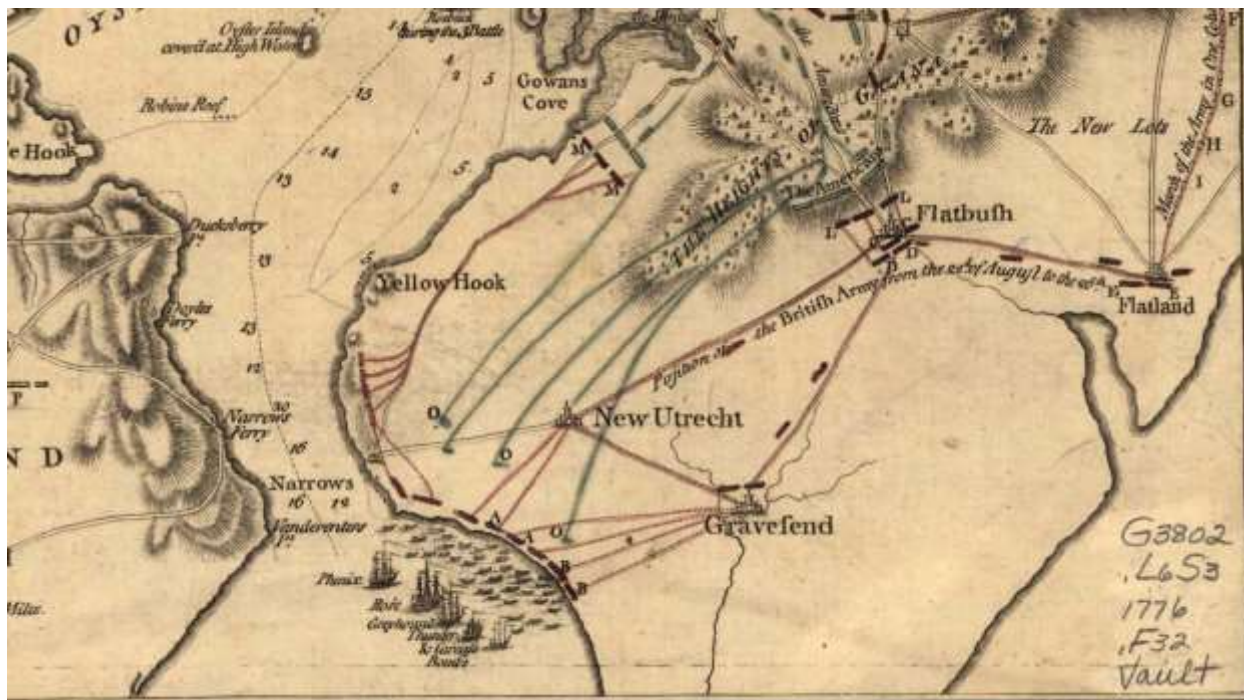


42nd Regt.'s Amphibious Landing at Gravesend and Skirmishing at Flatbush, Long Island, New York, Aug. 22 -26, 1776



Detail from “A plan of New York Island, with part of Long Island, Staten Island & east New Jersey, with a particular description of the engagement on the woody heights of Long Island, between Flatbush and Brooklyn, on the 27th of August 1776 between His Majesty's forces commanded by General Howe and the Americans under Major General Putnam, shewing also the landing of the British Army on New-York Island, and the taking of the city of New-York &c. on the 15th of September following, with the subsequent disposition of both the armies.,” 1776, by William Faden

Map Source: Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division



Detail of Portrait of Admiral of the Fleet Howe, 1st Earl Howe, 1794, by John Singleton Copley

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from Nat. Maritime Museum, Greenwich.

Excerpt of Letter from Adm. Richard, Viscount Howe to the Lords of the Admiralty Describing the Amphibious Landing on Long Island, New York, Aug. 22, 1776

Admiralty-Office, October 10th, 1776

Extract of a letter from Lord Viscount Howe, Vice Admiral of the White, and commander in chief of his Majesty's ships and vessels in North America, to Mr. Stephens, dated on board the [64-gun HMS] Eagle, off Bedlow's island, New York, the 31st of August, 1776.

