd Grenadier Company Skirmish, Spanktown, Feb. 23, 1777

LONDON, June 12...

Extract of a Letter from Newport, Rhode-Island, dated April 3...

“I am just informed., that Gen. [Sir William] Howe was very near being taken by the rebels, by his having advanced too far from Quarters in the Jerseys; but fortunately the Grenadiers of the 42d being out foraging, observed his Danger, and ran to his Assistance; they soon beat off that party, but the poor Fellows paid dear for it; as they were pushing this Party, another popped out of the Woods with two Field Pieces and flanked them, killed 24, and wounded a good many more. The 71st regiment of [Brig. Gen.] Sir William Erskine, I hear, has done Wonders in different Skirmishes in the Jerseys; and the 27th and 45th are highly praised for their Bravery.”

Source: *Northampton Mercury*, June 16, 1777, p. 2.

Rebel Account of 42nd Grenadier Company Skirmish at Spanktown, Feb. 23, 1777

Extract of a letter from Morris Town, Feb. 26, 1777.

“General [Sir William] Howe still continues to threaten your city; — a reinforcement is arrived at Amboy, consisting of the 10th, 37th, 38th, and 52d regiments, one battalion of grenadiers, and one of light infantry, the whole amounting to about 2000 men; they were out on Sunday last [Feb. 23] upon a foraging party with three field pieces, when they were attacked by about 600 of our people at eleven in the morning near Spank-town. The firing continued from that time with some short intermission until night, by the best accounts we can get the enemy’s loss amounted to upwards of an hundred men killed and wounded; we took ten prisoners; our loss was eight killed and wounded. They came with about fifteen or twenty waggons, a considerable part of which were employed in carrying off their dead and wounded; some of the waggons were so piled, that the dead fell off, and were left in the road. A few such affairs will make them sick of foraging at so expensive a rate. The enemy killed two of the inhabitants; one with his protection in his hand, had his brains blown out while he was offering it to an officer; the other was run through the body with a bayonet; both were killed for not getting their waggons ready as speedily as they were wanted to remove the dead out of the way.”

Source: *Pennsylvania Journal; and the Weekly Advertiser*, Mar. 5, 1777 in *Documents Relating to the Revolutionary History of the State of New Jersey*, Vol. I, Ed. William S. Stryker, John L. Murphy Publishing Co., Trenton, 1901, Google Books, pp. 307-308.

News Account of 42nd Grenadier Company Skirmish, Spanktown, New Jersey, Feb. 23, 1777

New-York, March 3.

On Sunday last, the 23^d ult, the gallant Colonel [Charles] Mawhood (who commanded the 17th Regiment with such *Eclat* [style or brilliance] in the Affair near Princetown) with his Brigade, in Quest of Forage, fell in with the main Body of the Rebels not far from Morris Town in New-Jersey, and, after a running Engagement with them in which he drove them several Miles, giving them the Bayonet as usual, he ordered his Men to return. The Rebels endeavoured to form an Ambuscade in the Way our Troops returned; but being discovered, they were warmly attacked first by a Volley, and then immediately by the Bayonet, and put to flight as before with considerable Loss. The King's Troops lost one valuable Officer (Captain [John] Hall of the 46th) and 4 Men killed, and about 40 wounded. The chief of this Loss happened through the impetuous Bravery of the Soldiers, who, instead of flanking a Fence, marched up to it in Front, and received the Enemy's Fire, which indeed they afterwards sufficiently revenged. The Brigade returned without further Molestation, conducting the Waggon with a very large Quantity of live Stock and Forage to the Army.

Source: *New York Gazette and Weekly Mercury*, Mar. 3, 1777 in *Documents Relating to the Revolutionary History of the State of New Jersey*, Vol. I, Ed. William S. Stryker, John L. Murphy Publishing Co., Trenton, 1901, Google Books, pp 296-297.

Rebel Attacks on 42nd Regt. at Piscataway, New Jersey, Feb. 7 – May 1, 1777



Detail of Portrait of Lt. Gen. Lord John Murray, circa 1759 by Allan Ramsay

Picture Source: *Chronicles of the Atholl and Tullibardine Families*, Vol. III, Ed. John, 7th Duke of Atholl, 1908, opp. p. 370.

Excerpt of Letter from Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling to Gen. Lord John Murray, Col., 42nd Regt. Reporting Several Attacks on Piscataway, New Jersey, Feb. 7-Mar. 13, 1777

Dated Piscataqua in the Jerseys 3 Miles from Brunswick
on the road leading to Amboy 13th March 1777

My Lord...

the 7th of that Month [Feb.] 300 of them attacked our Quarters and endeavored to cut off our provision Waggon, we repulsed them, on the 23^d they attacked our Piquets with as little advantage on their side, we driving them off, & followed them a Couple of Miles, and on the 1st of this Month 5 or 600 of them came hoping to surprise us in a Snow Storm, but were mistaken, we drove them as formerly, and they acknowledge with having a L^t Co^l who is since dead of his wound, and a cap^t wounded with believed 40 & 50 killed and wounded, Since that we have been quiet and I am hopeful they are satisfied nothing

is to won at our hands for our Men are Exceedingly Harrassed having never Strip[p]ed since the Middle of December, but lye in their cloaths all night with their accoutrements on, and their arms lying by them & the first shot from the Piquets is a signal for every man to turn out, & never I saw men readier or more resolute, on every occasion, but these fatigues are getting the better of us, an ugly fever has gotten in among us, which carrys them off in 8 days, in the last Fortnight 12 men have died of it, and some of our best men, we anxiously for the openly the campagne in hopes that Change of air & ease/ for that would be Ease in comparison of what we now undergo/ may bring us some relief; There is no appearance of the Rebels – Succumbing, a Determined Spirit of Rebellion kept up by their Leaders, seems to be rooted in their hearts, and they hope to weary Brittain out of it, most of their army is composed of Country people and there mostly Irish.

I am glad the Scotch cloathing is coming I was afraid it was taken, I have not heard one word from the Agents since Reg^t arrival in America if they are not more punctual, I shall enter a complaint against them, your Lordship will please give them direction, and lett me know whither you are to send out the small Mounting for last year or allow money as was done at Glasgow, the Reg^t is in want of no knapsacks, having provided themselves compleately before we came out – Cap^t [John] Smith Lieu^t H. [Harry] Munro & [Robert] Franklin & Ensign [John] Campbell, are exchanged but none of the men; I hope your Lop: will send an active Officer with the men to compleat us, if the 2 [Additional] companies does not come, L^t [Valentine] Chisolm is very ill, nor do I Expect much Service out of L^t H. [Harry] Munro, L^t Peter [Patrick] Graham is recovering, but will be long e'er he gets the use of his Arm.

I have the honor to be

[Thomas Stirling]

Source and Notes: *Lord John Murray Papers*. “Lops” is shorthand for Lordships. Capt. Smith and his officers were captured on the *Transport Oxford* by a rebel Brig. in May 1776 and had been exchanged for rebel officers. Lt. Chisholm had to retire due to a medical condition and Lt. Graham was wounded in the attack on Fort Washington, Nov, 16, 1776. Capt. Smith and the other officers who had been exchanged had been captured by the rebel navy in the transport *Oxford* while sailing with the regiment for America.

Letter from Brevet-Maj. William Grant, 2nd Battalion, 42nd Regt., to Gen. Lord John Murray, Col., 42nd Regt., Regarding Attacks on the Regiment, Piscataway, New Jersey, Feb. 7 – June 5, 1777

Dated Piscataway near Brunswick
5th June 1777

My Lord

The letter which your Lop: [Lordship] did me the honor to write me I did not receive till very lately - M^{rs} Grant & I are infinitely happy to understand that your Lop: & [daughter] Miss [Mary] Murray are well, and wish you both long life & all manner of Prosperity.

As to news My Lord I need not trouble you with the Operations of last campagne, not the progress of [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis Corps in Jersey after his Lop: crossed the North River, these matters being clearly & Fully sett forth in Gen^l [Sir William] Howes letter to [Sec. of State] Lord George Germain and given to the Public in the News papers. I will therefore begin with our winter Quarters, at Piscataway near Brunswick, which indeed was the worst that perhaps ever a Reg^t had in point of Lodging and the Most Alert post in the Army, the whole of the Officers lay in their Cloaths, & the Men in their Cloaths & accoutrements, likewise Pitched our Tents which we did a few days ago, in the front of our Cantonments. We were constantly alarmed both day & night All the time we remained Scattered in cantonments, which was near four months, and during that time, the rebels made four very Serious attacks upon our Picquets, in great Numbers, but being well Supported by the Reg^t they were always beat off with very considerable Loss, and warmly pursued thro thick woods, & Swamps for some Miles. I have the honor to be with great regard

My Lord

Your Lordships most faithful & most obed^t Serv^t

William Grant

R^t Hon^{ble} Gen^l Lord John Murray}

Source: *Lord John Murray Papers*.

**Journal of Engineer Extraordinary and Capt. Lt. Archibald Robertson Describes
Rebel Attack on the Picket of the 42nd Regt., Piscataway, New Jersey, Mar. 1, 1777**

March 1st This day a Party of Rebels attacked the Piquet of the 42^d at Piscatawa but were immediately drove back; the 42^d had 3 wounded.

Source: *Archibald Robertson, Lieutenant-General Royal Engineers, His Diaries and Sketches in America*, Ed. Harry Miller Lydenberg, New York Public Library, New York, 1930, p. 125.

Rebel Account of Attack on 42nd Regt. at Piscataway, New Jersey, on Mar. 1, 1777

PHILADELPHIA, March 13...

Extract of letter from Morristown, dated March 10, 1777 –

“[Rebel] General [William] Maxwell attacked the enemy on Saturday last [Mar. 1], near Quible or Squable town, as they were penetrating into the country for provender, most kinds of which are much wanted among them. We had three men slightly wounded, none killed or taken; the enemy left four dead on the field, and carried off numbers as usual, which, by accounts from the prisoners, were twenty, and numbers wounded. Their rear was so closely pursued that they left one waggon behind; the three prisoners are just arrived, and say the 42^d, or Highland Watch, suffered greatly in the last action.

Source and Note: *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, March 13, 1777. The “*Highland Watch*” or the “*Old Highland Watch*” were common nicknames for the 42nd Regt.

**Lt. Gen. Charles, Earl Cornwallis Orders Award of Rum for Conduct of the Royal Highlanders,
Piscataway, New Jersey, Mar. 1, 1777**

Brunswick, 1st March, 1777

Earl Cornwallis’s Orders

The General desires that an extraordinary day’s rum may immediately be given to the Forty-second Regiment, for its gallant conduct in repulsing and defeating upwards of three thousand of the enemy, with considerable loss.

Source: *Historical Record of the Forty-Second or, Royal Highland Regiment of Foot*, Parker, Furnivall, and Parker, London, 1865, footnote p. 71.

**Excerpts of a Letter No. 5 from Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the
American Department, to Gen. Sir William Howe, Commander-in-Chief,
North America, Describing Highland Reinforcements for the 1777 Campaign, Mar. 3, 1777**

Whitehall 3 March 1777

Sir, in my dispatch of 14th January transmitted to you by the packet you were informed that His Majesty thought proper to defer sending you his sentiments on your plan for the next campaign until he was enabled to take the whole into his royal consideration. I am now commanded to acquaint you that the King entirely approves of your proposed deviation from the plan which you formerly suggested, being of opinion that the reasons which have induced you to recommend this change in your operations are solid and decisive...

Here I cannot help expressing the very great concern I feel for the loss you have had in the Hessians [at Trenton] and for the disappointment you will have in the 3000 Germans Mentioned in my

letter of 14th January, for I begin to fear it will not be possible to send you more new forces than about 820 Hessian Chasseurs [Jägers], ditto Hanau about 400, two Regiments of Anspach infantry consisting of about 1280, and four companies of Highlanders amounting to about 400...

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution*, Vol. XIV, *Transcripts 1777*, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1976, pp. 47-48 from TNA, *Colonial Office: Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1776-1777* at CO5/94, f. 105.

**Letter from Secretary at War Viscount Barrington to Lt. Gen. John, Duke of Argyll,
Commander of His Majesty's Forces in North Britain, to Prepare one 42nd Regt. Additional
Company for Embarkation to America, London, Mar. 7, 1777**

W: O: 7th March 1777

My Lord

I have the honor to acquaint your Grace that I have this day signified H: M: P: to the Colonels of the 42^d & 71st Reg^{ts} of Foot that they hold one of the additional Companies of each Battⁿ of the 71st & One of the 42^d Reg^t in readiness for immediate Embarkation for N^o America, & have acquainted them that Camp Equipage is not to be provided.

I have the honor to be My Lord &c
Barrington

His Grace the Duke of Argyle &c &c &c
Edinburgh

Source and Note: TNA, *War Office General Letters* at WO4/99, p. 228. "H: M: P:" is His Majesty's Pleasure. Although only one 100 man company was called for from the 42nd Regt., 3 subaltern officers and 170 private men embarked.

**Rebel News Account Indicated 42nd Regt. Detachment Attacked While Foraging,
Quibbletown (Now New Market), New Jersey, Mar. 8, 1777**

Extract of a letter from Morristown, dated March 10.

"[Brig.] General [William] Maxwell attacked the enemy on Saturday last [Mar. 8], near Quible or Squable-town, as they were penetrating into the country for provender, most kinds of which are much wanted among them. We had three men slightly wounded none killed or taken; The enemy left four dead on the field, and carried off numbers as usual, which, by accounts from the prisoners, were twenty, and numbers wounded. Their rear was so closely pursued that they left one waggon behind; the three prisoners taken are just arrived, and say the 42d, or Highland Watch, suffered greatly in the last action.

Source and Note: *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), Mar. 19, 1777, p. 4. The 42nd Regt. muster reports dated at Piscataway, N. J. on Apr. 30, 1777 does not record any deaths on Mar. 8, 1777.



Detail from “*A sketch of the northern parts of New Jersey*,” 1781, by Lt. John Hills

Map Source: Library of Congress Geography and Map Div.

Excerpts of Notebook of Lt. John Peebles, 42nd Grenadier Company, Describe Rebel Skirmishes of the 3rd British Grenadier Battalion, Near Woodbridge, New Jersey, Mar. 16, 18 and 23, 1777

...Sunday 16th. about 1 o'clock in the morn^g. we march'd out above 2000 strong & 2 3 pounders with [Maj.] Gen^l. [Hon. John] Vaughan at our head, before we got to Woodbridge he made a division of the Troops some went off to the left across the Country & some kept the Road to the Northward – just about day break we came upon some of the Enemy's out Picquets' our light Infantry exchanged a few shot with them & took some prisoners, the rest fled, The Divisions soon join'd at Spank Town which was quite deserted, having all run off when they hear'd the first firing, we then came on to the Road and moved on homewards haven taken in all 12 prisoners & killed 4 when we had got a few miles on, a parcel of the rascals came on our rear & kept up a scattered popping fire for a good while with the Light Bobs [Lt. Infantry] even till we pass'd Woodbridge. Major [Henry] Johnson [28th Regt.] & two or 3 men wounded – we got into Amboy about nine a good deal fatigued the Roads & Cou8nbtry being very soft & deep...

Tuesday 18th. March fine weather & warm – at 9 o'clock The flank Corps [Lt. Infantry and Grenadiers], 3^d. Brigade [German] Waldeckers & a Battⁿ. of Hessians with 4 six pounders march'd out in great haste having heard o party of the Rebels were betwixt this & Woodbridge, we moved on pretty briskly, having hear'd some firing in front which proved to be some of our light Horse skirmishing near Strawberry Hill... As we approach'd Strawberry Hill saw a body of the Enemy drawn up on Herds Hill N. W. of Woodbridge who seem'd to make a stand & a larger Body were seen in the Wood to the Eastw^d. of the Hill, The Light Infantry had been detach'd to the left some time ago & when we came to Woodbridge we wheel'd up the Brunswick Road on which we Proceeded about a ¼ of a mile & drew up our Guns facing Herds Hill & the Wood to the right, in which direction they fired a few Rounds, on the Commencem^t. of which the Rebels on the Hill filed off by their left to the rear in pretty decent order & I believe without losing a man, the Waldeckers & Hessians moved on in the Elizabeth Town road while we Grenad^{rs}. moved forward from the Guns & took possessⁿ. of the Hill the Enemy had quitted, & saw them retreating to the westward, we sent out & took in some Cattle, & then return'd to Woodbridge where we halted a little, at this time the Waldeckers fired some of their 3 pounders & some small arms were hear'd in that direction we were ordered to march up briskly to that quarter, but before we arrived the few Rebels that made their apperance had walk'd off probably with some loss as they dd not come

near us all the rest of the day, we had 1 light Infantry man wounded, & return'd to Quarters without further loss or Molestation with Drums beating to convince the General of his Victory...

Sunday 23^d. March fine pleasant weather – The flank Corps, 3^d. Brigade went ashore [from their transports] before 5 o'clock in the morn^g. & march'd together with the Waldeckers & a Battⁿ. of the 71st. [Highland Regt.] & 8 pieces of Cannon to cover Boats that went up to the Marshlands to the Eastw^d. of Woodbridge to get Salt Hay, The Troops were disposed along the road beyond Woodbridge, down near the Church, & on Herds Hill, we staid about 2 hours, & march'd back: a few fellows made their appearance in our Rear which occasion'd a little firing betwixt the light infantry & y^m. [them] 1 man wounded, some Horsemen appear'd on Strawberry Hill immediately after we pass'd it, at whom there was some cannon fired but I believe did not hit any of them, we march'd in Town with drums beating another Triumphall entry –

Source: *Peebles' Journal* Entry for Mar. 16, 18 and 23, 1777 and published in *John Peebles' American War*, Ed. Ira D. Gruber, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg (Pa.), 1998, pp. 103-105.

**General Order to Disband the 3rd British Grenadier Battalion and to Assign
Capt. Charles Graham's 42nd Grenadier Company to Lt. Col. Hon. Henry
Monckton's 2nd British Grenadier Battalion, New York, Mar. 23, 1777**

Head Quarters New York 23rd March 1777

The 3rd Brigade when mov'd is to Continue Under L^t General [Charles] Earl Cornwallis Command as before,

The third Battⁿ. of Grenadiers & 3rd Battⁿ. Light Infantry are to be Incorporated into the 1st. & 2nd. of each as Follows,

The 15th. 28th. 33rd. & 37th. Companies to the 1st Battⁿ Grenadiers

The 46th. 57th. & 42nd to the 2nd Battⁿ. Grenadiers

The 15th. 28th. & 33rd. Light Infantry to the 1st Battⁿ of L^t Infantry

37th. 46th. & 57th. to the 2nd Battalion L^t. Infantry

Source: Order Book of the 1st Regt. of Foot Guards called *William Howe orderly book*, Great Britain. Army, 1776-1778, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Mich.

**Excerpt of Notebook of Lt. John Peebles, 42nd Grenadier Company, Describes the
Disbanding of the 3rd British Grenadier Battalion, Amboy and Brunswick, New Jersey,
Mar. 26, 1777**

Wednesday 26th. March the [3rd] Light Infantry [Battalion] & [3rd] Grenadiers disembark'd at 7 o'clock, Baggage & sick men put on board 3 sloops we march'd between 8 & 9 o'clock with 6 waggons carrying our bedding pass'd thro' Bonam Town about 11 & thro Piscataway about an hour after they [the 42nd Highlanders] have been all quiet in their quarters for these 3 weeks past We went round by the Bridge & arrived at Brunswick about 2 oclock when the 3^d. Battalion of Grenad^{rs}. was divided between the 1st. and 2^d. the 15th. 28th. 33^d. & 37th. [Grenadier] Comp^{ys}. join'd the 1st. Battⁿ. & the 42^d. 46th. & 57th. join'd the 2^d. Battⁿ. The men Quarter'd in Store Houses & have got some bedding The Officers in Empty Dwelling Houses. This Place quite full of troops the duty easy & the Post quiet. [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis & [Maj.] Gen^l. [James] Grant commands

Source: *Peebles' Journal* Entry for Mar. 26, 1777 and published in *John Peebles' American War*, Ed. Ira D. Gruber, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg (Pa.), 1998, pp. 105-106.