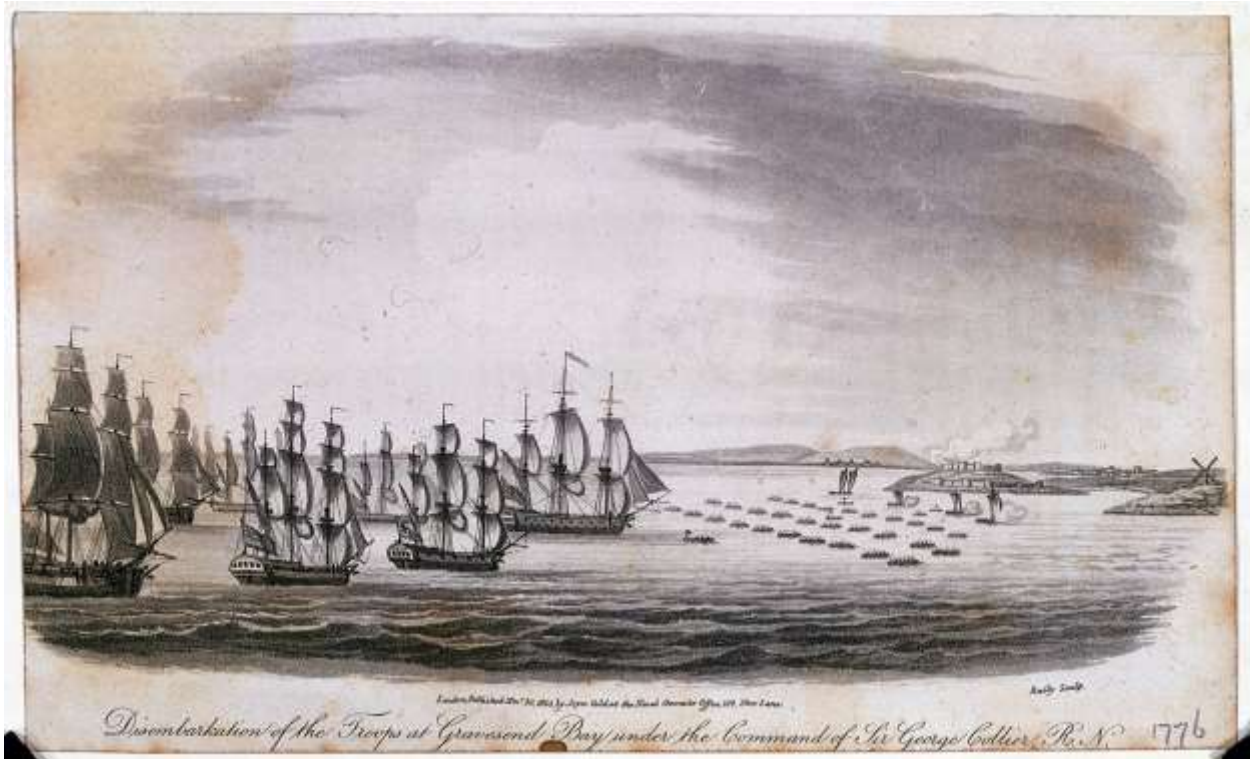
General [Sir William] Howe giving me his intentions to make a descent in Gravesend bay on Long island, on the morning of the 22d the necessary disposition was made, and seventy-five flat-boats, with eleven batteaux and two gallies, built for that occasion, were prepared for that service.

The flat-boats, gallies, and three batteaux, manned from the ships of war, were formed into [nine] divisions... The rest of the batteaux, making a tenth division, manned from the transports...

Early in the morning of the 22d, the covering ships took their stations in Gravesend bay. The light infantry with the reserve [including the 42nd Regt.] to be first landed, forming a corps together of 4000 men, entered the boats at Staten island the same time.

The transports in which the several brigades composing the second debarkation (about 5000 men) had before embarked, were moved down and suitably arranged without the covering ships by eight o'clock. The first debarkation not meeting any opposition, the second succeeded immediately after; and the other transports, carrying the rest of the troops, following the former in proper succession. The whole force then destined for this service, consisting of about 15,000 men was landed before noon.

Source and Note: *Edinburgh Advertiser*, Oct. 15, 1776, p. 244. All nine companies of the 42nd Highlanders were part of the first wave of the landing.



Disembarkation of the Troops at Gravesend Bay under the Command of Sir George Collier, R.N., 1814, by Joyce Bailly Gold

Picture Source: National Maritime Museum, Greenwich

**Account by Capt. Henry Duncan, 64-gun HMS Eagle, of the Amphibious Landing;
Gravesend, Long Island, Aug. 22, 1776**

...The flat boats were all assembled by four o'clock on the beach, under the particular command of Commodore [William] Hotham... About half after seven the admiral hoisted his flag on board the [44-gun *HMS*] *Phoenix* in Gravesend Bay, Long Island. She with the [28-gun *HMS*] *Greyhound*, [20-gun *HMS*] *Rose*, and two bombs were placed to cover the landing. About eight the *Phoenix* fired a gun and hoisted a striped flag, blue and white, at the mizen top-mast head, as a signal for the troops to proceed to the shore. A little after eight all the ships with troops for the first landing were in motion; and the boats that had taken in about 1,000 troops from Staten Island began to move across towards Gravesend Bay, in Long Island. Half-past eight Commodore Hotham hoisted the red flag in his boat as a signal for the boats to push on shore. The boats immediately obeyed the signal, and in ten minutes or thereabout 4,000 men were on the beach, formed, and moved forward. The wind blew down the harbour, but the flood tide had made up too strong for the ships to get down in their intended station; nevertheless, by twelve o'clock or very soon after, all the troops were on shore, to the number of 15,000, and by three o'clock we had an account of the army being got as far as Flat Bush, six or seven miles from where they landed.

Source: "Journals of Henry Duncan, Captain, Royal Navy 1776-1782" in *Naval Miscellany*, Vol. I, Ed. John Knox Laughton, Naval Records Society, 1902, Google Books, pp. 122-123.

Excerpt of Letter No. 26 from Gen. Sir William Howe, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Reporting the Landing, Gravesend, Long Island, New York, Aug. 22-25, 1776

Newtown, Long Island 3rd September 1776

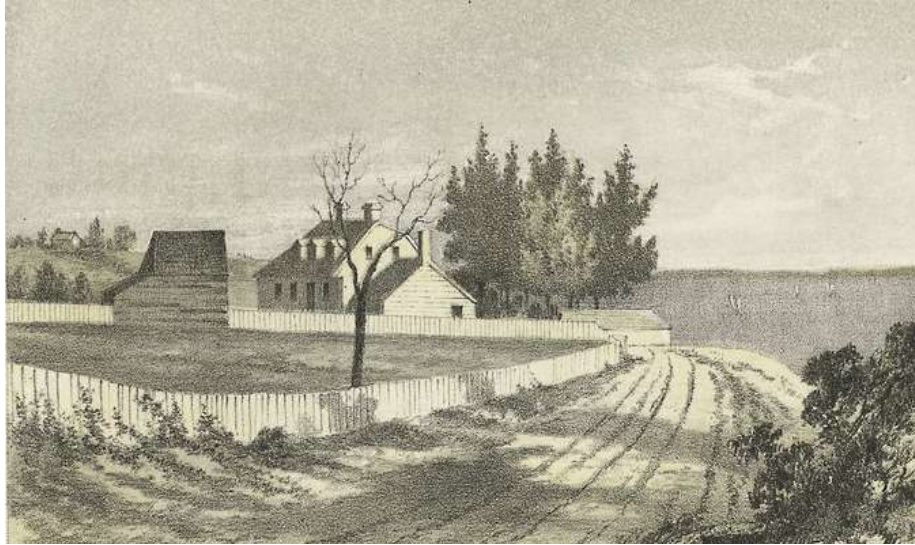
My Lord, on the 22^d last past in the morning the British with Colonel [Carl von] Donop's Corps of Chasseurs [Jägers] and Hessian Grenadiers disembarked near Utrecht on Long Island without opposition, the whole being landed with forty pieces of cannon in two hours and a half under the direction of Commodore [William] Hotham, Lieutenant-General [Henry] Clinton commanding the first division of the troops.

The Enemy had only small parties on the coast, who upon the approach of the boats retired to the woody heights commanding a principal pass on the road from Flatbush to their works at Brooklyn. [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis was immediately detached to Flatbush with the reserve [including the 42nd Regt.], two Battalions of light infantry and Colonel Donop's Corps with six field-pieces, having orders not to risk an attack upon the pass if he should find it occupied, which proving to be the case his Lordship took post in the village, and the Army extended from the ferry at the Narrows through Utrecht and Gravesend to the village of Flatland.

On the 25th Lieutenant-General [Leopold] de Heister with two Brigades of Hessians from Staten Island joined the Army, leaving one Brigade of his troops, a Detachment of the 14th Regiment from Virginia, some convalescents and recruits under the command of Lieutenant Colonel [William] Dalrymple [14th Regt.] for the security of that island...

Signed.

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution*, Vol. XII, Transcripts 1776, pp. 216-218 from TNA, *Colonial Office, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches* at CO 5/93, f. 257.



Denyse's Ferry, Gravesend, Long Island, Where British Landed

Picture Source: *New York Public Library*.