News Account of Returning Wounded Highland Soldiers, London, Mar. 31, 1777

Yesterday a great number of Highlanders, and other wounded soldiers, from America, were landed near Tower Wharf, and passed through the City. They appeared miserable objects; some with one leg, some without arms, and scarified all over their faces, &c.

Source: *London Evening Post*, Apr. 1, 1777, p. 4

Excerpts of a Letter No. 47 from Gen. Sir William Howe, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Requesting Additional Highland Companies for the 1777 Campaign, New York, Apr. 2, 1777

New York 2 April 1777

My Lord, observing by your lordship's dispatches the small reinforcement intended for this Army for the ensuing campaign, compared with my requisitions for executing the plan I had the honour of submitting to your Lordship in my letters upon that subject, I beg leave to press the additional strength of the Corps of dismounted dragoons I solicited by Lieutenant-Colonel White, of the Corps of chasseurs [Hessian Jägers] proposed to be raised by Captain [Andreas] Emmerick, and of the six additional companies of the 42^d and 71st Regiments...

I fear the Enemy means to keep back the British and Hessian prisoners in their possession contrary to agreement. They know their advantage by such a step and I suspect M^r Washington is led by those who, while their interest is in question, have little regard to his honour...

Signed.

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution, Vol. XIV, Transcripts 1777*, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1976, pp. 64-65 from TNA, Colonial Office: *Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1776-1777* at CO5/94, f. 143.

Excerpts of a Letter No. 47 from Gen. Sir William Howe, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Describing Revised Plans for the 1777 Campaign, Apr. 2, 1777

New York 2 April 1777

My Lord...

In these circumstances I find myself under the necessity of relinquishing a principal part of the plan before proposed for an offensive Corps on the side of Rhode Island etc., and to adopt one on a smaller scale which the enclosed distribution points out.

From the difficulties and delay that would attend the passage of the River Delaware by a march through Jersey, I propose to invade Pennsylvania by sea; and from this arrangement we must probably abandon the Jerseys, which by the former plan would not have been the case...

In the former campaign the force was suitable to the operation; whereas in the ensuing one, from the several posts necessarily to be preserved, the offensive Army will be too weak for rapid success, though I shall hope for the arrival of reinforcements in time to strengthen this as well as the other Corps; but I fear they will not be sufficient to cause any material alteration in the plan now proposed.

From these considerations and the delays which may attend the evacuation of the Jerseys from the vicinity of the Enemy's principal force, it is probable the campaign will not commence so soon as your Lordship may expect, even though we should not undertake anything offensive in that quarter, which I mean to avoid unless some very advantageous opening should offer. But your lordship may be assured the operations will be forwarded as expeditiously as the nature of the service will admit, and in the meanwhile I shall anxiously wait His Majesty's commands by Major [Nisbet] Balfour...

My expectations of a move in the winter against the Enemy in Jersey upon the arrival of the troops from Rhode Island, as Mentioned in a former letter, have been frustrated by a deep fall of snow

which rendered the country impassable, and since the breaking up of winter the depth of the roads forced me to relinquish the idea.

Restricted as I am from entering upon more extensive operations by the want of force, my hopes of terminating the war this year are vanished. Still, I think it probable that by the latter end of the campaign we shall be in possession of the provinces of New York, the Jerseys and Pennsylvania, though this in some measure must depend upon the successes of the northern Army. For notwithstanding it is my opinion the rebels will not be able to raise their Army voted last autumn, yet they will have a numerous militia in the field, in addition to their standing force, with a tolerable train of artillery...

Signed.

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution, Vol. XIV, Transcripts 1777*, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1976, pp. 64-65 from TNA, *Colonial Office: Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1776-1777* at CO5/94, f. 143.

**Excerpts of a Letter from Gen. Sir William Howe, Commander-in-Chief,
North America, to Gen. Sir Guy Carleton Indicating Minimal Support will be
Provided for Lt. Gen. John Burgoyne's Northern Campaign, New York, Apr. 5, 1777**

New York 5 April 1777

Sir, having but little expectation that I shall be able, from the want of sufficient strength in this Army, to detach Corps in the beginning of the campaign to act up Hudson's River, consistent with the operations already determined upon, the force your Excellency may deem expedient to advance beyond the frontiers after taking Ticonderoga will I fear have little assistance from hence to facilitate their approach. And as I shall probably be in Pennsylvania when that Corps is ready to advance into this province, it will not be in my power to communicate with the Officer commanding it so soon as I could wish. He must therefore pursue such measures as may from circumstances be judged most conducive to the advancement of His Majesty's service consistent with your Excellency's orders for his conduct...

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution, Vol. XIV, Transcripts 1777*, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1976, p. 66 from TNA, *Colonial Office: Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1776-1777* at CO5/94, f. 149.



Detail of A sketch of the northern parts of New Jersey, 1781, by John Hills,

Picture Source: *Library of Congress, Geography and Map Div.*

**Lt. Gen. Charles, Earl Cornwallis' Attack on Rebel Maj. Gen.
Benjamin Lincoln at Bound Brook, New Jersey, Apr. 12 – 13, 1777**

**Lt. Gen. Charles, Earl Cornwallis' After Orders to Prepare to Attack Rebel
Maj. Gen. Benjamin Lincoln's Force at Bound Brook, New Jersey, Apr. 13, 1777**

After Orders 9 °Clock at Night 12th April 1777
The Brigade of Guards/Grenadiers & Light Infantry Included/ to Assemble on the parade Near [Brig.]
Gen. [Edward] Mathews Quarters to Morrow Morning at 2. °Clock in order to March...

Source and Note: Order Book of the 1st Regt. of Foot Guards called *William Howe orderly book*, Great Britain. Army, 1776-1778, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Mich. This order identifies the troops assigned to Lord Cornwallis; raid on the Rebel post at Bound Brook on Apr. 13, 1777



Detail of Portrait of Gen. Benjamin Lincoln, 1784, by Charles Willson Peale

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons

**Excerpts of a Letter No. 53 from Gen. Sir William Howe, Commander-in-Chief,
North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American
Department, Describing the Battle of Bound Brook, New Jersey, Apr. 13, 1777**

N^o 53 Duplicate
My Lord...

New York 24th April 1777

[Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis, ever watchful to take Advantages of the Enemy's Situation, surprized and defeated, on the 13th Instant at Break of Day, a [Maj. Gen. Benjamin Lincoln's] Corps of the Rebels at Bound Brook, killed Thirty and took between eighty and ninety Prisoners including Officers, with three brass Field Pieces, the general Officer commanding there very narrowly escaped being of the Number. The Loss on our Part was only three Yagers and four Soldiers of the Light Infantry slightly wounded...

I have the Honor to be, Your Lordship's
most faithful and most Obedient Servant
W. Howe

Right Hon^{ble} Lord George Germain
&^c &^c &^c

Source and Note: *Records of the British Colonial Office Class 5, Part 5: The American Revolution, 1772-1784*, Ed. Randolph Boehm, University Publications Inc., Frederick, MD, 1972, pp. 319-321 and TNA, *Colonial Office: Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1776-1777* CO 5/94. The 42nd Lt. Inf. Co. participated in this battle as part of the 1st Lt. Inf. Bn.

**Corp. Thomas Sullivan's Account of Lt. Gen. Charles, Earl Cornwallis' Attack on Rebels at
Bound Brook, New Jersey, Apr. 12 – 13, 1777**

April 12th. Lieu^t. General [Charles, Earl] Cornwallis, Major General [James] Grant, Brigadier-General [Edward] Mathews and [Hon. Alexander] Leslie, with one Battalion [1st] of Light Infantry [including the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co.], one Battalion of British Grenadiers, a detachment of the Guards, the Light Dragoons, two Battallions of Hessians, the Chasseurs [Jägers] commanded by Colonel [Carl von] Donops, and three Battallions of the 2^d. Brigade, marched from Brunswick, between 8 and 9 o'clock at night, in order to Surprise a large body of the Enemy, stationed at Boundbrook, seven miles distance from that town, commanded by one [Maj.] General [Benjamin] Lincoln.

The Expedition was conducted with so much secrecy, that scarce any of the Inhabitants knew of the departure of the Troops till morning. They avoided the Roads, and got close by the Rebels Intrenchments before day; heard their Centinels cry (all's well) and were ordered to lie on their Arms till the Enemy should fire their morning gun.

Two Battallions of the 2^d. Brigade. i.e. 28th and 49th Battallions did not march till 3 in the morning, and took post on the right of the Army, for fear of any surprize from the Enemy in the Neighbourhood of Quibble-town or them parts.

The order being given for the attack y^e. Troops rushed on with their usual Intrepidity, and put the Rebels to Flight, killed about 100, took 73 Prisoners, among whom was one of Lincoln's Aid-de-Camps; he, himself escaping by the Goodness of his Horse; one Captain, one Lieu^t. and a man in Irons, sentenced by the Enemy⁶ to be shot that day, 3 Brass Cannon, a Quantity of arms, two Waggons loaded with Ammunition, a Number of Horses, 120 Head of cattle, Sheep, Hogs, &c. besides destroying 300 Barrels of Flour, several hogsheads of whiskey and Rum, with Sundry other Articles.

Our loss was 1 man killed and 5 wounded. The troops returned home in the Afternoon of the same day.

Source and Note: *From Redcoat to Rebel, the Thomas Sullivan Journal*, Ed. Joseph Lee Boyle, Heritage Books, Bowie (Md.), 1997, pp. 109-110. Corp. Sullivan was in the 49th Regt. in the 2nd Brigade.



Detail of "Plan of the area of Bound Brook, 20 April 1777," by Hessian Jäger Capt. Johann Ewald

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from *Keystone Library Network Digital Collections*

Officer's Account of Battle of Bound Brook, New Jersey, Apr. 13, 1777

Extract of a Letter from an Officer at New-York, April 9.

“The only Thing of any Consequence, that has happened lately, was a Surprise made on the 13th inst. at day-break, by [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis, on a Body of Rebels, at a Place called Bound-Brook, about six Miles from Brunswick, where he took 80 prisoners, three Pieces of Field-Artillery, several Horses, upwards of 100 Head of Fat Cattle, 200 sheep, and many Hogs, besides destroying a large Quantity of Rum, Pork, Flour, &c. all which was effected with the Loss of two Men killed and three wounded. What Number of the rebels were killed I have not heard, 50 we know of, besides the Wounded. I assure you the Game is nearly up with the poor Devils; never was there known such Desertion, hardly a Day passes that there do not come in 30 or 40 a day; and Yesterday only, there came in 206, all with their Arms. They also sometimes bring in their own Officers as prisoners. The Surprise I mentioned was so sudden, that the [Maj.] General [Benjamin Lincoln] who commanded them fled on our Approach, on Horseback, without either his Coat, Breeches, Shoes, or Saddle; his Aide-de-Camp was taken.”

Source and Note: *Northampton Mercury*, June 16, 1777, p. 2. The date of the officer’s letter is obviously incorrect.



Gen. Benjamin Lincoln’s Sword

Picture Source: *Smithsonian, Division of Military History and Diplomacy, National Museum of American History*

Rebel Account of Battle of Bound Brook, New Jersey on Apr. 13, 1777

PHILADELPHIA, April 16.

Extract of a letter from [American] Head Quarters, MORRIS TOWN, April 14.

THE enemy came out early yesterday morning from Brunswick, with an intent of surprising General [Benjamin] Lincoln at Bound Brook, and had like to effected their design by the carelessness of a militia guard upon one of the fords on the Rariton; but the general got a notice of their approach time enough to withdraw himself and most of his men to the mountain, just in the rear of the town. Our chief and almost only loss was two pieces of artillery, and with them Lieutenants Ferguson and Trumbull, with about 20 men of Col. [Thomas] Proctor’s [Continental Artillery] regiment. A party of horse was pushed so suddenly upon them, that they could not possibly get off. They staid about an hour and a half, and then went back to Brunswick. General Lincoln took his post again with a reinforcement.

Source: *Virginia Gazette*, Dixon and Hunter, May 2, 1777, p. 3. The 42nd Light Infantry Company was one of the British units involved in this attack as part of the 1st Light Infantry Battalion.

Lt. Gen. Charles, Earl Cornwallis’ Orders to Forward Gen. Sir William Howe’s Congratulations to the Troops, Including Capt. Hon. George Mackenzue’s 42nd Lt. Infantry Company, who Defeated Rebel Maj. Gen. Benjamin Lincoln’s Force at Bound Brook, New Jersey, Apr. 13, 1777

Head Quarters Brunswick 15th April 1777...

Lord Cornwallis has the pleasure to Acquaint the Troops employ’d in the Attack at Bounbrook, that his Excellency the Commander in Chief is Highly pleas’d with their Behaviour on that Occasion & has

Instructed him to Return them his Thanks for their Silence & Attention During the March & for their Spirit when they Arriv'd at the Enemy's Quarters.

Source and Note: Order Book of the 1st Regt. of Foot Guards called *William Howe orderly book*, Great Britain. Army, 1776-1778, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Mich. Bound Brook was about 10 miles northwest of (New) Brunswick. The participating units led by Lord Cornwallis were some Lt. Dragoons, 1st. and 2nd Lt. Inf. Bns., 1st Bn. Brit. Grenadiers, Guards Brig., 400 Hessian Grenadiers, and Jägers.

**Letter from Grenadier Lt. John Peebles, 42nd Regt., to his Father, John Peebles
Providing a Status of the Regt., Brunswick, New Jersey, May 7, 1777**

Brunswick New Jersey 7th May 1777

Dear Father

I have sent forty Guineas to New York to buy a Bill of that value if it can be got to be inclosed herein. if a Bill can't be got I have beg'd the favor of Cap^t John Graham of the 71st [Highland] Reg^t who was formerly in our Reg^t to take the Cash home with him & pay it to you or your order as soon after his arrival in Scotland as he can ~

I wrote you last month & I believe the letter with some others will go by Cap^t Graham who expected to sail some time ago.

We are all quiet here in Quarters yet where I suppose we will remain till the latter end of the Month, about which time I imagine we will take the field – There has been an Expedition lately into New England, Under the Command of Gen^l [William] Tryon & [Brig. Gen.] Sir Will^m Erskine, they landed with about 1500 Men near Hartford in Connecticut, march'd about 20 Miles into unto the Country & burnt a large magazine of Provisions & Stores at a place called Danbury, they had a Smart Action with the Rebels on their return to the Ships & beat them with great loss, having one of their Generals & a great number of their men kill'd. the loss on our Side amounts to about 100 kill'd & wounded –

I beg my love to my Sister & her Boys who I hope are well my compl^{ts} to all friends and I am

Dear Father

Your Affect^e Son

JPeebles

Source: NRS, *Papers of the Cuninghame Family of Thorntoun*, Letter No. 2 at GD21/489 f. 3.

The 42nd Regt. in the Battle of Piscataway, New Jersey, May 10, 1777

**Excerpt of Letter from Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling to Gen. Lord John Murray, Col., 42nd Regt.,
Describing 42nd Regt. in the Battle of Piscataway, New Jersey, May 10, 1777**

Copy Lieu^t. Co^l. Stirling to Lord John Murray

Dated Amboy Camp 24th June 1777.

My Lord

...our Situation at Piscataqua, continued to be as bad as when I wrote last: and four times since that period did the Rebels Attack us in force, the last time was on the 10th of May when 2000 men under two Rebel Generals came with an intention of Sweeping us off, but they were disapointed, they had not the Satisfaction of Driving in one Centry, tho the wood was full of them, the Picquet Supported the Guard, and I ordered two Companies to Support them with orders to push the Rebels, while I marched with 2 companies and got upon their Right Flanks. This put them in confusion which I took the advantage of and Marched up to them before they had time to know my Numbers, and after a Sharp contest of near an hour, when they were five to one we drove them to their left when they attempted to form, but four companies of Light Infantry making in all about 100 men, who happened to be cantoned a Mile on our Right appeared on their front, and begun firing, and our pressing them on their right, they began to break

and run, we pursued them for three Mile, to their Camp, which they began to Strike in great confusion, night coming on we were ordered back to our Canonment, the Reg^t. lost 3 Serjeants 6 Rank & file killed, 2 Serj^{ts}. & 16 wounded, [Brevet] Major [Duncan] Macpherson got a Slight scratch on the head from one of our Light Infantry who was Drunk and took him for a Rebel, Lieu^t. [William] Stewart who behaved very Gallantly, had the Misfortune to have his Thigh broke, but is doing pretty well, tho he will never be fit for service, if your Lordship can procure him an Establishment at home, I should be glad of it, we took a Cap^t. and 36 men, how many were killed I cannot exactly Say, but the Rebels acknowledged with near 200 killed wounded & Missing, we got the Generals thanks upon this occasion, as we have three times in particular before...

I beg to offer my Comp^{lts}. to Miss [Mary] Murray and I am My Lord
 Your Lop: mo: Obed^t. & mo: Obed^t. Serv^t.
 Signed/ Tho^s. Stirling

Source: *Lord John Murray Papers*.



Maj. Gen. Sir Thomas Stirling after Benjamin West

Picture Source: The Black Watch Castle & Museum.

Excerpt of Letter from Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling, 42nd Regt., to his Brother, Sir William Stirling of Ardoch, Describing the Battle of Piscataway, New Jersey, May 10, 1777

Amboy June 25th 1777

My Dear Sir Will^m

I had the pleasure of receiving your letter of 31st January, and two days ago that of 4th March, I wrote a few weeks ago an answer to L. [Lady] Stirling's letter; as I would upon every occasion write to some of my friends to give them accts of us I delayed answering your letter till now, we have had a most trying winter quarters but happily overcame all difficulty, & danger, repeated were the attacks the Rebels made on us some account of which I wrote, but the latest was the most serious which happened on the 10th of last month; 2000 of them under two Gen^{ls} [William Maxwell and Adam Stephens] attacked our Piquets in the wood where most of our former attacks had been, our men supported themselves Gallantly (not one sentry being drove in) until they were reinforced by a Guard and those by two Comp^{ys} which I

ordered up while I marched myself with two Comp^{ys} out upon their right flank & attacked them, those in the front pushing them also at the same time, this put them in confusion, not believing we would be the aggressors, which I took the advantage of & pushed on with the two Comp^{ys} before the Rebels had time to recollect themselves or know our numbers and after a sharp contest of $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour when they were five to one they began to give way & move to toward their left where they attempted to form and come around our right but about 100 of the Light Inf^y coming up in their front began firing & we pushing them on their right they broke & were we pursuing them for 3 miles to their Camp which they began and struck in a great hurry, night coming on we were ordered back to our quarters by Lord Cornwallis who had come up on the firing, it was with great difficulty I could get our men to stop from the pursuit & was forced to send Officers and ride myself into the front of the firing to stop them as I write to you only it will not be affectation to say never have men behaved with greater spirit or determined resolution than ours did upon this occasion or indeed through all the several affairs we have had & it is a doubt with me if any 500 of his Majesty's troops would have maintained themselves in an open scattered cantonement 2 miles from any other troops for 5 months without allowing the Enemy even to gain an advantage, except this Corps, we had 3 Serg^{ts} & 6 priv^{ts} killed, 2 Off^{rs} ([Brevet-] Maj^r [Duncan] M^cPherson & L^t [William] Stewart) 2 Serg^{ts} & 15 wounded. We took a Rebel Captⁿ & 36 prisoners, how many we killed I cannot say but the Rebels acknowledged within 1 or 200 killed wounded and missing we got the Gen^{ls} thanks on this occasion as we have three times in particular before, since that the rebels never have once looked at us...

Source and Notes: NRS, *Papers of the Family of Stirling Home Drummond Moray of Abercairny* at GD 24/1/458/7. The sergeants killed at Piscataway on May 10, 1777 were Angus M^cIntosh (Maj. Murray's Co.), Simon Lawson (Capt. Erskine's), and Duncan Cumming (Capt. Smith's). The privates killed were Andrew M^cKenzie and Donald M^cDonald (Gen. Murray's), Donald M^cDonald, Donald Cameron and Dougald M^cIntyre (Capt. Erskine's) and Donald Chisholme (Maj. M^cPherson's).