Excerpt of a Letter from Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling to his Brother, Sir William Stirling of Ardoch, Describing the Landing of the 42nd Regt., Long Island, Aug. 22-26, 1776

Camp near Bloomingdale, Island of New York, Sep^t 22, 1776

My Dear Sir Will^m:

I wrote you since my arrival here; the 22^d of Augst, the army landed on Long Island after having been reinforced by [Lt.] Gen^l [Henry] Clinton from Southward with 7 Reg^{ts} after an unsuccessful expedition; [Lt.] Gen^l [Leopold von] Heister with the 1st division of Hessians 8500 men; the Light Dragoons from Halifax & the remainder of ours & [Maj. Gen. Simon] Frasers [71st Highland Regt.] except about 600 that were taken by Rebel privateers of which we lost 4 Off^{rs} and 85 men, in short our strength by the Rebel acc^{ts} is 21000 which is not wide of the mark we met with no opposition on landing...

Source and Note: NRS, *Papers of the Family of Stirling Home Drummond Moray of Abercairny* at GD24/1/458/1. Stirling's comment "... we lost 4 Off^{rs} and 85 men" refers to the rebel capture at sea of the *Transport Oxford* carrying Capt. John Smith's company, which is described in this volume in *App. G : Prisoners of War*

Account of British Amphibious Landing at Gravesend, by Chaplain James M^cLagan, 42nd Regt., Long Island, Aug. 22-29, 1776

Piscataway 31st May. 1777

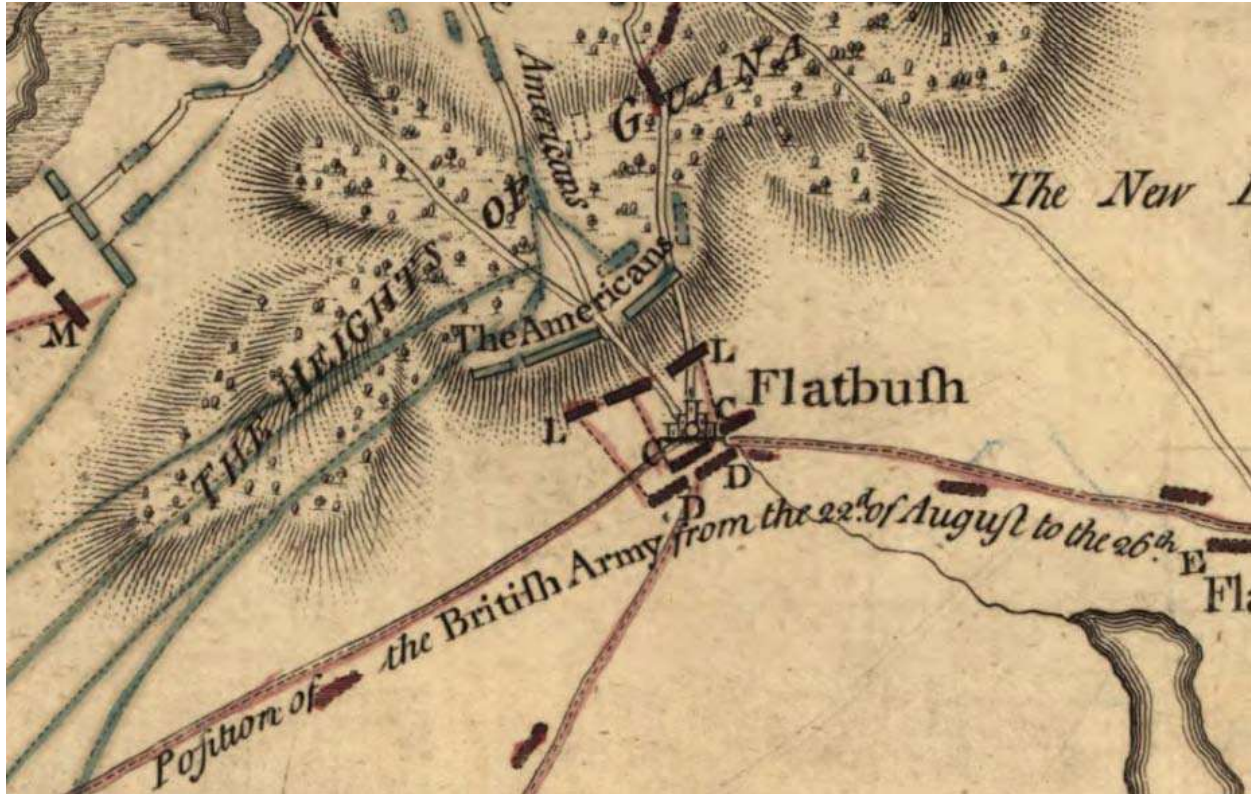
My Lord...