Detail from Wax Sculpture Portrait of Maj. William Murray, circa 1773-1774, by Samuel Percy, Dublin

Picture Source: *National Gallery of Scotland* at <https://www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/3362/william-murray-1737-1778-soldier>

Letter from Maj. William Murray, 42nd Regt., to his Brother, Mungo Murray of Lintrose, Describing the Actions of the Regiment at the Battle of Piscataway, New Jersey, May 10, 1777

Dear Brother

I received yours of the 29th Dec^r Yesterday – I am Glad to Find all Friends are Well – Our Situation since the beginning of last January has been very Disagreeable, Our Quarters Extended for above Miles, in Scattered Houses, Which Incouraged the Enemy to Attack us Frequently, But by being very Vigilant, and neither Officer nor Sol^s Throwing off his Cloaths During the Winter, we never were Surprised But on the Contrair, Drove the Enemy every time they Attacked us, We lost a good many men,

and L^t [William] Stewart from Athol – had his Thigh brock, and [Brevet-]Major [Duncan] M^cPherson was Slightly Wounded – We are now Incamped and expects to be in motion every Hour so you most excuse the Brevity of this Letter – I have Drawn my Subsistance up to the 24 Dec^r 76 you wd be so good as Writ the Agent and Apply for my Subsistance from him from the 24th Dec^r to the 24 June

Williamson is Dead his money is £ – 18.11 – Which youl be so Good as pay to his Friends and Charge it to me.

Capⁿ M^cKenzie is perfectly recovered, and all your Acquaintances are in perfectly good Health, I am much obliged to you and M^{rs} Murray for Your Attention to Kitty - I beg you will write me more Frequent, and send the Letters inclosed to the Agent, who will forward them by every Packet, I hear of Doctor Murrays death, and Miss Mary Murrays being Married to M^r Belches, a very good Way of Settling a Law Plea I am now the Oldest [*i.e.* Senior] Major in America am looking out Sharpe for Preferment, If they put any man over my Head, this will be my last Campaign If they prefer me I will Stick by them, in Order some day perhaps to Introduce some of your Sons into the World, Which is the greatest motive I have in View by remaining in the Service Colo: Murray is arrived But I have not yet seen him My Kindest Compliments to Mrs Murray and All Friends I am

D^r Brother

Yours most Aff^{ly}

W^m Murray

Piscataway 5 June 1777

Source: NRS, *Murray of Lintrose Papers* at GD 68/117/004-005.

Excerpt of Letter from Brevet-Maj. William Grant, Commander, 2nd (Provisional) Battalion, 42nd Regt., to Gen. Lord John Murray, Col., 42nd Regt., Describing the Actions of the Regiment in the Battle of Piscataway, New Jersey, May 10, 1777

Dated Piscataway near Brunswick
5th June 1777

My Lord

... The last time of these attacks was indeed a very warm one it happened on Saturday the 10th of May, the Rebels from the Information of Prisoners consisted of 2000 which had been collected from the Neighbouring posts of Quibbletown, Lamptown, Westfield, Chatham & Commanded by brigadier Generals, [Adam] Stevens & [William] Maxwell, attacked our Picquet, which was in a Short time Supported by two Companies, advanced into the Wood, where Notwithstanding the very Superior Number of the Rebels, they Maintained their ground untill they were joined by the rest of the Reg^t when a very heavy fire commenced, which obliged the Rebels to retreat in the greatest confusion toward their left, where they fell in with Six Companies of Light Infantry Quartered between Piscataway & Bonham Town, who were advancing to Support the 42^d the whole of the Rebels now gave way, and fled with the utmost precipitation, our Troops pursuing them close to their encampment (on the heights near Metuchen Meeting house) The Ardour of the Troops was so great, that it was with difficulty they could be restrained from Storming their Encampment, but night coming on, they were ordered to return to their cantonments, in the affair [Brevet] Major [Duncan] M^cPherson & Lieu^t [William] Stewart were wounded, three Serj^{ts} & Six privates killed Two Serj^{ts} & 15 privates wounded. The Six light Infantry Companies had only one Serj^t wounded, they had none killed as they did not join us till after the Pursuit begun; the loss of the Rebels was very considerable, I saw a great many of them Slain and wounded I went along, besides an Officer and 36 taken prisoner we have been informed Since that action, by Spys & well affected people in the Neighbourhood; that the rebels lost on that occasion near 300 including many Officers of different Ranks.

Your Lordship would observe by Gen. [Sir William] Howes dispatches to [Sec. of State] Lord Germaine, that the R. H. Reg^t acted a very brilliant and capital part, in every action & skirmish they had

the honor to be engaged in, throughout the whole of the last campaign, and during their winter Quarters, that Single Battalion, consisting only of Seven companies, the grenadier & Light companies, are always detached & Cap^t [John] Smiths are prisoners with the rebels took above 500 prisoners & put many to the sword since the beginning of Last campaign, and for their very important Services, they had the honor to receive the commander in Chiefs' particular Thanks three different in all the orderly books of the Army. in short the whole of the general Officers, and every corps in the Army, are very Sensible of the gallantry of the Royal Highland Reg^t; The Hessian Troops are remarkably fond of them, they are indeed too brave, insomuch as their officers, sometimes can't easily take them off, even when they see that they pursue the enemy too far, I am well persuaded, that the conduct of this Corps if properly represented, will not Escape the Notice of His Most gracious majesty. I must not omit telling y^r Lop: that on the 26th May [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis & [Maj] Gen^l [James] Grant were out early in the Morning with a Detachment of Light Horse & Light Infantry with Some field pieces, to reconnoiter the Enemy, whom they Approached pretty near, this occasioned a smart Cannonade from both sides, Gen^l Grant had a narrow Escape, his horse was shot dead, under him, by a Cannon ball, on that occasion we had no men killed & but two Slightly wounded.

Agreeable to your Lops: desire I have inclosed a List of the Officers as appointed to the different companies of the Reg^t as also as a return of the killed and wounded Since the 27th of Aug^t 76 to the 10th of May 77, both days Inclusive.

I have the honor to be with great regard
My Lord

Your Lordships most faithful & most obed^t Serv^t
William Grant

R^t Hon^{ble} Gen^l Lord John Murray }

42 ^d Foot return of the Killed & Wounded Since the 22 nd Aug ^t 76 to the 10 th May 1777 both days inclusive Piscataway 23 ^d May 1777						
	Killed			Wounded		
	Sergeants	Drummer	Rank & File	Sergeants	Drummer	Rank & File
Total N ^o Killed and Wounded	4	1	26	13	2	192

Officers wounded on York Island 16th Sept^r 76 [Brevet-] Major [Duncan] M^cPherson, Cap^t [John] M^cIntosh and Ensign [Alexander] M^cKenzie, who died some days after of his wounds – wounded at the Taking of Fort Washington, Lieu^{ts} [Normand] M^cLeod [Patrick] Graham & [Alexander] Grant The 10th May 1777. Wounded Major M^cPherson & Lieu^t [William] Stewart W^m Grant [Brevet-] Major 42^d or R.H. Reg^t

Source: *Lord John Murray Papers*.

Chap. James M^cLagan's Account of 42nd Regt at the Battle of Piscataway, New Jersey, May 10, 1777

Dated Piscataway 31st May. 1777

My Lord....

Piscataway is a Small village not having half room enough for the Reg^t, it is scattered and much exposed to the Enemy's attacks, there having been no other Troops, within three Miles of it till of late, the consequences were what might naturally be Expected, the Rebels often Attacked our quarters tho they

made very little of it, of these there was a Remarkable one the 1st of March when the Enemy had six killed a considerable number wounded, and a L^t Co^l M^cKay who commanded them mortally.

Their grand Attack upon us they reserved for the 10th of May, when about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, a body of about 2,000 of them attacked our Picquet at once. L^t W^m Stewart [Capt. Archibald Erskine's Co.] who was at the head of this little body, opposed them with great Spirit, they knew that their Companions, (who scarce had their Cloaths or Cartridge boxes off day or night, Since we came here / would dart to their assistance, at the first fire, and without waiting any further orders / for in our situation he is the prettiest fellow who is first upon the field of Action, where they form so far as the nature of the present Service requires / ; they did not know that the Enemy were so Numerous.

Before the Picquet could have been properly Supported L^t Stewart had his right thigh broke by a Musket shot about 4 inches above the knee, three serjeants and Six Men were killed, [Brevet] Major [Duncan] M^cPherson & 17 Non-commissioned Officers & Soldiers were all wounded – While assistance was a coming the Enemy came up to Lieu^t Stewart, some of them were for Bayoneting him & others not, two Rebels were engaged in carrying away Serj^t Duncan M^cGrigor [Brevet-Maj. Duncan M^cPherson's Co.], a steady Veteran from Balquhiddy, who was also wounded. But the foremost of the Reg^t coming up, one of them fled and the other was going to follow when M^cGrigor took him by the hair with one hand and told him *"you stayed when I did not want you, and now you shall carry me out of the field on your back"* he made his word good.

All that were killed & wounded of the 42^d were hurt before a Sufficient Number came up to drive the Enemy out of the bushes & Lurking places where they first fixed themselves, & took their aim Unseen and Screened from our Shot. The Highlanders Pursued them for 2 miles or 2 Miles & a half, and could scarce be prevailed upon to return when the sun set. their fires brought the Corps that were Stationed to the right & left of them, but the Pursuit was so rapid that they came too late to engage with the Enemy. Tho the rebels have unarmed Men and Waggons of Purpose to carry their dead and wounded away lest we should see them, a Parcel of them were seen dead on the Ground; a wounded Officer & 35 Men were taken prisoners; a flag of Truce came to enquire how many fell into our hands; they own there are 40 they cannot account for, they do not tell what their loss is, but it is believed to be [between] 2, & 300 the number of the 42^d that Engaged were about 250 men.

The Alacrity with which the Highlanders fight, is truly Amazing, they seem to Entertain no other thought on those occasions, but that of annoying the Enemies of their King and Country. All the Troops behave well, but they seem to make the Cause their own, so that persuasion & authority are only Necessary to temper their Zeal, and impetuosity & keep them from following too far – We sometimes / at least Some of us / Mistook the right King, but we were always friends to King & Monarchy in General, the American Rebellion, on the other hand is intirely Selfish and void of every Spark of generosity that ever Graced the human Nature.

The American Character till of late years was the love of Riches & pleasure, to procure which they Scroupled no pains, neglected no means, right, or wrong, they distinguished themselves by their litigiousness, deceit & Reluctancy to pay their debts; when we got Canada from the French, they were Seized with the Demon of Ambition, and never Since lost Sight of the Idea of Independency & Supreme power, few of them have any religion at all, the Northern colonies assume a Great Deal of the Appearance of it, but are intirely void of the Life & Soul of it; The Southern Colonies have neither the one nor the Other [they] being free of these restraints, have given their Appetites & Passions full Scope. their injustice, cruelty, & venom against the few friends to Government, have no bounds but that of their power; as they Seem to have entirly Exchanged God for Mammon they show the greatest Anxiety to preserve Life, for the sake of the Riches and Pleasures of this world, and the Power & honor they expect in the Grand Republic. For these reasons, tho they would Risk their Salvation to destroy the Kings Friends, yet for the sake of their world they don't fight bravely and desperately as others would do in their situation, but would fain do it from Lurking holes, by Stratagems, and by the hands of Strangers, such as Some British & French more Germans and Multitudes of Irish, They are out of Sight, our Superiors in Cunning, guile & deceit, but seem to come far short of us In nerves & Spirits as well as honesty - The Friends of Government are not Numerous any where, the love of Life & property made them very Slow in

risquing any thing at first, & now they can do little if anything, tho' they are most Barbarously used in person & property, there seems to be no Montrose among them, the few we find at home are seldom to be depended upon, as they are ready to act the Spy & the Enemy whenever opportunity offers; as there appears among other Proofs from many having been taken in Arms against the King with their protection in their Pockets. Many have come over from the enemy with their Arms, but there is scarce a Native American among them; Several corps of them are raised or raising for the Kings Service.

The Commission your Lop: honored me with respecting Seeds of Trees, Shrubs, and Flowers, for a certain Nobleman, I never lost Sight of; but in the places in which the Army Act, Almost everything is laid waste, unhinged, & all men live in Uncertainty and hurry; but if I live till peace and Security are again restored, I shall not fail to do it in the best Manner I am capable of.

A Fleet from Britain with part of the Reinforcements, are arrived at New York, but our Additional Companies are not among them, tho we need them much; many of our Men being dead or unfit for Service in Consequence of wounds, carried off by the Fevers & or now lying in them, in consequence probably of Fatigue & bad Quarters; They however that are in health, are as full of Spirit as ever men were. I have the honor to be with the highest Esteem. My Lord

Your Lops: most obe^d & most humble Servant
James M^cLagan

the R^t Hon^{ble} Lord John Murray

Source and Note: *Lord John Murray Papers*. Sgt. Duncan M^cGregor was discharged Nov. 19, 1778.

**Excerpt of Memorial of Lt. William Stewart, Capt. Archibald Erskine's Company,
42nd Regt., Describing the Battle of Piscataway, New Jersey, May 10, 1777**

To the Right Hon^{ble} Lord Amherst General and Commander in Chief of all
His Majestys Forces in Britian &c. &c. &c –

The Memorial of Lieutenant William Stewart Late of the 42^d Regiment
Humbly Shewith

That your Lordship's Memorialist
Has been an Officer in His Majestys Service upwards of twenty years, was during the last war at the taking of Martinico and the Havanna

That your Lordship's Memorialist
Served in America under the Command of His Excellency Sir William Howe, was present with the 42^d Regiment in every material Action until the tenth day of May 1777; when having The Command of the Picquet Guard (Consisting of Forty men) in the Cantonment of Piscataway in the Jerseys he was attacked by a Body of Rebels, who endeavoured to Dislodge the Picquet and Break in upon the Cantonments

That towards the Close of the Action your Lordships Memorialist was wounded with a Rifle Ball which Passed through the Lower part of his thigh and Shattered the Bone, So as utterly to Deprive him of the use of his Limb. which your Lordship's memorialist only Consider as the Chance of War...

And your Lordships Memorialist
as in duty bound Shall every pray

W^m Stewart

Source: TNA, Memorial of Lt. William Stewart, late of the 42nd Regt, to Lord Amherst Undated (approximately April 1780)), *Baron Jeffrey Amherst, Commander in Chief, Papers* at WO 34/162, f.148.

Account of the Battle by Lt. John Macdonald, Maj. William Murray's

Company, 1st Battalion, 42nd Regt., Piscataway, May 10, 1777

On the 10th of May the rebels made a formidable attack on our picquet in front, and took the officer and sergeant prisoners, after killing or wounding most of the men. When I came up with major Murray's company I released them, and took a wounded officer with thirteen rebels prisoners. Our people were so enraged at their continual harassing that post, and in particular at this last attempt, that I, finding them in humour to bayonet the prisoners, took some time to put them in discreet hands, with positive orders not to hurt them. By this little delay I missed the regiment, which halted at a proper distance. I followed a firing, which I found to be a few mad fellows of ours and a company of Light Infantry, that had joined them and followed the chase too far, and to no good purpose. When I came I used all arguments that would occur to me to make them return to the regiment, but all in vain, until they approached an encampment of the enemy where only a tent was standing, and saw them forming behind their encampment. I then told them in a very serious manner that cannon would soon appear, and hoped they would not their lives; thus I at last got the better of their impetuosity, and retired a little. At that instant my son [Vol. William MacDonald] joined me, with a sergeant and fifteen men. It seems [Lt.] Colonel [Thomas] Stirling, missing me, asked the lad where I was, the latter answering that he left me giving charge of prisoners to Corporal Paul Macpherson, and that he believed that I was forward. The Colonel ordered him to take a party and find me, and directed I should declare his displeasure to these men for venturing so far from the regiment, and, at their peril, to return immediately. In this place, gratitude leads me to say that major Murray's company of the 42d was the most alert, most decent, and best principled soldiers I ever had the honour to command or be connected with."

Source: "Major John Macdonald, Selections from his Autobiography" Part III, by Emma Rose Mackenzie, writing under the "*nom de plume*" M.A. Rose in *The Celtic Magazine* The Celtic Magazine, No. CXIII. March 1885. Vol. X, pp. 221-222.

Excerpt of Notebook of Lt. John Peebles, 42nd Grenadier Company, Describes the Battle of Piscataway, New Jersey, May 10 and 12, 1777

Saturday 10th. May The 42^d. at Piscataway were attack'd in the afternoon. – About 1500 or 2000 of the Rebels collected from their different Quarters with an intention to cut off the 42^d. – About 4 o'clock in the afternoon they were discover'd with [in a] Wood in front of their Post & fir'd upon, on which the advanced & attack'd the Picquet and a heavy fire ensued – The Company's turn'd out to their support & dash'd into the Wood upon the Enemy – the Light Infantry Companys in that Q^r. came up to their Assistance & the 28th. Reg^t. turn'd out briskly to the support of the 42^d. who had by this time broke thro' the Rebels & put them to the Rout & pursued them to their Camp at Metuchen Meeting house (about 4 miles) before they halted The 42^d. suffered as follows [Brevet] Major [Duncan] M'Pherson slightly wounded in the head by a Light Infantry Man – Lt. [William] Stewart who had the Picquet shot thro the thigh, bone brok. 3 Serj^{ts}. & 6 R & file dead, 2 Serj^{ts}. & 15 wounded – of the Enemy about 30 found dead in different places & 28 taken prisoners – deserters that have come in since [illeg] say they lost a great many, & a flag of truce that came in this day the 12th. say they have a Major 2 Capt^s. & 70 missing, & begs we will bury their dead –

Source: *Peebles' Journal* Entries for May 10 and 12, 1777 and published in *John Peebles' American War*, Ed. Ira D. Gruber, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg (Pa.), 1998, pp. 111-112.

Corp. Thomas Sullivan's Account of the 2nd Brigade (Including Corp. Sullivan's 49th Regt.) Supporting the 42nd Highlanders at the Battle of Piscataway, New Jersey, May 10, 1777

May 12th. [10th]. About 5 o'clock in the Afternoon a Body of 2000 Rebels, commanded by Brigadier Generals [Maj. Gen. Adam] Stevens and [William] Maxwell, attacked the Picquet of the 42^d. Regiment, or Roya[l] Highlanders, at Piscataway, commanded by Lieu^t. Colonel [Thomas] Stirling. The

Picquet, which was in short time supported by two Companies, advanced upon the Enemy into the Woods; where, notwithstanding the very superior numbers of them, they maintained their ground until they were joined by the rest of the Regiment, when a heavy fire commenced; which obliged the Rebels to retreat in the greatest confusion toward their left, where they fell in with the Light Infantry Companies, that were that time Quartered at Piscataway, who were advancing to support the 42^d.

The 2^d. Brigade of British upon hearing the firing marched from their Quarters and fell in upon the Left of the Light Infantry, with 2 three Pounders. The whole of the Enemy now gave way, and Fled with the utmost precipitation, we pursued them close to their Encampment, (in the heights near Metuchen Meeting-house,) which they began to strike with the greatest terror. It being almost dark, the Troops quitted the Pursuit and returned to their Cantonements.

In this attack we had two Officers and 26 men killed and wounded. The loss of the Rebels must have been very considerable, as upwards of 40 were found next morning, dead in the Woods, besides an Officer and 36 men taken Prisoners.

The Royal Highlanders deserved much praise, in this as well as every other place where try'd upon a like occasion.

It is worthy of Remark, that the brave, tho' unfortunate Lieu^t. [William] Stuart of that Regiment, who was wounded in the above action, had been three times attacked, when commanding the Picquet at the same Post.

Source and Note: *From Redcoat to Rebel, the Thomas Sullivan Journal*, Ed. Joseph Lee Boyle, Heritage Books, Bowie (Md.), 1997, pp. 113-114. Corp. Sullivan was in the 49th Regt. in the 2nd Brigade.