On the 22^d of August General [Sir William] How and the Greatest part of the Army landed on Long Island without opposition... 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: James M^cLagan to Lord John Murray, May 31, 1777 in the *Lord John Murray Papers*.



Detail showing 1st Bn., 42nd Regt. position with the reserve at "C. C. Lord Cornwallis with the Reserve, 2 battalions of Light Infantry, Col^l. Donop's Corps, & 6 Field Pieces on the 22^d" from "A plan of New York Island, with part of Long Island, Staten Island & east New Jersey, with a particular description of the engagement on the woody heights of Long Island, between Flatbush and Brooklyn, on the 27th of August 1776 between His Majesty's forces commanded by General Howe and the Americans under Major General Putnam, shewing also the landing of the British Army on New-York Island, and the taking of the city of New-York &c. on the 15th of September following, with the subsequent disposition of both the armies," by William Faden, 1776

Map Source: *American Revolution and Its Era: Maps and Charts of North America and the West Indies, 1750 to 1789*, Library of Congress, Geography and Maps Div.

Excerpt of Memorial to Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling, 42nd Regt., Describing the Actions of the Regiment, Long Island, New York, Aug. 22 to 25, 1776

Memorial

L^t Col: Stirling 42^d Reg^t

On the 22^d of Aug^t 1776 the Army embarked from Staten island and landed on Long Island near New Utrecht w^t out opposition, [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis was sent on to Flat Bush w^t the British reserve [including the 42nd Regt.] 2 Miles from FB the 2^d Battⁿ of 42^d was left to Guard a pass which led to Brooklyn which they maintained 'tho having a constant picketing w^t the Enemy who was incamp^d in considerable numbers in the woods close by, intill the 26th when a disposition having been made for a Gen^l attack...

Source and Note: Archives, *Regimental Headquarters, The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment)*, Balhousie Castle, "Short account of the movements and engagements of the two battalions of the 42nd from 22nd August to 16th December 1776" (Addressed to Col T Stirling commanding 42nd Royal Highlanders.) BWRA 0398 Stirling Papers /5. The large 42nd Regt. had been split into two provisional battalions commanded by Maj. Murray and Brevet Maj. Grant, under the overall command of Lt. Col. Stirling. The "reserve" was made up of four composite battalions of British Grenadiers, the two provisional battalions of the 42nd Highlanders and Lord Cornwallis' own 33rd Regt.

**Corp. Thomas Sullivan's Account of the Amphibious Landing,
Gravesend, Long Island, New York, Aug. 22, 1776**

Aug. 22^d. After our being on board ship a day & two nights, waiting for the weather, which was wet, to clear up; the whole Army got ready for landing on *Long-Island*. The *Light Infantry* and *Grenadiers* embarked in the morning at 6 o'clock on board the Flat bottomed Boats. The *British* and *Hessian* troops, dropt down the River, and ranged in order under cover of the Men of W; Our Brigade i.e. the 2^d. was under cover of the [64-gun *HMS*] *Eagle*, and [*HMS*] *Centurion* of 50 Guns. The *Artillery* was put on board the *Row-Gallies* and Floating *Battarries*, under cover of the *Light-Infantry* and *Grenadiers*, and Royal Highlanders. The whole Army were ready together in Flat-boats; the sight of which was beautiful and delightful to any *English Soldier* or *Subject*, to see near twenty four Thousand men ready to land in a moment.

His Lordship Admiral [Richard, Viscount] *Howe* attended the Embarkation and landing of the Army with great attention; & when all things were ready, he hoisted the Union and landing *Flags* on board his Boat. And the whole Army landed then in a body, without opposition; on the *South-East* end of *Long-Island*, at a place called *Gravesend*, near the *Narras*.

When the *Rebels* saw that our Army was landing, the advanced guards they had at the water side fled with great precipitation, and joined their main Body, and ran to their Works; and were Pursued by the *Grenadiers*, *Chasseurs* and *Highlanders*.

Source and Note: *From Redcoat to Rebel, The Thomas Sullivan Journal*, Ed. Joseph Lee Boyle, Heritage Books, Bowie (Md.), 1997, p. 48. Corp. Sullivan was in the 49th Regt

**Hessian Jäger Officer's Account of the Landing at Gravesend and
Skirmishing at Flatbush, Long Island, Aug. 22-25, 1776**

August 22. — We weighed anchor and lay close over against Long Island. The ships of war came within range of the shore and pointed their cannon at the beach. At eight in the morning the whole coast swarmed with boats. At half-past eight the admiral hoisted the red flag, and in a moment all the boats "reached the shore. The English and Scotch, with the artillery, were first disembarked, and then the brigade of [Col. Karl] von Donop (the only Hessians there). Not a soul opposed our landing... We marched on, equally undisturbed, through Gravesend, and reached Flatbush towards evening. Three hundred riflemen had been there a little while before us. We sent a few cannon shots after them, set out our pickets, and slept quietly all night...