Col. David Stewart of Garth's Second-Hand Account of the Battle of Piscataway, New Jersey, May 10, 1777

On the 10th of May, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, the American Generals, [William] Maxwell and [Adam] Stephens, attacked the Royal Highland regiment with 2000 men. Advancing with great secrecy, and being completely covered by the nature of the country, their approach was not perceived till they rushed forward on a small level piece of ground in front of the picquets. These they attacked with such promptitude, that the men had hardly time to seize their arms. Notwithstanding this unexpected and sudden attack, they kept the enemy in check till the picquets in reserve came to their assistance. Pushing forward fresh numbers, the enemy became at length mixed with the picquets, who retired, disputing every foot, to afford more time for the regiment to turn out. The soldiers were less in readiness than the picquets, being all employed in different avocations, or taking the rest they could not enjoy at night. But the resistance made by the picquets allowed them time to assemble, and the enemy were driven back, with great precipitation, leaving upwards of 200 men in killed and wounded. The Highlanders, pursuing with great eagerness, were with difficulty recalled, and were only prevented by the approach of night from pushing on to attack the enemy's camp. The loss of the Highlanders was 3 serjeants and 9 privates killed: [Brevet-Maj.] Captain Duncan Macpherson, Lieutenant William Stewart, and 3 serjeants and 30 privates wounded. * The lieutenant and 3 serjeants were disabled for life, as well as many of the men from the severe wounds naturally to be expected from such close fighting. Six serjeants, all men of the best conduct and character were considered a great loss to the regiment.

* On this occasion, Sergeant [Duncan] Macgregor, whose company [Brevet-Maj. Duncan M'Pherson's] was immediately in the rear of the picquet, rushed forward to their support, with a few men who happened to have their arms in their hands, when the enemy commenced the attack. Being severely wounded, he was left insensible on the ground. When the picquet was overpowered, and the few survivors forced to retire. Macgregor, who had that day put on a new jacket with silver lace, having, besides large silver buckles in his shoes, and a watch, attracted the notice of an American soldier, who deemed him a good prize. The retreat of his friends not allowing him time to strip the serjeant on the spot, he thought the shortest way to take him on his back to a more convenient distance. By this time Macgregor began to recover; and, perceiving whither the man was carrying him, drew his dirk, and grasping him by the throat, swore that he

would run him through the breast, if he did not turn back and carry him to the camp. The American, finding this argument irresistible, complied with the request, and meeting Lord [Charles] Cornwallis (Who had come to the support of the regiment when he heard the firing) and Colonel [Thomas] Stirling [42nd Regt.], was thanked for the care of the sergeant: but he honestly told them, that he only conveyed him thither to save his own life. Lord Cornwallis gave him liberty to go whithersoever he chose. His Lordship procured for the serjeant a situation under Government at Leith.

Source and Note: *Sketches of the Character, Manners, and Present State of the Highlanders of Scotland; with Details of the Military Service of the Highland Regiments*, Vol. I, Second Edition, Col. David Stewart, Archibald Constable and Co., Edinburgh, 1822, Google Books, pp. 381-382. Although written well after the American war, Stewart used accounts from the regiment's surviving participants to record the events.

General Orders Commendation to the 42nd Regt. by Gen. Sir William Howe, Commander-in-Chief, North America, for “Sperritted Behaviour” at Battle of Piscataway, Brunswick, May 10, 1777

Head Quarters Brunswick May 14th 1777...

His Excelency the Commander in Chief Returns his Thanks to the 42nd Reg^t. & Detachment of Light Infantry for their Sperritted Behaviour the 10th Ins^t. When thay Defated a Body of the Enemy much Superior to them In numbers & he is Like Wise Much Pleased at the A Lertness With Wich the 2nd Brigade Got Under Armes to Support the 42nd –

Source and Notes: *William Howe orderly book*, Great Britain. Army, 1776-1778, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Mich. This order book, which the orders of Maj. Gen. James Grant of Ballindalloch, Lt. Gen. Charles, Earl Cornwallis, commanding in New Jersey, and of Gen. Sir William Howe, Commander-in-Chief of the British Army in North America, is actually an order book belonging to the 1st Regt. of Foot Guards.

Excerpt of Letter from Maj. Gen. James Grant of Ballindalloch to Maj. Gen. Edward Harvey, Adjutant General of His Majesty's Forces, Describing Rebel Impressions of the 42nd Highlanders, Piscataway, New Jersey, May 10, 1777

New Brunswick
7th June 1777

Dear [Lt.] General [Edward Harvey, Adjutant Gen. of the Forces]...

The Jersey Winter has been pretty alert, but We have gone through it Handsomely, the Rebels have fail'd in every thing they have attempted and the superiority of the Kings Troops, has been constantly kept up. We have now got under Canvass, to my great Joy & satisfaction for this Post of which I shall send you a Sketch by the next Packet was no doubt weak in every Part, but it was a Position of necessity not of choice, & tho' the Rebels avowedly crossed the Delawar, to oblige us to quit the Jerseys by destroying us in those Cantonments, they never have been able to make an Impression any where. They made two Attempts upon Piscataway the Quarters of the 42nd – but were repulsed both times & pursued with great spirit, even a little too much Zeal, but the eagerness of the Men who could not be brought off luckily was attended with no bad consequence & has had on the contrary a very good Effect, for the Yankies say in talking of the Highlanders I vow now it is a wicked Regiment, they would kill us all if they could...

have the Honor to be D^r. General Your most Humble Servant

Gen^l. Harvey

[James Grant]

Source: *James Grant Papers of Ballindalloch Castle, Scotland*; Library of Congress Microcopy, Reel 28, Container/Box 29 MFilP/GD494/1/Box 29, Letter Book No. 4, folios 15-16. Transcribed by Todd Braisted, Facebook posting, June 7, 2015.



Detail of Portrait of Alexander Hamilton, 1806, by John Trumbull

Source: Wikimedia Commons, from Washington Univ. Law School

Excerpt of Letter from Rebel Lt. Col. Alexander Hamilton to Gouverneur Morris, New York Committee of Correspondence, Regarding the Battle of Piscataway, New Jersey, May 10, 1777

Head Quarters Morris Town [New Jersey]
May 12th 1777

Dear Sir...

An attack was made upon their pickets near Bonum Town. We have no regular account of this matter, but what we have had is to this purport: That a party under Col: [William] Cook [12th Penna. Regt.] attacked one of their pickets and drove it in: That it was reinforced and sallied out again and was beaten a second time: That it received a second reinforcement and made a second sally: and, That [Brig.] General [William] Maxwell who conducted the affair; perceiving the matter growing too serious by continual succours coming to them from Brunswick and Amboy, thought it best to retire which he did in good order, the enemy keeping a respectful distance, during the whole time of their retrogradation. 'Tis said we lost between 20 & 30, killed, wounded and a few stragglers taken; and 'tis also asserted that some of our officers counted nineteen dead bodies of the enemy on the field. The Royal Highlanders had taken possession of a wood, by way of ambuscade, out of which they were expelled by our troops. Here I believe the principal loss was sustained on both sides.

I am with great regard Sir Your Obedient servant
A Hamilton

Source: "From Alexander Hamilton to Gouverneur Morris, 12 May 1777," Founders Online, National Archives (http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Hamilton/01-01-02-01_59, ver. 2013-12-02). Source: *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton*, vol. 1, 1768–1778, ed. Harold C. Syrett. New York: Columbia University Press, 1961, pp. 251 – 253.

News Account of the Battle of Piscataway, New Jersey, May 10, 1777

Last Saturday Se'nnight [a week ago] about 4 o'Clock in the Afternoon, a Body of 2000 Rebels, which had been collected from the neighbouring Posts of Quibbletown, Samptown, Westfield, Chatam, &c. commanded by Brigadier Generals [Adam] Stevens and [William] Maxwell, attacked the Picquet of the 42d, or Royal Highland regiment, at Piscataway, commanded by Lieut. Colonel [Thomas] Stirling. ---
- The Picquet, which was in a short Time supported by two Companies, advanced into the Wood, where, notwithstanding the very superior Number of the rebels, they maintained their Ground until they were joined by the Rest of the Regiment, when a very heavy Fire commenced; which obliged the Rebels to retreat in the greatest Confusion toward their Left, where they fell in with the Light Infantry, quartered between Piscataway and Bonham-Town, who were advancing to support the 42d. -- The Whole of the Rebels now gave Way, and fled with the utmost Precipitation, our troops pursuing them close to their

Encampment, (in the Heights near Metuchen Meeting House) which they began to strike with the greatest Terror.

The Ardour of the Troops was so great, that it was with difficulty they could be restrained from storming the Encampment; but Night coming on, they were ordered to return to their Cantonments, in this Affair we had two Officers and 26 men killed and wounded. The Loss of the Rebels must have been very considerable, as upwards of 40 were found next Morning in the Woods, besides an Officer and 36 Men taken Prisoners.

Too much Praise cannot be given to the 42d Regiment, for their very spirited and intrepid Behaviour, on this as well as on every other Occasion, where they have been engaged, as well as the Light Infantry, who behaved with their usual Bravery and Impetuosity.

It is worthy of Remark, that the Brave but unfortunate Lieutenant [William] Stewart, who was wounded in this Action, has been three Times attacked when commanding the Picket at the same Post.

Source: *New-York Gazette and the Weekly Mercury*, May 19, 1777.

Rebel Account of Battle of Piscataway, New Jersey, May 10, 1777

Extract of a letter from Morristown, dated May 13, 1777.

“Saturday May 10) our people had a brush with the enemy, in which we lost a few men; but did the enemy a good deal of hurt. Sunday morning early, general [William] Maxwell, with 500 men, attacked and drove their out guards near Piscataway, when a reinforcement coming up to the enemy, they formed. A hot engagement ensued, which lasted about half an hour, when the enemy gave way, and our troops pursued; but the enemy, as usual, poured out so fast with a second reinforcement that our people were obliged to give up the pursuit and secure a good retreat, for they were nearly surrounded. Yesterday three deserters came over to us, who were in the action; they say their killed and wounded were about 200. Among the former was a major, belonging to the Highlanders [incorrect, see Note]. Our loss is one officer and nine privates missing, very few wounded...The enemy allow, by a flag that is come in, that they had killed and wounded one major mortally wounded, one captain, two lieutenants, and 65 privates.

Source and Note: *Virginia Gazette*, (Purdie) May 30, 1777, p.3. Brevet-Maj. Duncan M^cPherson was slightly wounded pursuing the retreating rebels and not killed.

Rebel Account of Battle of Piscataway, New Jersey, May 10, 1777

BALTIMORE, May 20.

Extract of a letter from a general officer at post near Bonham town, dated May 11.

I have the pleasure to inform you, that yesterday afternoon part of my division attacked the Royal Highlanders and six companies of light infantry. It was a bold enterprise, they being posted within two miles of Bonhamtown, and about the same distance from Brunswick. The action continued about an hour and a half. The continental troops behaved well, drove in the picquets at Bonham, attacked and drove the Highlanders out of a wood they had taken possession of, near to Piscataway town. The enemy were reinforced, but again compelled to give way. They were reinforced a second time: when, upon due consideration of our situation, with respect to the different posts, of Brunswick, Rariton landing, and Bonham town, it was judged advisable to retire. The retreat was made in excellent order, and our loss is inconsiderable. I congratulate you on the advantage obtained over the enemy's best troops. The Highlanders, obstinately brave, were too proud to surrender, which cost many of them dear.”

Source: *Virginia Gazette* (Purdie), May 30, 1777, p. 3. Similar article in the *Pennsylvania Journal*, May 21, 1777.

Rebel Accounts of Battle of Piscataway, New Jersey, May 10, 1777

PHILADELPHIA, May 27...

Extract of a letter from the Jersies, dated Chatham, May 19.

“Since my last a considerable number of General [Adam] Stephen’s division having hastily assembled from the different posts, attacked the 42d, 2d battalion of the 71st, the 33d, and six companies of light infantry, posted at Bonham Town, Piscataway, and in that neighbourhood. It was a bold enterprize, as the enemy might be easily reinforces from Brunswick, the landing, or Amboy. We had learned the hour of their dining, gave them time to take a drink, and made a sudden attack on them about half an hour after four. Among their killed was Major [Duncan] M^cPherson [wounded], 3 subalterns, 3 serjeants, and as we are informed by a person from Piscataway, 60 privates. Major Frazer of the 71st, and Capt. [Lt. William] Stewart of the light infantry wounded. It is said 120 privates were wounded, 40 of them dangerously and carried to New York. We lost 2 killed, 1 Captain, 3 subalterns, and 11 privates wounded, 1 subaltern dangerously wounded, and taken with about 12 of his division.

“This great advantage gained over the best of the enemy, has compelled them to send from New York, one battalion of Hessian grenadiers, the 10th and 55th British regiments to reinforce these posts.”

Extract of a letter from Ash Swamp, dated May 20, 1777.

“Last Saturday week [May 10, 1777] General [Adam] Stephen ordered eight hundred men, from different regiments, to muster at Colonel Cook’s quarters, about nine miles from Matuckin [Metuchen] meeting house. In the afternoon they marched over Dismal swamp, and advanced to the place where the enemy kept their picket, and where the enemy, having observed our motions, had collected about three hundred, whom our advanced guard engaged for some time, and making a feint retreat over a narrow causeway, turned suddenly upon the enemy, and repulsed them with a considerable slaughter. By this time we were reinforced with six companies of light infantry, and other troops, when the skirmish became general, was pretty warm for some time, and the enemy gave way; but being reinforced with a large body and artillery from Brunswick, we were at last obliged to retreat, they not daring to pursue us. The next morning we sent a flag to Bonhamtown, desiring a list of our men; in the afternoon we received it, according to which they had one subaltern, whose leg had been cut off, and twenty three privates prisoners, most of whom were wounded, and also informed us of two of our men killed.

“By the best accounts from the inhabitants since come out of Brunswick, the enemy had near a hundred killed, and many wounded; this may seem very extraordinary, but when you consider that we had a number of good riflemen, and many excellent marksmen, well posted in the woods, and other suitable places, the enemy in the open field, and frequently in confusion, I think you will be reconciled to the probability of their loss far exceeding ours. This action was conducted by General Maxwell, and the troops were Jerseymen, Pennsylvanians and Virginians.”

Source: *Virginia Gazette* (Dixon & Hunter), June 6, 1777, pp.1-2. Brev. Maj. Duncan M^cPherson was slightly wounded and no 42nd Regt. officers were killed in this attack. Former Marine Lt. William Stewart, who commanded the picket was seriously wounded and lost the use of his leg.



**Excerpt of Letter from Rebel Maj. Gen. Adam Stephen to Gen. George Washington
Discussing Attack on 42nd Regt. at Piscataway, and Gen. Washington's Challenging
Response, Chatham and Morristown, New Jersey, May 10 and 12, 1777**

Sir,

Chatham [N. J.] 14th May 1777

I rec^d the honour of your Letter last night —Your Excellency has not Seen an Officer that was in the Action Saturday Night—They were of the party; but to their Staying at Such a distance from the Sceene of Action The Surviving Highlanders owe their Existence.

I took delight in mentioning the Troops to your Excellency who distinguishd themselves—The Reverse gives me pain; hoping that time, Attention, & habit, will improve us—Whether owing to the order in the field, or to What, I am uncertain—but one half of the troops were not Engaged—& Never had the ground—gained from the Enemy.

Time will discover the Loss of the Enemy —a more Accurate Acc^t than I had, is Seldom Obtaind The troops who Stayd a Quarter or near half a mile in the rear must needs have run damn^d hard to retreat the way the troops engagd did—But the fighting troops Were killd a Considerable time on a Rising ground untill they Had an Opportunity of Coming off... I am with great Respect

S^r your most Ob^lhub. Ser.

Adam Stephen

To Major General Adam Stephen

Morris Town 12th May 1777.

Dear Sir

Your account of the attempt upon the Enemy at Piscataway is favourable, but I am sorry to add, widely different from those I have had from others, (officers of distinction) who were of the party. I cannot by them learn, that there is the least certainty of the Enemy's leaving half the slain upon the Field, you speak of in your letter of this date; that instead of an orderly retreat, it was (with the greatest part of the detachment) a disorderly route, and, that the disadvantage was on our side, not the Enemy's, who had notice of your coming and was prepared for it, as I expected. I am &ca

G. Washington

Sources: Lib. of Congress, *George Washington Papers*, Series 4, General Correspondence (Stephen letter) and "From George Washington to Major General Adam Stephen, 12 May 1777," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified November 26, 2017, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-09-02-0400>.

**Rebel Gen. George Washington's Report to the Continental Congress of the Battle of Piscataway,
New Jersey, May 10, 1777**

Head Quarters, Morris Town, May 12, 1777.

Sir...

On Saturday a Smart Skirmish happened with a detachment of our Troops, who attacked a Number of the Enemy near Piscataway, in which our Men behaved well and obliged the Enemy to give way twice, as reported to me, with loss; The Enemy receiving a strong Reinforcement, our People retreated to their Post. I cannot give the particulars, as they have not been sufficiently ascertained. Their Pickets were also attacked yesterday by some of our parties from Bound brook and forced within their Lines. I have &c.

Source: *The George Washington Papers at the Library of Congress, 1741-1799*, The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799. John C. Fitzpatrick, Editor.

Corp. Thomas Sullivan's Description of Brunswick, New Jersey, May 12, 1777

May 12th ...

A Description of Brunswick.

Brunswick is a compact and well (altho' small) built Town, on the Banks of the Rariton River; there are two Churches or Meeting-houses in it: In one of which is a high Spire, and seen of a Good distance, considering the lowness of the ground where the Town is Built. Above the Town is built a good Barrack , sufficient to hold a Regiment of Foot. It lies in a Plentiful and rich County in the Jerseys, and is well supplied with fire Wood. Scooners and Sloops of good Burden comes to the town from New-York or Amboy at High water. At a small Village or town, called The Landing, a mile and a half above [up-river] Brunswick, is a Bridge on the River, the Pillars of which are Brick, overlaid with Planks and Boards. In that Village the Guards, 5th. and 35th Battallions were quartered during the Winter. The Enemy made no Works or Batteries about this Town, so it was quite defenceless; but our Army made some Redoubts about it which we did to shelter the Guards and Picquets from the Fierceness of the Weather, as also to defend the Cantoonments from any attack of the Enemy. When we came there, the Inhabitants were mostly fled from it, being persuaded by the rebels, that if they remained there our Army would destroy them...

For the Conveniency of the Army on both sides of the Rariton River, there was a wooden Bridge built across the Ferry at Brunswick, it being three miles round to go to the upper Bridge at The Landing...

Source: *From Redcoat to Rebel, the Thomas Sullivan Journal*, Ed. Joseph Lee Boyle, Heritage Books, Bowie (Md.), 1997, pp. 114-115. Corp. Sullivan was in the 49th Regt. in the 2nd Brigade.

**Excerpts of Letter No. 54 from Gen. Sir William Howe, Commander-in-Chief,
North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American
Department, Describing Dispositions of the American and British Armies, May 22, 1777**

New York 22 May 1777

My Lord...

The Enemy's Army in Jersey has been encamped some days near to Boundbrook. [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis is also encamped at Brunswick on each side of the Rariton and upon the communication between that place and Amboy. Major General [John] Vaughan's Corps being encamped at the latter place making use of the tents of last year, the camp equipage of the present not being arrived. His Lordship has also thrown a bridge over the Rariton at the town of Brunswick...

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution, Vol. XIV, Transcripts 1777*, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1976, pp. 91-92 from TNA, *Colonial Office: Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1776-1777* at CO5/94, f. 195.



Detail showing Brunswick, New Jersey from "Sketch of Brunswick. Sketch of the ground near Mr. Low's at Rariton Landing," 1777, by Alexander Sutherland and John Hill

Picture Source: Library of Congress, Geography and Map Div.

The Beginning of Gen. Sir William Howe's New Jersey Campaign, May 24, 1777

**Excerpts of a Letter No. 56 from Gen. Sir William Howe, Commander-in-Chief,
North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department,
Reporting the Arrival of British Recruits and Camp Equipment, May 24, 1777**

N^o 56

New York 3^d June 1777

My Lord...

The Arrival of the camp Equipage on the 24th of May, both for the Army and Provincials, has relieved me from much Anxiety, being Articles greatly wanted for the Opening of the Campaign, which will now immediately take place in Jersey, where the Enemy's principal Strength still remains, and I shall proceed as occurrences may arise, according to the Plan made known to your Lordship in my former Dispatches...

The Officers of the Guards and British Recruits also arrived on the 24th May, the Ansbach troops, 432 German recruits, and 51 German chasseurs on the 3rd instant, convoyed by the [70-gun *HMS*] Somerset. These Troops appear to be in very good Health and have disembarked upon Staten Island to refresh for a short Time.

With the most Respect I have the Honor to be,

Your Lordship's most faithful
and most Obedient Servant
W. Howe

Right Hon^{ble} Lord George Germain
&^c &^c &^c

Source: *Records of the British Colonial Office Class 5, Part 5: The American Revolution, 1772-1784* Ed. Randolph Boehm, University Publications Inc., Frederick, MD, 1972, pp. 348-350 and TNA, *Colonial Office: Secretary of State*,

Military Dispatches, 1776-1777 at CO5/94, f. 210. Camp equipage consisted of tents with poles and pegs, camp kettles with bags, hatchets and powder bags.



Detail of Portrait of Maj. Gen. James Grant of Ballindalloch

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory

**Excerpt of Notebook of Lt. John Peebles, 42nd Grenadier Company, Records
1st Lt. Infantry Battalion and 42nd Regt. Detachment Searching for Rebels,
Bound Brook, Lambtown and Quibbletown, New Jersey, May 26 and June 1, 1777**

Monday 26th. May The 1st. Battⁿ. Light Infantry [with the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co.] with 2 field Pieces went out Early this morn^g. to Reconnoiter the Enemy's situation at Bound Brook [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis and [Maj.] Gen^l. [James] Grant went along with them. They found about 1000 there & heard some firing – they followed the Light Infantry all the way to within shot of the yager Post with 2 pieces of Canon, where they exchanged some rounds in which Gen^l. Grants Horse was killed – The Main Body of the Rebel army are supposed to be Encamp'd t^o other side of the Mountain, They having left all the Villages near this

Sunday 1st June 1777 yesterday Even^g. the yagers perceived a scouting party of the Rebels near their Post. They sent out a party after them, some on horse some on foot & killd & took the whole of them being 13 & an off^r. One yager killd & one wounded – This morn^g. a detachm^t. march'd from Piscataway before 1 o'clock [Lt.] Colo: [Mungo] Campbell [52nd Regt.] and Major [William] Murray [1st Bn., 42nd Regt.] with part of the 42^d. & 52^d. Reg^t. they went thro' the Country as far as Lamtown & near to Quibbletown without seeing a man in arms & return'd to their Camp about 7 o'clock...

Source: *Peebles' Journal* Entries for May 26 and June 1, 1777 and published in *John Peebles' American War*, Ed. Ira D. Gruber, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg (Pa.), 1998, p. 114.

**Letter from Lt. Gen. Charles, Earl Cornwallis to Rebel Gen. George Washington Regarding
Sending Supplies to Captured Soldiers of the 42nd Regt. and Gen. Washington's Response,
Brunswick and Middlebrook, June 6, 1777**

Brunswick June 6th 1777

Sir,

L^t Col: [Thomas] Sterling of the 42^d Reg^t wishes to send an Officer with money & necessaries to the men of that Regiment who are confined at Philadelphia & Lancaster: I am to desire that you will please to let me know whether you choose to comply with L^t Col: Stirling's Request.

I am Sir With due Respect

Gen^l Washington
&c &c &c

Your Most Obed^t Sev^t
Cornwallis

N^o 30. To Lord Cornwallis

Middle Brook, June 6th 1777.

My Lord

I received the favour of your Lordship's letter of this day. I am sorry, I cannot with propriety comply with Lieut: Col: Sterling's request; but as I wish not to obstruct any supplies, you may think proper to send for the comfort and accommodation of your prisoners with us, I am to assure you, that the greatest care will be taken to forward and deliver, whatever money or necessaries may be transmitted for the purpose; and vouchers of its being done will be returned for the satisfaction of the Gentlemen from whom they come. Lieut Col: Sterling can send those Articles by a Flag addressed to Elias Boudinot Esquire Commissary for Prisoners, with proper directions for the distribution of them, and they will not, fail to be observed. Every matter of a similar nature is to pass through his hands, and to be transacted by him, as was signified in a late letter of mine to [Hessian] Lieut: Gen^l. [Leopold Philip] De Heister, to point out the proper Channel of conveyance in these cases...

I am, Sir, with due respect &c^a
G Washington

Source: *George Washington Papers at the Library of Congress*, Series 4, General Correspondence, Charles Cornwallis to George Washington, June 6, 1777 and George Washington to Charles Cornwallis, June 6, 1777, Series 3e Varick Transcripts.

**Letter from Brig. Gen. Sir William Erskine of Torrie, Lt. Col. 1st Battalion,
71st Highland Regt., to Sir John Halkett of Pitfirrane, New York, 7th June 1777**

My d^r Sir John

N York 7th June 77 go
tomorrow for the Jerseys
to take the field –

We are just now on the move to open the Campaign, which we found impossible sooner for want of field equipage &c &c

Washington has posted himself pritty strongly behind Bon [Bound] Brook, to The East of the Rariton River, I wish he may keep his Ground, but I dout [doubt] him, in my oppinion he'l either Cross the Delaware, or Retire further in the Country, they have att present 40 pices of cannon, all against them, as they retard his movements and surely his Bussiness is to protract this war, knowing the great expence we are att____

We have one Corps within 8 miles of him, and have been feeling the strength of our troops for some days, and I think a few more, will clear some of our eyes, If that Gentleman keeps his ground – Should he Cross the Delaware, he'l never rest till the Crosses the Susquehanna, then he may probably endeavour to hold post, It cant be long if we push him, should we find any other move will answer our purpose, better, we'll take it, if he goes in to Sussex County, the [Lt. Gen. John Burgoyne's] Northern Army if they move on, must certainly be on his back, in my oppinion the opening to the North, will be the first thing to give a turn to affairs in this country, without that God knows when we may end it, Rebellion believe me is very deeply Rooted, the Country vast, well peopled, plentifull, and seem determin'd, our Army unequal to Conquer and hold, few men this year from the Mother Country, and loosing every day, I know some write in a different stile, they must know more of the Matter or are led more in the secret than I, however this Country like our own, is soon up, and as soon down, and our scrape in this dout, may do more, than I can forsee had our wise ones, att home, Exerted themselves in sending us a responsible reinforcement this spring, the Affair was finishd, without dout as it is, thousands

are undetermin'd, for they don't want either for men, or ammunition, I have now told you my expectations, in the beginning of the Campaign, probably a week or two may alter them, nothing so common in civil war ... remember me to everybody and I am ever most sincerely yours W: Erskine

Source and Note: "Letters from Sir William Erskine 71st Fraser Highland Regiment to Sir John Halkett Bt" in the National Library of Scotland, *Pitferrane Papers* at GB233/MS 6406-6511, pp. 39-41. "Kings Cairns" are large cairns chiefly made of stone, and seldom turf covered, suspected of being ancient burial cists. See *British Barrows a Record of the Examination of Sepulchral Mounds in Various Parts of England*, William Greenwell, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1877, Google Books, note to p. 421.

Hessian Lt. Von Bardeleben's Account of the Movement of the 42nd Regt. near Brunswick, New Jersey, June 11, 1777

Wednesday, the 11th of June – The 71st and 42nd Regiments of Scots with the Combined [Hessian] battalion moved closer to Brunswick. The latter camped this side of Brunswick and the first two near Bonnington...

Source: *The Diary of Lieutenant von Bardeleben and Other von Donop Regiment Documents*, Translated Bruce E. Burgoyne, Heritage Books, Westminster (M.D.), 2007, p. 105.



Detail of Portrait of Lord George Germain, 17766, by Nathaniel Hone, the Elder

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons

Excerpts of Letter No. 60 from Gen. Sir William Howe, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Describing Operations in New Jersey, June 12-30, 1777

New York 5 July 1777

My Lord,

Having established a Corps sufficient for the defence of Amboy, the Army assembled at Brunswick on the 12th of June. The Enemy's principal force being encamped upon the mountain above Quibble Town with a Corps of two thousand Men at Prince Town, it was thought advisable to make a Movement in two columns from Brunswick on the 14th in the morning, leaving Brigadier General Mathew with 2000 Men to guard that post. The first division under the command of [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis advanced to Hillsborough and the second to Middle Bush under the command of [Hessian] Lieut.-General [Phillip] De Heister, with a view of drawing on an action if the Enemy should remove

from the mountain towards the Delaware. But on finding their intention to keep a position which it would not have been prudent to attack, I determined without loss of time to pursue the principal objects of the campaign by withdrawing the Army from Jersey, and in consequence of this determination returned to the camp at Brunswick on the 19th and marched from thence to Amboy on the 22^d, intending to cross to Staten Island from whence the embarkation was to take place.

Upon quitting the camp at Brunswick, the Enemy brought a few troops forward with two or three pieces of cannon which they fired at the utmost range without the least execution or any return from us. They also pushed some Battalions into the woods to harass the rear where Lord Cornwallis commanded, who soon dispersed them with the loss of only two Men killed and thirteen wounded, the Enemy having nine killed and about thirty wounded.

The necessary preparations being finished for crossing the troops to Staten Island, intelligence was received that the Enemy had moved down from the mountain and taken post at Quibble Town intending, as it was given out, to attack the rear of the Army removing from Amboy, that two [Rebel] Corps had also advanced to their left, one of 3000 Men and 8 pieces of cannon under the command of [Maj. Gen. William Alexander,] Lord Stirling, [Brig.] Generals [William] Maxwell and [Thomas] Conway, the last said to be a captain in the French service; the other Corps consisted of about 700 Men with only one piece of cannon.

In this situation of the Enemy it was judged advisable to make a Movement that might lead to an attack, which was done the 26th in the morning in two columns. The right under the command of Lord Cornwallis, with Major General [James] Grant, Brigadiers [Edward] Mathew and [Hon. Alexander] Leslie, and [Hessian] Colonel [Carl von] Donop, took the route by Woodbridge towards Scotch Plains. The left column where I was, with Major Generals [Johann von Stirn] Sterne, [John] Vaughan and [Charles] Grey, Brigadiers [Samuel] Cleaveland and [James] Agnew, marched by Metuchin Meeting House to join the rear of the right column in the road from thence to Scotch Plains, intending to have taken separate routes about two miles after the junction in order to have attacked the Enemy's left flank at Quibble Town. Four Battalions were detached in the morning with six pieces of cannon to take post at Bonham Town.

The right column, having fallen in with the aforementioned Corps of 700 Men soon after passing Woodbridge, gave the alarm by the firing that ensued to their main Army at Quibble Town, which retired to the mountain with the utmost precipitation. The small Corps was closely pushed by the light troops and with difficulty got off their piece of cannon.

Lord Cornwallis, soon after he was upon the road leading to Scotch Plains from Metuchin Meeting House, came up with the Corps commanded by Lord Stirling who he found advantageously posted in a country much covered with wood and his artillery well-disposed. The King's troops, vying with each other upon this occasion, pressed forward to such close action that the Enemy, though inclined to resist, could not long maintain their ground against so great impetuosity but were dispersed on all sides, leaving behind three pieces of brass ordnance, three captains and sixty Men killed, and upwards of two hundred Officers and Men wounded and taken.

His Lordship had five Men killed and thirty wounded. [Lt. and] Captain [Hon. John] Finch [1st Regt. of Foot Guards] of the light company of the Guards was the only Officer who suffered, and to my great concern, the wound he received proving mortal, he died the 29th June at Amboy.

The troops engaged in this action were the 1st Light Infantry, 1st British Grenadiers, 1st, 2^d, and 3^d Hessian Grenadiers, 1st Battalion of Guards, Hessian Chasseurs, and the Queen's Rangers. I take the liberty of particularizing these Corps as Lord Cornwallis in his report to me so highly extols their merit and ardour upon this attack. One piece of cannon was taken by the Guards, the other two by Colonel [Friedrich von] Mingerode's Battalion of Hessian Grenadiers.

The Enemy was pursued as far as Westfield with little effect, the day proving so intensely hot that the soldiers could with difficulty continue their march thither. In the meantime it gave opportunity for those flying to escape by skulking in the thick woods until night favoured their retreat to the mountain.

The Army lay that night at Westfield, returned the next day to Raway, and the day following to Amboy. On the 30th at 10 o'clock in the forenoon the troops began to cross over to Staten Island and the

rearguard under the command of Lord Cornwallis passed at two in the afternoon without the least appearance of an Enemy.

The embarkation of the troops is proceeding with the utmost dispatch and I shall have the honour of sending your lordship further information as soon as the troops are landed at the place of their destination.

Signed.

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution, Vol. XIV, Transcripts 1777*, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1976, pp. 127-129 from TNA, *Colonial Office: Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1776-1777* at CO5/94, f. 253.

Excerpt of Notebook of Lt. John Peebles, 42nd Grenadier Company, Records the Beginning of the Spring Campaign, Brunswick, New Jersey, June 11-13, 1777

Wednesday 11 June The General [Sir William Howe] arrived at Brunswick with his Suite [staff]...

Thursday 12 June ... the 42^d. & 52^d. arrived in the afternoon A Good many other Reg^{ts}. come up & encamp'd t^o other side the [Raritan] River – Some works making for the Defense of this Place on bothe sides y^e. River

June 13th. 1777 The army march'd from Brunswick at Night in two lines. The 1st under the Command of Lieu^t. Gen^l. [Charles] earl Cornwallis & Major Gen^l. [James] Grant consisting of the Hessian & Anspach Chasseurs [Jägers] Two Batt^{ns}. Light Infantry [with 42nd Lt. Inf. Co. in 1st Bn.] ...2 Medium 12 pounders, British Grenad^{rs}. [With the 42nd Gren. Co. in the 2nd Bn.] with their Battⁿ. Guns, Brigade under L^t. Colo: [Thomas] Stirling (the 33^d. & two Batt^{ns}. 42^d.) with 2 Howitzers & 2 six po^{rs}...

The 2^d. Division under the Command of His Ex^y [Hessian] L^t. Gen^l. [Leopold Philip] D'Heister...

Source: *Peebles' Journal* Entry for June 11-13, 1777 and published in *John Peebles' American War*, Ed. Ira D. Gruber, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg (Pa.), 1998, pp. 115-116.



Extract of "Plan of Perth Amboy from an actual survey..." 1777, by James Grant (deputy surveyor) and Alexander Sutherland (Engineer)

Map Source: *Library of Congress Geography and Map Div.*

Journal of Capt. Archibald Robertson, Dep. Quarter Master Gen., Records Army Departure from Winter Quarters, Piscataway and Amboy, New Jersey, June 12-30, 1777

12th This Morning the 2^d Division of the Troops Left Amboy, consisting of One Company Anspach Jägers, Queen's Rangers, Ferguson's Riflemen, Dismounted and Mounted 17th Light Dragoons, Stern's [Hessian] Brigade; 3 Regiments, 4, 44, 15; 17, 64, 38, 27, 46, 10; 23, 40 British; and were encamped between Brunswick and Piscataway. The 42, 52, 37, likewise moved from Piscataway and Bonheim Town to Brunswick. A very wet morning.

13th At 12 at Night the whole Army after leaving a Garrison at Brunswick, march'd in Two Divisions on the Hillsboro' Road. The 1st Division under [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis pass'd the Millstone River at Schenck's Bridge and took Possession of the high ground round Hillsboro', where they had a little Skirmishing with the Rebels in which we had one officer and 3 Men Wounded of the Light Infantry and 2 Hessian Grenadiers.

The 2^d Division under General [Sir William] Howe took up their Ground at Middle bush, about 5 miles from Brunswick and 3 from Hillsboro'.

[Rebel] General [George] Washington with his Army suppos'd to be about 7 or 8000 Men Occupied a Strong Camp about 4 miles North of Bond Brook on the Road to Baskin Ridge amongst the Mountains...

18th Orders were delivered in the Evening for the Troops to be ready to march by day Break.

19th At Day Break The 2^d Division march'd from Flat Bush Camp, towards Brunswick, followed by the 1st Division from Hillsboro'. They were incamped from Brunswick to Bonheim Town. The Rebels never fired on the Rear until they came within a mile of Brunswick and only Wounded one Man.

22^d The whole Army Evacuated Brunswick. About 1200 Rebels with 2 Pieces of Cannon Attack'd the Rear but were soon Drove off. We had 4 or 5 Killed and about 20 Wounded. The Rebels suppos'd to lose many more. We all got to Amboy about 3 o'clock.

The Brigade of Stirne and 6 English Regts, Vizt, 64th, 27th, 44th, 15th, 4th, and 23^d cross'd immediately to Staten Island and were encamp'd at Princes Bay...

25th Information being given to the General that the Rebel Army had quited their Camp and come down to the Low Country about Sam Town, Quibble Town, etc., and that they intended to possess the Short hills near Metuchen to Annoy our Rear, when Embarking orders were given for Army to Pack all their Baggage and Tents at Amboy and to be under Arms at 6 o'clock in the Evening.

The 6 Regiments order'd from Staten Island and Stirne's Brigade disembark'd. The Whole Army was formed into two Columns, and After Lying on their Arms All night, they march'd at 6 o'clock in the morning of the 26th. The Right hand Column commanded by Lord Cornwallis march'd by Woodbridge and along the North side of the Short hills. The Left Column by the Cross roads and Metuchen detaching the 28th, 35th, and 2 Hessian Battalions to take post at Bonheim Town. The Right hand Column, about 10 miles from Metuchen On the Westfield Road, fell in with some Brigades of the Rebels, commanded by [Rebel Maj. Gen. William Alexander] Lord Stirling, who were strongly posted, and drove them off with little or no loss. The Rebels halted again about a mile farther on and were Attack'd a 2d time. They were immediately drove back with Considerable loss and 3 Brass 3 – Pounders taken. We had about 40 Killed and Wounded, amongst the Latter [Lt. and] Captain [Hon. John] Finch of the [1st Regt. of Foot] Guards who died in two days after. We continued our march both Columns on the same Road towards Westfield in Extreme Heat. The 1st Column Encamp'd near Westfield and the 2^d about 1 mile short of it. The Whole Rebel Army decamp'd that were near Quibble Town and regained the Mountain.

27th All the Army moved to the Banks of the Raway about 6 miles and encamp'd without A Shot being fired at our Rear, had Several men died on this March from the Excessive Heat.

28th Arrived at Amboy about 10 in the Morning. Stirne's Brigade embark'd immediately. The 7, 26, 38, and 3 Battalions Hessian Grenadiers cross'd to Staten Island and encamp'd. The Rest of the Army remains on the old Camp at Amboy.

29th in the Morning 52, 35, Waldeckers, 2 Battalions Anspach, Kohler's [Hessian] Grenadiers, and Loos [Hessian] Battalion cross'd to Staten Island and were encamped. Continuing to pass over all the Horses and heavy Baggage of the Army.