"August 23.—This morning early we were attacked on the right wing of the advanced guard. We brought up a cannon and drove them back. It rained bullets... Captain Congreve and one Constable were wounded by my side, and an Englishman was shot through. In the afternoon they attacked on the left side of the village and set fire to several houses, and we drew back into the village.... I advanced on the right wing, where I occupied a big garden, with one hundred and fifty men, chasseurs [Jägers] and light infantry. As the enemy had fallen back from here, I relieved Lieutenant von Donop. The rebels were placing cannon on the highway, and our Scotch Highlanders [1st Bn., 42nd Regt.] had to make a battery across the road, with embrasures for two cannon. I had to cover the work, and so came to the advanced posts, where, however, I was little disturbed.

"August 24.—A hot day. The rebels approached twice, fired howitzers and used grape and ball, so that all our artillery had to come up. At noon I slept a little while, and was waked by two cannon-balls which covered me with earth. The rebels have some very good marksmen, but some of them have wretched guns, and most of them shoot crooked. But they are clever at hunters' wiles. They climb trees, they crawl forward on their bellies for one hundred and fifty paces, shoot, and go as quickly back again...

"August 25.—We barricaded ourselves in the village; and to-night our chasseurs were to take a good rest. About two o'clock the rebels roused us from our slumbers; we quickly quieted them, however, with two cannon and a few rifle-shots. To-day we were attacked again, but after several of them had

bitten the dust they drew off... The rebels advanced in force. [Lt.] General [Charles, Earl] Cornwallis wanted Colonel Donop to retire, but the colonel stayed where he was and intrenched himself.

"August 26.—During this day we had much trouble, and at night were continually awakened by alarms from the outposts. This was not caused by attacks of the rebels, but mostly by deserters who wanted to come to us; and when the English and the [Hessian] grenadiers heard them approach they at once fired by platoons, if they did not get an immediate answer. To-day [Lt.] General [Leopold] von Heister came over to us with six battalions.

Source and Notes: Excerpts from "Die Neuesten Staatsbegebenheiten," (dated 1777, Frankfurt a. M., pp. 11c— 116.) in *The Hessians and the other German Auxiliaries of Great Britain in the Revolutionary War*, by Edward Jackson Lowell, Harper & Bros., 1884, Google Books, pp. 59-62. The letter, of which the above is the largest part, would seem to have been written by an officer of chasseurs, probably either Major von Prueschenk or Lieutenant von Grothausen. The Hessian Jägers were rifle-armed skirmishers.

**Excerpt of a Letter from Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling to his Brother, Sir William Stirling
of Ardoch, Describing Actions of the 42nd Regt., Long Island, Aug. 22-26, 1776**

Camp near Bloomingdale, Island of New York, Sep^t 22, 1776

My Dear Sir Will^m:

I wrote you since my arrival here... we met with no opposition on landing from that to the 28th we were preparing to attack them and during that time I had an uncomfortable post with half the Reg^t [1st Bn.] where we had constant skirmishing with the enemy however came off with five wounded ...

Source: NRS, *Papers of the Family of Stirling Home Drummond Moray of Abercairny* at GD24/1/458/1.

**Rebel New York Militia Col. Josiah Smith's Account of Skirmishing,
Flatbush, Long Island, Aug. 22-23, 1776**

22d [Aug. 1776] The [British] Regulars landed below New Utrecht, and I, with regiment, went down to Flatbush and near the Regulars, out all night and our advance killed several of them; 23d, all day in the woods [of Flatbush] and incessant firing all day – we killed a number and they wounded four of us, and shot Col. [Ephraim] Martin [Brig. Gen. Nathaniel Heard's New Jersey Brig.] through the breast...

Source and Note: "Col. Josiah Smith's Journal" in Documents and Letters Intended to Illustrate the Revolutionary Incidents in Queens County, N. Y., by Henry Onderdonk, Jr., Lott Van De water, Hempstead (N. Y.), 1884, Google Books, p. 7. Col. Smith was commander of the First Regt. of Minute Men.