The Troops now at Amboy are encamped as follows:

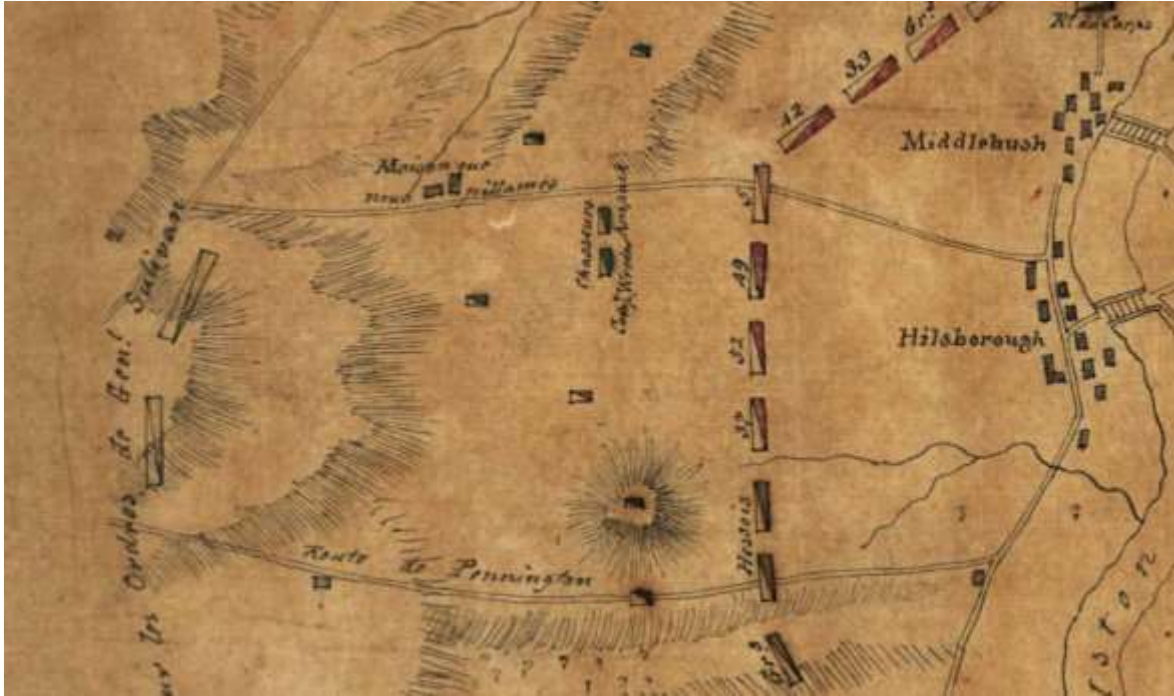
2^d Light Infantry, Jagers, 1st Light Infantry, Light Infantry Guards, Wemyss's Corps.

2^d Brigade, 4th, 3^d [with the 42nd Regt.], 1st, Guards.

British Grenadiers, 3 Battalions 71st.

30th All the Army cross'd to Staten Island without the least Molestation and encamp'd on the Road to Richmond.

Source: Archibald Robertson, *Lieutenant-General Royal Engineers, His Diaries and Sketches in America*, Ed. Harry Miller Lydenberg, New York Public Library, New York, 1930, pp. 136-140.



Detail from "Plan de notre camp à New Brunswick le 12e. juin..." , 1777, by Friedrich Adam Julius von Wangenheim, with the 42nd Regt. shown in the upper right hand corner, and the Millstone River to the right

Picture Source: Library of Congress, Geography and Map Div.

**General Orders Reference Brigade Commanded by Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling, 42nd Regt.,
Brunswick, New Jersey, June 13, 1777**

Head Quarters Brunswick Camp

13th June 1777

Order of March for the Division to be under the Command of Lieu^t Gen^l [Charles] Earl Cornwallis & Major Gen^l [James] Grant

Hessian & Anspach Chasseurs [Jägers]

2 Batt^{ns} Light Infantry except four Companys under the Command of Major [Peter] Craig [57th Regt.] to join [Capt. and] Lieu^t Col^l [Thomas] Twistleton [3rd Guards Regt.]

2 Medium 12 Pound^{rs}

B: [British] Grenad^{rs} with their Battⁿ Guns

Brig^{de}. under L^t. Col^l. [Thomas] Sterling [42nd Regt.] with 2 Howtize^s & 2. 6 p^{rs} 33^d. & 2 Batt^{ns}. 42^d. Regim^t. –

Brig^{de} under L^t Col^l S^r H. [Henry] Calder [49th Regt.] with 4. 6 p^{rs}. 5th. 49th. 52^d. & 37th.

Col^l. [Carl von] Donop with 3^d. 2^d. & 1st. H. [Hessian] Grenad^{rs}. –

16th. Dragoons leaving a Detach^t. of an Officer & 16 Dragoons with Brigad^r. [Edward] Mathew at Brunswick –

These Corps to assemble & form in Column of March by half Companies on the Prince Town Road at 11 oClock this Night, the head of the Column at One Mile Run. –

A Corps of Pioneers to March at the Head of the Grenadiers.

The Battⁿ Baggage Waggons with Surgeons Roberts & Bowman in the rear of the Amunition Waggons of L^t. Col^l: [Thomas] Sterlings Brigade.

The 2^d Division under the Command of His Excellency [Hessian] Lieu^t Gen^l [Leopold Phillip] De Heister, Major Gen^{ls} [Johann David] Stirn, [John] Vaughan & [Charles] Gray – Brigad^r. Gen^{ls}. [James] Agnew & [Hon. Alexander] Leslie to March by the Left. –

The four Companys of Light Infantry with Major Craig & [Capt. Patrick] Ferguson's Rifle Company to join the Light Infantry of the Guards under the Command of Lieu^t. [Col.] Twisleton the 4 Grass hoppers to be attached to this Corps –

The Battⁿ of Guards with the Corps of Pioneers 40th. & 23^d. Regim^{ts}. under the Command of [Capt. and] L^t. Col^l: [Charles] Trelawny [2nd or Coldstream Guards Regt.] to form the Advanced Guards following Lieu^t. Col^l. Twisletons Corps with 2 Medium 12 P^{rs} & 2. 6 p^{rs} –

Major Gen^l [Johann David] Stirns with the Hessian Brigade, the line Marching by the Left by half Companies –

Major Gen^l [Charles] Gray with 2^d & 4th Brigd^{es} with 2-6 P^{rs} to each Brig^{de}.

Major Gen^l [John] Vaughan with 3^{de} & 1st Brigades & 2-6 Pound^{rs} to each Brig^{de}.

17th. Dragoons with their dismounted...

The Troops Encamp'd on the east side of the Rariton [River] will receive Orders to call in their out posts –

The Regim^{ts}. with L^t Gen^l [Charles] Earl Cornwallis's Division will call in their out posts at Nine o'Clock –

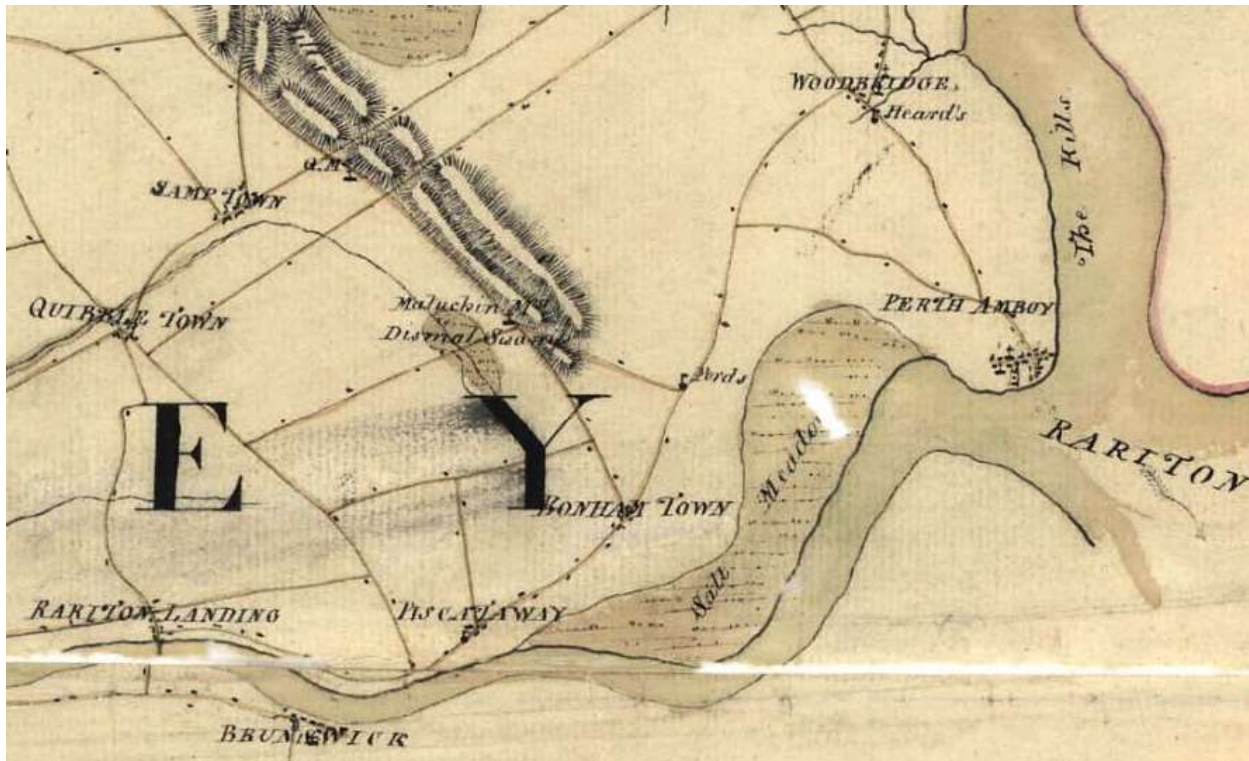
Brig^r. Gen^l. Leslie with the Brig^{de}. of 71st. [Highland] Regim^t to assemble on the road to Prince Town at 11 o'Clock in the rear of Lord Cornwallis's Corps and their wait for further Orders –

The Troops under Orders to March are to Carry three days Bread & Pork & one days Rum; to Strike Tents at eight oClock & Load their heavy Baggage & Tents keeping two Waggons for each Regim^t. for the Officers Canteens & Provisions.

No more can possibly be allow'd on this March –

The heavy Baggage, Tents & remaining Waggons, to be left Brunswick under the Care of a Serjeant & Six Men from each Regim^t. and an Officer from each Brigade; proper Baggage Stores appointed...

Source and Notes: *Orderly Book of General Sir William Howe, Kept By Major Stephen Kemble, Deputy Adjutant General, 29 January 1777 - 20 June 1777*, New York State Library, Manuscripts and History Library, Accession Number 6744. This order represents the first brigade command assignment for Lt. Col. Stirling, 42nd Regt. These orders prepare the army to withdraw to Amboy, New Jersey in Gen. Howe's attempt to draw the Rebel army out of its strong position so his army can engage them. A "Grass hopper" was a light 3-pound cannon. An "Officers Canteen" mentioned in this order does not refer to a small water container, but rather a box with his eating utensils and cooking equipment.



Detail from "A sketch of the northern parts of New Jersey," 1781, by Lt. John Hills

Map Source: Library of Congress Geography and Map Div.

Excerpt of Letter from Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling, 42nd Regt., to his Brother, Sir William Stirling of Ardoch, Describing the Battle of Short Hills (also known as the Battle of Metuchen Meetinghouse), Scotch Plains, and the Regiment's Departure, New Jersey, June 12 – July 1, 1777

Amboy June 25th 1777

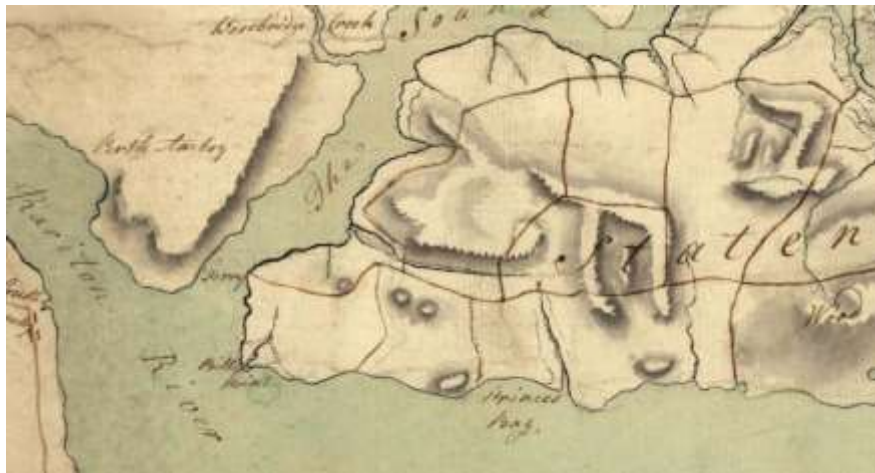
My Dear Sir Will^m

... we encamped soon after [May 10] & on the 12th ins^t [June] marched to Brunswick where the army was assembled, the 13th the Army marched to Hillsborough or Somerset Courthouse, 9 miles, there we remained till 19th when the Army returned to Brunswick, M^r [Rebel Gen. George] Washington having kept within his mountains 7 or 8 miles from us where he was posted so strongly it was not thought prudent to try to force him nor was it prudent to march to the Delaware with him to our rear; it was therefore resolved to embark & carry on an expedition some where: after transports having been prepared for that purpose we left Brunswick the 23^d & came here same day 6 or 700 of the Riflemen popping at our rear.

Staten Island July 3 thus far had I wrote when an Order came to strike tents & prepare to march, on 26th we marched toward Washington who we had learned had left the mountains & approached us with an intention of falling on our rear as we embarked, we were in two columns the right hand column fell in with [Rebel Maj. Gen. William Alexander] Lord Stirling who was there advanced party with 3000 men & five pieces of Cannon the Rebels made no stand but a running fight of it untill they got to their stronghold, however we took 3 pieces of brass Cannon 70 Prisoners & killed a good many with little loss on our side, except some who died with fatigue by drinking cold & bad water, some marauders who were taken we did not lose 20 men, a [Lt. and] Captⁿ [Hon. John] Fynch of the Guards [Lt. Infantry] was killed, our [42nd] Reg^t happened to be in the left Column which had not a shot fired at it except one at myself by my going an eminence beyond our flankers to reconnoiter but it missed me... we returned the 29th & 1st of July the whole left Amboy & crossed to this Island without a rebel

showing himself in our rear, & here we are where next God knows but it is much the same we cannot smile at our Enemy nor need we Military men be afraid the Rebellion will be ended too soon, it is a war for fifty years the Rebel Officers said to one of ours on a flag of truce, Tis a war of fifty years say I too if we do not adopt severe measures, M^r Washington & the Congress declared every one that is not their friend to be an Enemy why do not we adopt their maxim their should be no neutrality & very soon there will be no rebellion, in place of that simple John Bull is terribly angry if any severity is used while he is bleeding to death by this ungrateful rebellious Rascals, who would sacrifice him & the Country they are sprung from to death & ruin to carry their republican plan, for my own part I hate cruelty and commiserate the unhappy wretches who has been deluded by their dimagogues, but I am so much convinced of the necessity for the good of my Country, that I have not a doubt about it & every house where the males were absent without a good cause or occasion assigned I would destroy with the plantation, after giving them my proclamation, more as we are fond of them this would soon finish it, but while their families lived quick at home & where they can at all times come to when they tire of the service or their time is out it is only a frolick to them to turn out and fight against the bloody backed Butchers, as they politely call us, for my share I am heartily tired of it as I can see no end in the manner we go on – All your Acquaintances are well, [Capt.] Archie [Erskine] is B. [Brigade] Major to G [Hon. Alexander] Leslie. I hope Jamie Graham will get out to India by M^r Seton & Graham means, you mention nothing of the Bill on the Agents for £300 I sent you in January & remember _____ the surest way of sending Letters is by the packet write always by that conveyance I am sorry to hear of poor M^r Russels death, you have lost a faithful factor. Miss Murray has taken _____ plea but tho she may not have taken him for his [Middin?] I would not say so much for him, _____ Cork has chose one of Boolus's beautys for a wife, Menzie has made a proper choice, I wish he may _____, our destination is a secret – some say South some North. We will embark as many thousands as there is marked in the milestone at the R. Camp. I go again in the Brilliant Transport.

Source: NRS, *Papers of the Family of Stirling Home Drummond Moray of Abercairny* at GD 24/1/458/7.



Detail of "Plan of New York and Staten Islands with part of Long Island, survey'd in the years 1781, & 82."

Map Source: Library of Congress Geography and Map Div.

General Orders for Army to Withdraw from Brunswick and Perth Amboy, New Jersey, June 21 – 30, 1777

Head Quarters, Camp at Brunswick, 21st June 1777.

The Troops to march to-morrow morning to Amboy at daybreak.

Order of March.

[Hessian] Maj.-Gen. [Johann David] Stirn's Brigade will march by the Right, followed by the 64th, 27th, 44th, 15th, 4th, and 23^d Regiments, cross over from Amboy to Staten Island and encamp at Prince's Bay. Capt. [Archibald] Robertson, Assistant Quarter Master General, will conduct them.

The Baggage Waggons to march upon the right of the Column with their respective Brigades.

The Baggage of the Commander-in-Chief [Gen. Sir William Howe] and the Staff Officers in the rear of the 2^d Battalion Guards; that of the other General Officers at the head of the Waggons of their Respective Brigades or Corps.

The Chasseurs [Jägers] will cover the March of Stirn's Brigade till he passes the rear of the British; after which they will proceed to the head of that Column, and join Brig.-Gen. [Hon. Alexander] Leslie at Bonham Town.

Capt. [Patrick] Ferguson's Corps of Rifle Men to join Brig.-Gen. Leslie at same time and place.

Maj.-Gen. Stirn's Brigade will halt at Piscataway till the Chasseurs come to his front.

The 23^d Regiment to be followed by the 1st Battalion of Guards, then the 40th, 10th, 46th, 7th, 17th, 33^d, 42^d, 37th, 26th, 49th, 5th, 28th, and 2^d Battalion of Guards.

The Six Light Companies at Landing to join [Capt. James] Wemys's Corps [Loyalist Queen's Rangers] as soon as Gen. Stirn's Brigade and Chasseurs move off their Ground.

Brig.-Gen. Leslie, with the Brigade of 71st [Highland Regt.], will, as soon as joined by the Chasseurs, immediately take post on the short Hills and remain there till further Orders; the Baggage of 71st to fall in, in the Rear of the Hessian Baggage of Stirn's Brigade.

Each Regiment to draw in their Pickets when they march off their Ground.

The Troops encamped on the Brunswick side of the Raritan will pass over Capt. [James] Moncrieffe's Bridge in the following Order:

16th Dragoons, Battalion of Loos, Hessian Grenadiers, British Grenadiers, Light Infantry.

The Baggage of their Corps to pass in front of the Dragoons. This Corps will receive Orders for moving off their Ground from Lieut.-Gen. [Charles] Earl Cornwallis...

The Troops will always march by half Companies where the Ground will permit of it.

After Orders, 8 at Night...

The Tents and Baggage of the Army to be completely loaded by two in the Morning, and the Baggage Waggons of Lieut.-Gen. Earl Cornwallis's Division to be drawn up on the Piscataway side of the River by day break.

The Baggage of the Commander-in-Chief and Staff Officers to march in front of the British line of Waggons and not Rear of 2^d Battalion Guards, as directed in a former Order of this day.

Head Quarters Camp Perth Amboy 23^d June 1777.

A Detachment consisting of 1 Lieutenant Colonel, 1 Major, and 6 Captains, with a Subaltern and 20 privates, with Non-Commissioned Officers in proportion, from each Battalion of British Infantry in the Line, to parade this day at One o'Clock, to cover a Foraging Party from the Cavalry, and such Regiments of Infantry as may be in want of Forage. The whole to assemble on the Brunswick Road in front of 42^d Regiment, precisely at 1 o'Clock this day...

Head Quarters Camp at Perth Amboy, 24th June 1777.

The undermentioned Corps are to hold themselves in readiness to Embark and to be Brigaded as follows :

Queen's Rangers,

Light Infantry,

British Grenadiers.

Brigade of Guards, Commanded by Brig.-Gen. [Edward] Mathew.

1st Brigade, 4th, 23^d, 28th, 49th, Maj.-Gen. [John] Vaughan.

2^d Brigade, 5th, 10th, 27th, 40th, 55th, Maj.-Gen. [James] Grant.

3^d Brigade, 15th, 42^d, 44th, 17th, Maj.-Gen. [Charles] Grey.

4th Brigade, 33^d, 37th, 46th, 64th, Brig.-Gen. [James] Agnew.

5th Brigade, 71st, 3 Battalions, Brig.-Gen. [Hon. Alexander] Leslie.

The reserve to consist of the 7th, 26th, British, 1st Battalion of Anspach, and Ferguson's Rifle Corps, 16th Dragoons, mounted and dismounted.