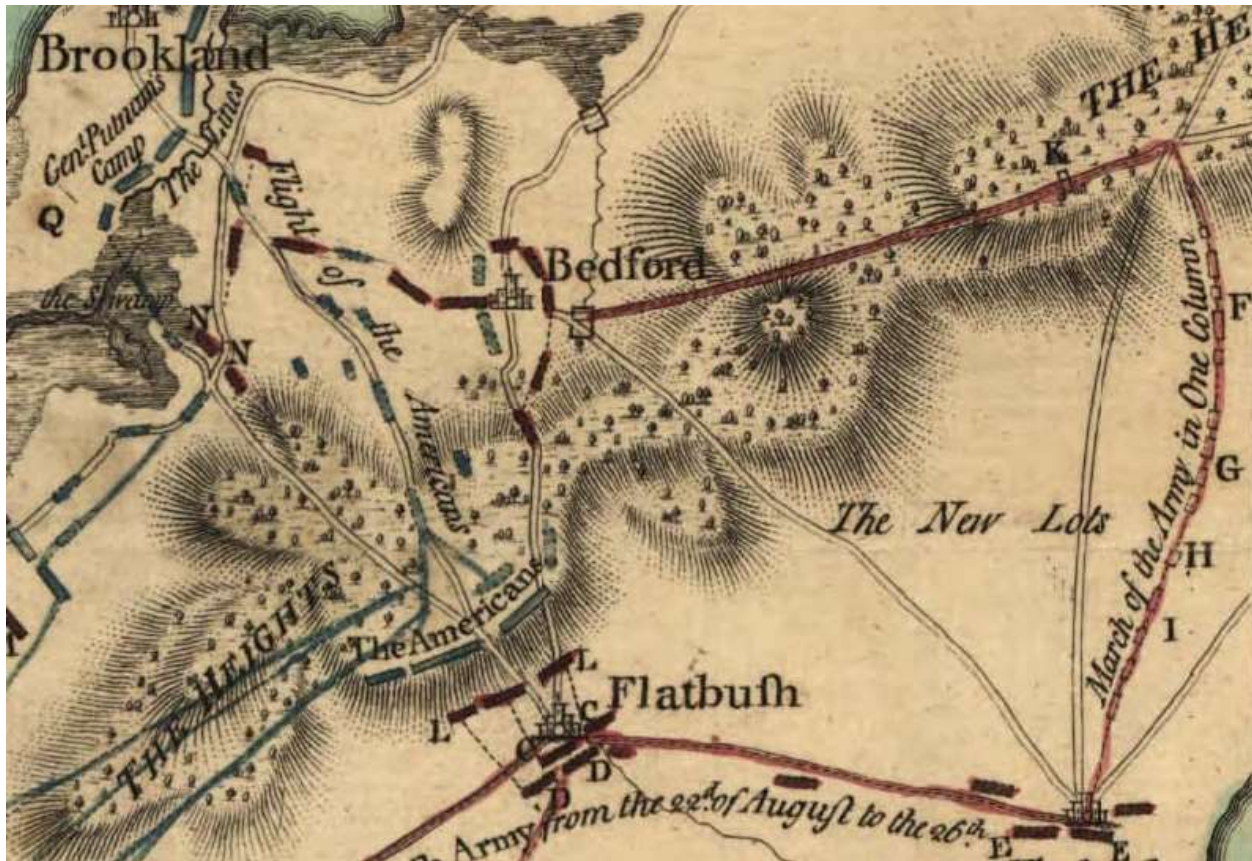
Detail of Portrait of Samuel Miles, Engraving by Henry Bryan Hall from Contemporary Portrait

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from Hollis Images, Harvard Lib.

Account of Skirmishing by Rebel Col. Samuel Miles, Pennsylvania Battalion, Flatbush, Long Island, Aug. 22-23, 1776

On the landing of the British army on Long Island, I was ordered over with my rifle regiment to watch their motions. I marched near to the village of Flat Bush, where the [1st Bn., 42nd] Highlanders then lay, but they moved the next day to Gen^l. [Sir William] Howe's camp and their place was supplied by the Hessians.

Source: "Auto-Biographical Sketch of Col. Samuel Miles" in the *American Historical Record*, Vol. 2, No. 14, Feb. 1873, p. 115.



Detail showing main body envelopment from "A plan of New York Island, with part of Long Island, Staten Island & east New Jersey, with a particular description of the engagement on the woody heights of Long Island, between Flatbush and Brooklyn, on the 27th of August 1776 between His Majesty's forces commanded by General Howe and the Americans under Major General Putnam, shewing also the landing of the British Army on New-York Island, and the taking of the city of New-York &c. on the 15th of September following, with the subsequent disposition of both the armies," by William Faden, 1776

Picture Source: *American Revolution and Its Era: Maps and Charts of North America and the West Indies, 1750 to 1789*, Library of Congress, Geography and Maps Div.

Battle of Brooklyn, Long Island, Aug. 26-27, 1776

General Orders for the Battle of Brooklyn, Long Island, New York, Aug. 26, 1776

G: O:

Head Quarters Long Island, 26th Aug^t 76...

Plundering is become so excessive that Commanding Officers of Corps must be responsible that the Soldiers do not quit their Encampments unless upon Duty in which case the Officer Commanding is to be answerable for their behavior of his Men.

The Mens Canteens are to be immediately filled with Rum & Water. Their Provisions & Necessaries put up in the best Manner for Carriage –

The Commander in Chief desires that the Soldiers may not Huzza in getting in our out of their Boats –

M. Bⁿ Orders The Commanding Officers of Comp^{ys} will see that the Mens necessities are pack'd up in their blankets immediately.

It is expected in future that the Men constantly Parade with their Packs and that they do not undo them until Night –

An Officer of a Comp^y constantly to see the Mens Rum mixed, if the Men cannot get Buckets they must see the Canteens carried to the Well –

G: After Orders, 5 O'Clock

The Army will Strike their Tents & Load their Baggage at 8 O'Clock this night to form at the head of their respective Encampments & there wait for further orders, the men to carry their Canteens, Camp Kettles, Provisions & Necessaries, no more than two Waggons can be allowed to each Reg^t for their Tents & Baggage, the overplus of Rum that Reg^{ts} may have in Store is to be carried in the Waggons with the Mens Tents –

The Advance Guard Consisting of three Squadrons of Cavalry, three Battalions of Light Infantry, four Batt^{ns} of Grenad^{rs} 1st Brigade 33^d & 71st Reg^{ts} will receive their orders from L^t Gen^l [Henry] Clinton with L^t Gen^l [Charles] Earl Cornwallis Major Gen^l [John] Vaughan & Brig^{rs} Gen^l [Alexander] Leslie & Sir W^m Erskine four light 3 pounders 2 Howitzers & 6 Six pounders will Attend this Corps –

The Advance Guard is to be follow'd by the Brigade of Guards with two 6 pounders & two Howitzers – The 3^d Brigade with two 12 Pounders. The 5th Brigade with four light 12 Pounders & two 6 Pounders, and 2^d Brigade with two 6 Pounders, the 49th Reg^t with four medium 12 Pounders & four Waggons with intrenching Tools to form the Rear Guard –

L^t Gen^l [Hugh] Earl Percy will take Post with the Brigade of Guards at the Head of the Line –

The Men are not to Load till ordered by their respective Commanding Officers & the greatest Silent Attention to be Observ'd by the Troops.

The Reg^{ts} to Wheel by half Companys & march from the Right, each Reg^t will have a flanking Party of a Non Commissioned Officer & four Men per Company under the Command of a Commissioned Officer of the Reg^t –

A Serj^t & Six Men of each Reg^t to take charge of the Baggage under the Command of a field Officer one Cap^t & 4 Sub^{ns} of the Line –

The Hospital Waggons with their own Guard to follow the 49th Reg^t –

Gen^l Officers Baggage with their Respective Guards next, & then the baggage of the Line –

The Q^r Master of Reg^{ts} & Pioneers are to form at the head of each Brigade under the direction of an Engineer, one Waggon is allowed to each Gen^l Officer. L^t Gen^l Leslie will have two if they can be procured –

The 4th & 6th Brigades will receive particular orders for their march. Six 6 Pounders two 3 pounders & two Howitzers will Attend these two Brigades. Cap^t [James] Moncrieff Engineer & an Assistant Engineer. to receive their Orders from Major Gen^l [James] Grant

The Baggage of the 6th Brigade will be embark'd in Flat Boats at Gravesend –

The New York Comp^{ys} are immediately to Escort the Artillery from Head Quarters to Denys's House where they will receive further orders ...

Source and Notes: NRS, "*Orderly Book, 4th Battⁿ Grenad^{rs}, 4th Battalion Grenadiers.*" This order documents the preparations made for the Battle of Long Island on Aug. 26-27, 1776. The 42nd Regt. was assigned to the left flank

attack under Maj. Gen. James Grant, with the 4th and 6th Brigades. The 42nd Light Infantry and Grenadier Cos. took part in the right flank attack under Lt. Gen. Henry Clinton.