Hessian and Anspach Yagers,	}	
3 Battalions of Hessian Grenadiers	}	Col. [Carl von] Donop.
Regiment Du Corps,	}	
d ^o Donop,	}	Maj.-Gen. [Johann David] Stirn
d ^o Mirbach,	}	
d ^o Loos,	}	...

Head Quarters Camp at Perth Amboy 29th June 1777...

Morning Orders, 10 o'Clock.

Each Corps on the Amboy side to give in to the Adjutant-General's immediately an Embarkation Return, that Boats may be provided accordingly to carry them over the Ferry.

After Morning Orders.

The 4th, 15th, 23^d, 27th, 44th, and 64th Regiments will, as soon as they have crossed the Ferry, march to their Ground of Encampment on Staten Island, leaving their Guns on the other side under the charge of an Officer of Artillery, to be appointed by Brig.-Gen. [Samuel] Cleaveland.

After Orders, 7 at Night.

The Queen's Rangers and Ferguson's Corps are to embark with the 5th Brigade. The Corps of Pioneers will Cross over this Evening to Staten Island, where they will receive further Orders.

30th June 1777.

Morning Orders, 7 o'Clock.

The Troops to Embark in the following Order, Ferguson's Corps:

1st Embarkation. – [Loyalist] Queen's Rangers, 4th and 5th Brigades.

2^d Embarkation. – 3^d [with 42nd Regt.] and 2^d Brigades.

3^d Embarkation. – 1st Brigade, Brigade of Guards.

4th Embarkation, Rear Guard. – Yagers, 1st and 2^d Light Infantry, 1st and 2^d Grenadiers.

The 1st Embarkation to take place at the Ferry, at Ten, and the others to follow as they shall be conducted.

The Rear Guard to march down with the 3^d Embarkation and Embark on the Beach below the Governor's House.

One day's Extra Rum to be issued to the Troops that cross the Ferry this day, as soon as they land on the other side.

Source and Note: "The Kemble Papers, Vol. I, 1773-1789" in *Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1883*, Publication Fund Series, Printed for the Society, New York, 1884, Google Books. This movement begins Gen. Howe's action to withdraw from New Jersey to move his army to Chesapeake Bay to take Philadelphia.



Detail of Hessian Map titled "Position de notre camp le 24 juin 1777 à Perth Amboy."

Picture Source and Note: *Library of Congress, Geography and Map Div.* The Hessian regiments are shown in green and white and the British regiments in red and white blocks. Amboy is shown in the lower right.

**Letter from Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling to Gen. Lord John Murray, Col., 42nd Regt.,
Describing Preparations to Withdraw from New Jersey and His Brigade Command,
Amboy, June 24, 1777**

Copy Lieu^t. Col^l. Stirling to Lord John Murray

Dated Amboy Camp 24th June 1777.

My Lord

I am honor'd with yours of 30th March, & return your Lop: [Lordships] thanks for your good intentions toward me in applying to Lord Barrington to Recommend me to his Majesty for Rank, but my juniority as Lieu^t Col^l does not give me least hope that it can take place, As for Rank in America only, it is no object, Gen^l [Sir William] Howe has this Campaign Altered his former System, and in place of Putting four Reg^{ts} in a Brigade, under the Command of a Brigadier has made the Brigade to consist of 3 Battalions commanded by the Senior Lieu^t Colonel of them, by this means I command one composed of the 33^d and 2 battalions of the 42^d. I believe I mentioned the Reg^t having been divided last campaign by Gen^l Howe into two battalions, Major [William] Murray had the 1st. and [Brevet] Major [William] Grant /who has had pay as Major/ the 2^d. an Adjutant and Quarter Master was Added pro tempore [*"for the time being"*], we are Still upon that Footing: my Command adds Nothing to my Rank or Emoluments, but that shall not make me relax in my Attention to forward the Service upon every Occasion, it has been Matter of great joy to me that your Lops: Reg^t under my Command, has Shewen the same determined Spirit and Zeal upon many trying occasions, that the Corps was formerly so Distinguished for, and it will give me pleasure, if any little shred I have had in it Meets with his Majesty's approbation, and the Applause of my Friends...

I am My Lord

Your Lop: mo: [most] Obed^t. & mo: Obed^t. Serv^t.

Signed/ Tho^s. Stirling

P. S. Staten Island 3^d July

After writing we made a move back thro' the Jerseys to Meet [Rebel Gen. George] Washington who we're told had left his Stronghold and approached Amboy to attack us when Embarked

Source: Lord John Murray Papers.

**Corp. Thomas Sullivan's Description of Gen. Sir William Howe's Campaign in New Jersey,
June 13 – 28, 1777**

June 13th. At 3 o'clock in the Afternoon, the Army struck their Camp at both sides of the [Rariton] River...

Advice was received further, that the Enemy's Principal force were encamped on the Mountain above Quibbletown, with a Corps of 200 men at Princetown, it was thought advisable to make a Movement from Brunswick.

June 14th. The Army moved at 1 o'clock in the morning, in two Divisions as follows.

The 1st. Division, consisting of 2 Battallions of Light Infantry [with the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co. in the 1st Bn.], 2 Battallions of British Grenadiers [with the 42nd Gren. Co. in the 2nd Bn.], 5 Troops of Light Dragoons, two Companies of Chasseurs [Jägers] with their Mounted Hussars, the Royal Highlanders, 33^d, 5th. 37th. 49th. and 52^d. Battallions; 3 battallions of Hessian Grenadiers, and some 300 of the [Loyalist] Queen's-Rangers, under the command of [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis, having with him Major General [James] Grant; the whole making a Body of about 8000 men, with the Field Pieces and Artillery belonging to them Corps.

The 2^d. Division (or Grand Army,) under the command of [Hessian] Lieu^t. General [Leopold Philip] De Heister...

The 1st. Division advanced by way of six mile Run to Hillsborough, and the 2^d. to Middlebush, with a view of drawing on an action, if the Enemy should remove from the Mountains towards the Delaware; but their advanced Picquets that were at Hillsborough, after firing a few shots retreated towards the woods as we Advanced. The 1st. Division encamped on a Height near the Town; the Chasseurs advancing after the Enemy, being supported by the 2^d. Battallion of Light Infantry on the Right flank of the Division. After a smart fire from them Corps, the Rebels retreated further into the Fastness of the thick Wood...

June 19th. The Commander in Chief [Gen. Sir William Howe], thinking it unnecessary to follow the Enemy into the Woods, and on finding their intention to keep a Position which it would not be prudent to attack, they being well fortified, determined without Loss of time to pursue the principal object of the Campaign, by withdrawing the Army from jersey, and in consequence of this Determination the Army returned from Hillsborough and Middle Bush to Brunswick and encamped in their former Ground...

June 22^d. The Troops struck their Camp at an near Brunswick, and formed a Line of march towards Amboy; the Grand Army marching in front. Upon the Army's quitting their Camp, and the Troops at Piscataway side, were marching from their Ground, the Enemy advanced with a few Troops forward and three Pieces of Cannon, with which they attacked the Picquet of the Hessians that were above the Landing...

The 5th, 37th, 26th, and 49th Battallions formed by the wood in front of their encampment, and on the right of the Hessians, expecting the Enemy to advance with more force; while the aforesaid Hessians formed the Line of March. The Enemy did not then advance and the four Battallions followed the Hessians, leaving six Companies of Light Infantry to cover their Rear; and the Chasseurs, Rangers, a Battallion of Guards, and six companies of British Grenadiers covered the retreat, at Brunswick side.

The Army at Piscataway side halted near y^e. Ferry, waiting for the Troops to march from Brunswick and Pass the new-Bridge, which being perceived by the Enemy, advanced with three Brigades and some Field Pieces with a few Light Horse to annoy the rear of our Army at the landing; they took up the Ground we left and began to Cannonade us, without doing the least execution or any return from us. This being observed by [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis, ordered the Army to march on; the Enemy pushed some Battallions into the woods to harass the rear.

The Light Infantry and Grenadiers halted in the edge of the wood, where the rear Guard aforesaid were divided into two Divisions, and lay in Ambush there. The enemy advanced in good Order with their Artillery in front, and Colours displaying; having a party of Light Dragoons and Riflemen on their Flanks. The Army during this Time continued their march.

Lord Cornwallis who commanded the Rear-Guard, being informed by a Deserter of the Enemy's advanced Party, that their main Body was close at hand, ordered the men not to fire until the Enemy would advance as far as Piscataway, and to the center of Both parties. As they advanced, the parties at both sides of the road engaged them, and a smart fire ensued; but the Enemy were soon dispersed, leaving 9 killed and about 30 wounded. Our loss was 2 men killed and 13 wounded.

Before the Army reached Amboy, the Enemy made three different attacks upon the rear, and where as often repulsed.

The whole Army encamped in the Evening near the Town, with an intention to cross over to Staten-Island from whence the Embarkation was to take place...

A party of the Enemy advanced upon y^e. Outposts of the Light Infantry, and after a smart engagement, were driven back to the woods, where they were pursued by the Picquet, and routed towards Piscataway, with loss.

June 25th. The General [Sir William Howe] received Intelligence that the Enemy had moved down from the mountains, and taken post at Quibbletown, intending to Attack the Rear of y^e. Army removing from Amboy...

The whole Army struck their Camp at 6 o'clock in the evening; all the Baggage and mens Knapsacks were sent to Amboy under a Guard, and from thence was Transported in Boats to Staten-Island. During that Night the Troops lay in their Arms.

June 26th. In that situation of the Enemy, it was judged adviseable to make a movement that might lead on to an attack, which was done at 3 o'clock in the morning in two Columns.

The Right, under the command of [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis, with Major-general [James] Grant, Brigadier Generals [Edward] Mathews and [Hon. Alexander] Leslie, and [Hessian] Colonel [Carl von] Donop with the 1st. Battallion of Light Infantry [with the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co.], 1st. Battallion of the British Grenadiers, 1st. 2^d. and 3^d. Battallions of Hessian grenadiers, 1st. Battallion of Guards, Hessian Chasseurs [Jägers], and the [Loyalist] Queen's Rangers, took the Rout by Woodbridge towards Scotch Plains.

The left Column with which the Commander in Chief [Gen. Sir William Howe] was, with Major-General [Hessian Johann Daniel] Stirne, [John] Vaughan and [Charles] Grey [3rd Brigade with the 42nd Regt.]; Brigadier-Generals [Samuel] Cleaveland [Artillery] and [James] Agnew, marched by Metuchin Meeting-house, to join the rear of the Right Column in the Road from thence to Scotch Plains; at the head of their Respective Brigades...

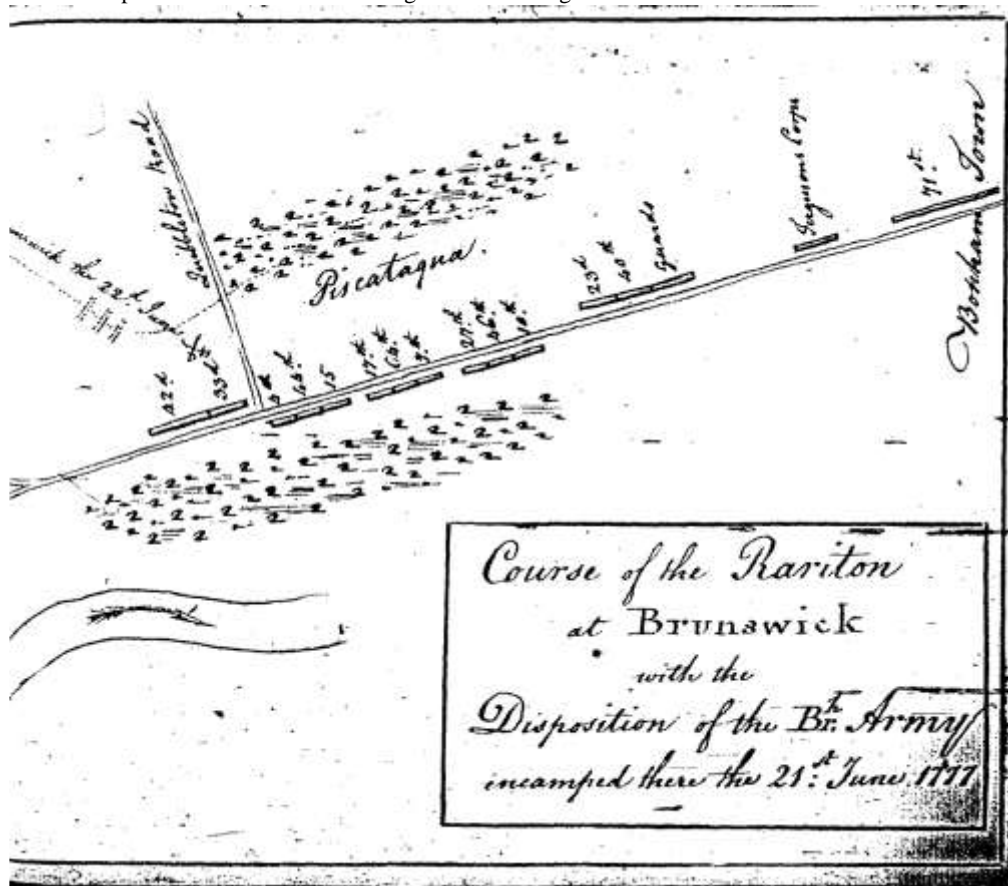
The Right Column, fell in with... [a Rebel] Corps of 700 men, soon after Woodbridge, gave y^e. alarm, by the heavy firing that ensued to their [Rebel] Body at Quibble-Town, which retired to the Mountain with the utmost precipitation. A smart engagement ensued between the Front [1st] Division and the Enemy, which last were repulsed with Loss. The small Corps being pursued close by y^e. Light Infantry, a smart Cannonading began, and three Battallions of the Enemy attacked 5 Companies of Light Infantry, the former occasioning from their situation the latter to incline into a wood, the Enemy being too superior in Number, and waited for the Guards and Rifleman to come up, Lord Cornwallis who headed them, seeing the Position the Enemy were in, came up with the said Battallions. The enemy were commanded by [Maj. Gen. William Alexander, called] Lord Stirling, and was advantageously posted in a thick wood, with his Artillery well disposed. The Troops vying with each other upon this occasion attacked the Enemy so close, that, tho' they were inclined to resist, could not maintain their ground against so much Impetuosity, but were soon dispersed on all sides, leaving behind three Pieces of Brass cannon, 3 Captains and 60 men killed, and upwards of 200 Officers and men wounded and taken.

Our Loss was 5 men killed, and 30 wounded...

June 27th. We marched from Westfield in the morning, driving all the Cattle we met before us, without any molestation, and halted in the afternoon at Raway, where we remained that night.

June 28th. This morning we continued our march to Amboy, and took up our former encampment, where we built Wigwams, for we had not tents.

Source and Note: *From Redcoat to Rebel, the Thomas Sullivan Journal*, Ed. Joseph Lee Boyle, Heritage Books, Bowie (Md.), 1997, pp. 116-122. Corp. Sullivan was in the 49th Regt. in the 2nd Brigade.



Position of the British Army June 21, 1777 Showing 42nd Highlanders on left flank of the Army near Piscataway, New Jersey

Map Source: "Andre's Journal," Ed. by Henry Cabot Lodge, in *Journal of the Military Service Institution of the United States*, Vol. XXXIV, Ed. Brig. Gen. T. F. Rodenbough, Military Service Institution, Governor's Island (N.Y.), 1904.

Brig. Maj. John Andre's Account of the Evacuation of New Jersey and Departure for the Chesapeake Campaign by Maj. Gen. Charles Grey's 3rd Brigade (Including the 42nd Regt.) Prince's Bay, Staten Island, June 28-July 22, 1777

28th [June] Army marched to Amboy. Several Regiments crossed to Staten Island and a great many horses.

29th More troops, horses and artillery crossed to Staten Island. A report was current that Sullivan (a rebel general) was at Rahway with 4000 men.

30th [June] The remainder of the Army crossed unmolested from Amboy to Staten Island. The Regiments were encamped on different parts of the Island. the 4th, 15th, 23^d, 27th, 42^d, 44th, and 64th encamped at Prince's Bay under the Command of [Maj.] General [Charles] Grey.

July 1st...General Grey received Orders to embark the regiments under his command the next day, excepting the 17th and 42^d, which were to march by way of the Rose and Crown [Tavern] to Cole's Ferry.

2^d. The transports which were to take the six regiments at Prince's bay having sailed for Cole's ferry by some misunderstanding the day before, general grey marched the eight regiments to that place, where they were encamped on the height's above Cole's ferry this day...

8th. Part of the Troops embarked according to y^e orders of the day before.

9th. Remainder of the troops under orders of embarkation embarked...

19th. A signal was made for sailing.

20th. Fleet weighed anchor and the transports moved down to Sandy Hook. The Men-of-war came to an anchor again near the Narrows.

22^d In the Morning the Fleet sailed from Sandy Hook.

Source: "Andre's Journal," Ed. by Henry Cabot Lodge, in *Journal of the Military Service Institution of the United States*, Vol. XXXIV, Ed. Brig. Gen. T. F. Rodenbough, Military Service Institution, Governor's Island (N.Y.), 1904, Google Books, pp. 492-493. This account covers the preparation for Gen. Sir William Howe's campaign to take Philadelphia by way of the Chesapeake. Prince's Bay on Staten Island is about four miles east-northeast of the ferry at Perth Amboy

Hessian Jäger Capt. Johann Ewald's Account of the Withdrawal of the Rear Guard, Including the 42nd Highlanders, from Amboy, New Jersey, June 28 - 30, 1777

On the 28th the army marched back in two columns to its former encampment at Amboy. On this march an enemy party followed our rear guard, but was constantly repelled by the jägers...

During the night of the 28th and early morning of the 29th the greater part of the army crossed over Prince's Bay to Staten Island. The rear guard under [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis, consisting of the jägers, the [1st and 2nd Bns.] light infantry and both [42nd and 71st] Highland regiments, crossed the bay toward evening on the 30th. The entire army took up camp from Billop's Ferry to Richmond.

Source: *Diary of the American War, A Hessian Journal, Captain Johann Ewald, Field Jäger Corps*, Trans. and Ed. Justin P. Tustin, Yale Univ. Press, New Haven, 1979, p. 69.

Corp. Thomas Sullivan's Account of the Army's Withdrawal from New Jersey and Departure for Chesapeake Bay, June 30 – July 23, 1777

June 30th. The Troops landed in Staten-Island at Amboy Ferry, about 10 o'clock in y^e. morning, and the rear Guard, under the command of [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis, at 3 in the afternoon; the main Body encamped in and about Richmond, that place being Head Quarters that time.

July 2^d. The whole Army marched to Cole's and Ryoson's Ferries, and encamped near Prince's Bay and them Places.

July 8th. The Troops embarked on board their different transports at Prince's Bay, except the Light Infantry, Grenadiers, Riflemen Corps, Chasseurs and Yaughers; which embarked next day.

July 20th. The Fleet dropped down the Narras to Sandy Hook...

July 23^d. All things being in readiness, the Admiral [Richard, Viscount Howe] weighed Anchor at 8 o'clock in y^e. morning at Sandy Hook, and the whole Fleet after him... The Fleet consisted of Seven Men of War of the Line, several Frigates, Sloops of War, Armed Vessels and Scooners, with upwards of two hundred sail of Transports. We steered our Course to the Southward, keeping in with y^e. land.

Source: *From Redcoat to Rebel, the Thomas Sullivan Journal*, Ed. Joseph Lee Boyle, Heritage Books, Bowie (Md.), 1997, pp. 122-123. Corp. Sullivan was in the 49th Regt. in the 1st Brigade.

Journal of Lt. Henry Stirke, 10th Lt. Inf. Company, Records the 1st Lt. Infantry Battalion's Departure from New Jersey and Embarkation for the Chesapeake Campaign, Staten Island, New York, July 2 – 23, 1777

July

2^d The Army abandon'd the Jerseys and landed on Staten Island.

9th The Army under the Command of [Gen.] S^t W^m How, compleated their Embarkation, at the Narrows.

20th Fell down to Sandy Hook.

23^d Sail'd. The 1st Battalion of Light Infantry, in the following Transports: The Christie, E. of Oxford, Spring, and Ocean Brig. 2^d battalion in the Betsy, Jenny, Mercury, and Hunter.

Source and Note: "A British Officer's Revolutionary War Journal, 1776 – 1778," Ed. S. Sydney Bradford in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, Vol. 56, No. 2, Baltimore, June 1961, p. 167. Capt. Hon. George Mackenzie's 42nd Lt. Inf. Co. was part of the 1st Lt. Inf. Bn.

Hessian Jäger Capt. Johann Ewald's Account of the Embarkation for the Voyage to the Chesapeake; Staten Island, July 4 – 19, 1777

From the 4th up to the 9th, this entire army was embarked with everything that was necessary for the expedition at Decker's ferry, Cole's Ferry, Simonson's Ferry, and Reisen's Ferry on Staten Island.

Since the wind was constantly easterly, the fleet remained at anchor between Long Island and Staten Island in the vicinity of Denys's ferry up to the 19th.

Source and Note: *Diary of the American War, A Hessian Journal, Captain Johann Ewald, Field Jäger Corps*, Trans. and Ed. Justin P. Tustin, Yale Univ. Press, New Haven, 1979, pp. 71-71. Capt. Ewald left the 1st and 2nd British Grenadier Bns. from his formation notes.

Excerpt of Notebook of Lt. John Peebles, 42nd Grenadier Company, Records Arrival of Two 42nd Regt. Officers and 170 Recruits and Embarkation, Staten Island, New York, July 6 - 9, 1777

6th. July our additional Comp^{ys}. arrived 2 1^{ts}. & 170...

July the 8th & 9th The Army Embark'd At Coles ferry, our [42nd Grenadier] Comp^y. on board y^e. [Transport] America abut a tone a half [displacement] to a man...

Source: *Peebles' Journal* Entry for July 6, 1777 and published in *John Peebles' American War*, Ed. Ira D. Gruber, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg (Pa.), 1998, p. 118.



Plan of New York and Staten Islands with part of Long Island, survey'd in the years 1781, & 82.

Map Source: *Library of Congress Geography and Map Div.*

General Orders for the 42nd Highlanders to Embark for the Philadelphia Campaign;

Staten Island, New York, July 7, 1777

Head Quarters Banker's House, Staten Island 7th July 1777.

Lord Cornwallis's Orders.

The Troops to Embark to-morrow in the following Order, between Coles's Ferry and the Quarter Master General's Quarters.

1st Embarkation. – Brigade of Guards and 1st Brigade British, at Six in the Morning.

2^d Embarkation. – 2^d Brigade, with the 15th and 17th Regiments, at 8 in the Morning.

3^d Embarkation. – The 42^d, 44th, and 4th Brigades at 11 in the forenoon.

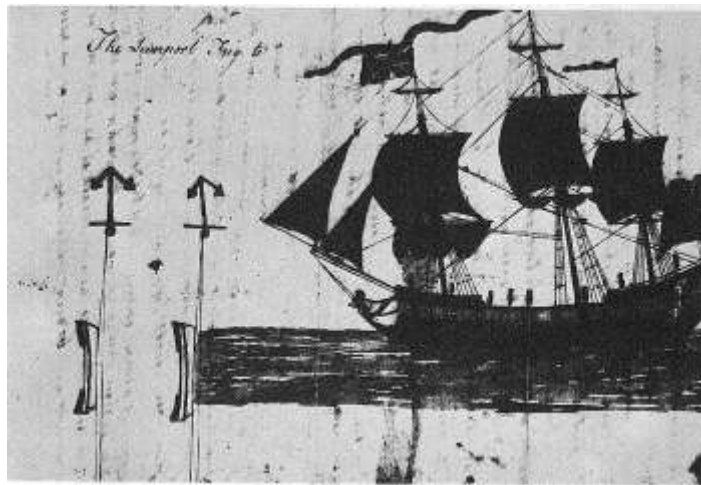
4th Embarkation. – 5th Brigade, with the Reserve, Viz.: 7th. and 26th British, and 1st. Battalion Anspach, at 4 in the afternoon.

Each Corps to have their Tents struck, their baggage packed up and carried to the beach nearest their several Encampments an hour before their Time of Embarkation, to be left under a Guard at the water side until their Transport's Long boats can be sent for them.

The Battalion of Loos, Queen's Rangers, Ferguson's Corps, and Pioneers, are to embark on Wednesday with the Light Infantry and Grenadiers. No Officer is to presume to take on board any horse above the number allowed in General Orders.

Until further Orders all reports are to be made to Maj.-Gen. [Charles] Grey.

Source and Note: "The Kemble Papers, Vol. I, 1773-1789" in *Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1883*, Publication Fund Series, Printed for the Society, New York, 1884, Google Books. This embarkation is for the army's voyage to Chesapeake Bay to begin the campaign to seize the Rebel capitol at Philadelphia.



Sketch of 32-gun *HMS Liverpool*, 1775, by Jeremiah Riley

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from *Naval Documents of the American Revolution*, Vol. 3, Ed. William Bell Clark, Naval Hist. Center, 1968, p. 1339

Hessian Jäger Capt. Johann Ewald's Account of the Beginning of the Voyage to the Chesapeake; Staten Island, July 19 – 20, 1777

Since the wind was constantly easterly, the fleet remained at anchor between Long Island and Staten Island in the vicinity of Denys's ferry up to the 19th. But on the morning of the 20th, about nine o'clock, a light wind arose, whereupon the fleet weighed anchor and put to sea in the same day. The fleet consisted of some two hundred sail [actually about 265] and sailed in the following formation

The frigate [*HMS*] *Liverpool*, 32 guns.

The [HMS] Eagle, 64 guns, on board which were Admiral [Richard, Viscount] Howe and the Commanding General [Sir William] Howe

[HMS] Raisonable,
64 guns

1st Division, Captain Parrey [RN]; the transport ships of the English Guards, the light infantry [including the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co. in the 1st Bn.] [Loyalist] Queen's Rangers, and [Capt. Patrick] Ferguson [Corps of Riflemen], on which ships were red and white pennants for signals.

[HMS] Augusta,
64 guns

2^d Division, Captain [William] Dickson [RN]; the transport ships of the 1st, 2^d, 3^d [including the 42nd Regt.], and 4th English Brigades, which had red pennants for signals...

Source and Note: *Diary of the American War, A Hessian Journal, Captain Johann Ewald, Field Jäger Corps*, Trans. and Ed. Justin P. Tustin, Yale Univ. Press, New Haven, 1979, pp. 71-71. Capt. Ewald left the 1st and 2nd British Grenadier Bns. from his formation notes.

Letter from Lt. John Grant, 42nd Additional Company, to Gen. Lord John Murray, Col., 42nd Regt., Describing His Trip to America with Recruits for the Regt., London, July 8-Aug. 27, 1777

[London, August 27, 1777]

My Lord

I arrived here last night with the non Commissioned Officers and arrived at Portsmouth the 24th Ins^t: I have the pleasure to acquaint your Lordship, that when I left the Reg^t they were all well / except the poor Sufferars / in good health and in high Spirit & behaves with that Spirit and Bravery, they ever were remarkable for, I landed at New York the 8th July, the Reg^t was Embarked for the Expedition, I was ordered to Staten Island with my Detachment where they lay encamped for three days to refresh themselves after being so long at Sea, then Draughted into the Different Companies, three of them were discharged, being thought old & unfit to undergo the Severities of that Service, I brought them to Portsmouth, there giving them their discharges, with 14 days pay, Agreeable to [Lt.] Colonel [Thomas] Stirlings orders. Your Lop [lordship]: will no doubt expect Some news. I have little or none, but what has been Already Published.

There has been nothing done in that part of the Country since the Army left the Jerseys, but [Adm. Richard] L^d & Gen^l [Sir William] Howe, have sett out upon an Expedition, their destination is not Known, they Sailed from Sandy hook the 25th July, with about 200 Sail of Ships, and about 1200 men., The Day we sailed from the Hook we spoke a Brigg bound for N York who said they saw the Fleet in Latitude 39 Stearing south west within Six Leagues of the shore, he imagined they were bound for Virginia – I cannot help giving some remarks concerning the Conduct of your Lordships Reg^t; I had the Curiosity to go see Fort Washington, I took a view of the Rocks they climbed, and to be sure, no men in the world but Highlanders would ever have thought of it, it was only fit for Goats to climb, there and upon every other occasion, they behaved like hero's, they were then about 12 Months in America, and was twelve times Engaged with the Enemy, and Always beat them, besides what they killed, they took prisoners more when ever they consisted of themselves in the field. The loss Sustained by the 42^d Reg^t in those different Engagements is at least 200 killed & wounded, and at most of those attacks they were engaged as a Separate Body from the rest of the Army, without any Support but their own good fortune poor Lieut [William] Stewart was wounded the 10th May his thigh broke, he was when I left him in a very reduced State, but I hope he will live, tho never fitt for Service, it is a pity for a brave officer, the very name of the Royal Highlanders Strikes terror in the Yankies. –

I have made Application to [Sec. at War] Lord Barrington for my Extraordinary Expences, upon this Tedious and long Command, I am Much Afraid I will not Succeed, if not I will be £50 out of Pocket over my pay which is more than I can Afford, I shall Expect to hear from your Lordship in Course of Post & in case I do not Succeed, I hope your Lordship will write to Lord Barrington in my favor it is hard to be sent upon command where I could not Subsist upon my pay, and be allowed Nothing, there is a Sloop here bound to Inverness next week it will be convenient for me and my Party as I cannot afford to go by Land, as I suppose your Lordship will order me a Recruiting, I beg your Lop: will give me my former Station, Nairn head Quarters & Forrest Strathspey my District. Colonel [Thomas] Stirling has kept Serj^{ts} [John] M^cIntosh [Capt. Grant's Co.] and [John] Wilson [Gen. Murray's Co.], and Sent in their places Serj^{ts} Grant & [Archibald] Fraser [Capt. Grant's Co.], being worn out on Service, Grant is from Strathspey, he will be very usefull to me in Recruiting. I had no letters for your Lordship, as when the Reg^t Sailed I did not know, I should have a passage for England, but Co^l Stirling and Major [William] Murray said they would write by the first pacquet after their Destination was known, [Ens.] Lord W^m Murray joined before I left the Reg^t, he was in good health then he is gone with the Reg^t, Cap^t [Charles] Graham & Lieu^t [George] Dalrymple is left Sick at New York. You will be pleased to direct my letter to be left at the Agents Office

I have the honor to remain

My Lord your Lordships most Obe^d and most humble Servant

John Grant

London on 27th Aug^t 1777

Lieu^t 42^d or R. H. Reg^t

N.B. the Mens names that was discharged

Norman M^cLeod

Duncan Menzies

Archibald M^cLean

Source: *Lord John Murray Papers*.

Letter from Maj. William Murray, Commander, 1st (Provisional) Battalion, 42nd Regt., to Gen. Lord John Murray, Col., 42nd Regt., Reporting on the Arrival of the Recruits from Scotland, Transport Minerva, July 9, 1777

Dated on Board Minerva Transport New York Bay

9 July 1777

My Lord

I rec^d two letters from your Lop: [Lordship] since I wrote you from Piscataway, one by the Pacquet about a week ago, and another by L^t [John] Grant, who arrived with the reinforcement from the Additional Companies Yesterday, I have seen the men this Morning, there are several good men amongst them; But there's a number very indifferant, and what Suprized me was to See several very old men Amongst them, one in particular, who was Discharged from your Lordships Reg^t upwards of Thirty years ago, and had served before he was Discharged Eight years, the man is now above Sixty years of age, it was cruel to Send a poor old man to this Country as a Soldier, his End will be a Langering Death in an Hospital, as he is not fit for an hours service, there are four or five much about his age come out. [Ens.] Lord W^m Murray is Likewise come out joined us, and is appointed to my Company. The Jerseys is now Evacuated, the whole Army under[Gen.] S^r W^m Howe is now Embarked, except what is left to the Protection of New York, Long Island, Staten Island and Road Island, where our Destination is to be no person in the Army can guess at, I have acquainted [Lt.] Co^l [Thomas] Stirling of your Recommendation of W^m Stewart, I most only observe that the Volunteers in this Army are so Numerous, That the wars must continue for years before the half of them will be provided for, I have Likewise acquainted M^r [Chap. James] M^cLagan of your desire that he should write Frequently & long letters, he tells me he wrote your Lordship lately giving you a Journal of our Winter Quarters.

I am now to thank your Lordship for your application to Lord Barrington in my Favor, your Lops: intentions were certainly very Friendly, but I must observe getting me Brevet Rank as Lieu^t Co^l would not be in my favor at Present, as I am the oldest Major in America, and therefore has reason from my Service, to be promoted to the first Lieutenant Colonelcy that falls vacant, whereas were I a Brevet Lieu^t Co^l I might be told I had got the Rank, and a Younger Major Might be made Lieu^t Co^l to a Reg^t and it would be looked upon as no injury done me. I would write your Lop: more frequently, had I either, Spare time opportunity, or Subject but the Service we are upon, deprives me of those three, your Lordship.

Source: *Lord John Murray Papers*.



Col. Elias Dayton

Picture Source: *Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Div. of Art, Prints and Photographs*, New York Public Lib.

Excerpt of Letter from Rebel Col. Elias Dayton, 3rd New Jersey Regt., to Gen. George Washington Reporting the Landing of a Thousand Highlanders, New York, July 10, 1777

Elizabeth-town July 10th 1777
7 o'clock.

Sir,

Since my last, a person has returned from New-York; that has been, four days, at that place, observing the motions of the Enemy...
He says... That he saw [Lt.] General [Henry] Clinton in New-York: & heard it said, he had brought with him, three thousand men; but he only saw about One thousand highlanders, which he observed particularly when they landed in New-York....

I am y our Excellencys most Obedient Humble Servant
Elias Dayton

Source: "To George Washington from Colonel Elias Dayton, 10 July 1777," *Founders Online*, National Archives.

Letter from Maj. William Murray, Commander, 1st (Provisional) Battalion, 42nd Regt., to his Brother, Mungo Murray of Lintrose, Providing a Status of the Regiment Preparations for the Campaign, On Board the *Minerva Transport*, July 11, 1777

Dear Brother

I Wrote you a Few Days ago and Inclosed you Bill of Exchange for £70 – Since that Time our Additional Recruits are arrived, and I received your letter Dated in March, I am surprised you do not take any notice of my letter that I Wrote last January beging you Would uplift my pay From the Agent, as it is receiving it a great Discompt taking it from the Contractors on this Country, I now inclose you a Bill upon the Agent for my Subsistance from the 24 D^r 1776 To the 24 June 1777, Which you will send to London for their acceptance before you uplift the Money As I am not certain that they have Drawn that

Money from The Treasury as I have not heard from them tho I have Wrote them frequently upon this Subject. – We are now Imbarked but has not the smallest Idea Where we are going, Lord William Murray has joined the Regiment as is appointed Ensign to my Company, Make my Compliments to the Duke of Athol when you see him and tell him I shall do every thing in my power to Serve his Brother Lord William, and shall be Attentive to Instruct him in his Profession as far as I am capable - Capⁿ M^cKenzie and all your Acquaintances are Well We Expect to Sail Dayly – I find Trusting to Co^l M^{ys} Interest is not to be depended upon Thank God I am told I stand on a good Footing with the Commander in Chief and My [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Conwallis Who's command we were under last Campaign professes a Particular Friendship for me And I am now the Oldest Major in America – But still I will not Flatter my self as I may be Dissapointed. I beg you; Write me more Frequently your letters that you send by the Post and comes here by the Packets are certain of coming soon and safe and cost me nothing you will therefore Write me by that Channel for the Future you may Inclose my Letters to the Agent Who will Forward them by the Packets – Kind Compliments to M^{rs} Murray and all Friends I am

On Board Minerva Transport 11 July
1777 –

Dear Brother
Yours Sincerely
Will^m Murray

Pray let me know how you Sons got on –

Source: NRS, *Murray of Lintrose Papers* at GD 68/2/117/001-002. The fleet sailed from Sandy Hook for the Chesapeake on July 22, 1777 according to Brigade Major John Andre, Maj. Gen. Charles Grey's 3rd British Brigade (including the 42nd Regt.).

Unnumbered Letter from Gen. Sir William Howe, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Reporting Plans to Counter Moves of the Rebel Army, New York, July 16, 1777

New York
July 16th 1777

My Lord,

By the Movement of the Enemy's Army in Jersey towards King's ferry upon the North River since the Embarkation of His Majesty's Troops from Staten Island he seems to point at preventing a Junction between this and the northern Army which will no further affect my Proceeding to Pensilvania than to make a small change in the distribution of the Troops.

For if the Enemy should cross the North River before I sail from hence, or should approach it so near as to give me a prospect of reaching Philadelphia before Him, I shall in either Case strengthen [Lt. Gen.] Sir Henry Clinton still more than by the Reserve which is already ordered to remain here in addition to the Troops Mentioned in the Return under Sir Henry Clinton's Command. he will then have sufficient force to act on the defensive against the whole Rebel Army – but as these additional Troops will not be wanted here if [Rebel] General [George] Washington should march to the defense of Pensylvania, I shall in such Event order Them to join me in that Province. The Enemy Movements taking this turn, I apprehend [Lt.] Gen^l [John] Burgoyne will meet with little interruption otherwise than the Difficulties he must encounter in transporting Stores and Provisions for the Supply of the Army.

On the other hand If Gen^l Washington should march with a determination to force Gen^l Burgoyne, the strength of Gen^l Burgoyne's Army is such to leave me no Room to dread the Event But if M^r Washington's intention should be only to retard the approach of Gen^l Burgoyne to Albany He may soon find himself exposed to an attack from this Quarter and from Gen^l Burgoyne at the same Time from both which, I flatter myself He would find it difficult to escape.

Under these circumstances I propose going up the Delawar in order to be nearer this place than I should be by taking the course of Chesapeak Bay which I once intended and preferred to that of the Delawar provided the Enemy had discovered a disposition to defend Pensilvania.

I have the Honor to be

Your Lordship's most Obed^t Servant
W. Howe

Right Honorable Lord George Germain &^c &^c &^c

Source: *Records of the British Colonial Office Class 5, Part 5: The American Revolution, 1772-1784*, Ed. Randolph Boehm, University Publications Inc., Frederick, MD, 1972, pp. 474-475 and TNA, *Colonial Office: Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1776-1777* at CO 5/94.

**News Account that Rebel Gen. George Washington Considered
the 42nd Regt. Among his Bitterest Enemies, New York, July 23, 1777**

A letter from New York, dated July 23, says. General Washington has offered a Reward of 50*l*. Sterling for every Light Horseman's Head. They are his bitterest Enemies, as also the Highlanders, 42d and 71st. We had 26 of the latter brought in here last Night wounded."

Source: *Public Advertiser* (London), Sep. 3, 1777, p. 2. A similar article was published in *Newcastle Courant*, Sept. 6, 1777, p. 4.

**Report of 42nd Regt. Soldiers left at New York Hospital for Philadelphia Campaign,
Aug. 10-17, 1777**

RETURNS of Sick and Wounded in his MAJESTYS HOSPITAL at *New York* between the *Tenth & 17th August 1777* –

Regiment or Troop	Remained last return	Since entered	Total	Discharged	Died	Remains...
42 nd D ^o [Regiment]	39	1	40	6	-	34...
71 st D ^o	44	1	45	10		35...
Total	707	38	745	125	30	590...

Jonⁿ Mallet Purveyor

Source: *Frederick Mackenzie Papers*, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan.

Report of 42nd Regt. Soldiers left at New York Hospital for Philadelphia Campaign, Nov. 2-9, 1777

RETURNS of Sick and Wounded in his MAJESTYS HOSPITAL at *New York* between the *2nd & 9th Nov^r 1777* –

Regiment or Troop	Remained last return	Since entered	Total	Discharged	Died	Remains...
42 nd D ^o [Regiment]	8	-	8	-	-	8...
71 st D ^o	25	-	25	3	1	21...
Total	657	89	746	110	19	617...

Jonⁿ Mallet Purveyor

Source: *Frederick Mackenzie Papers*, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan.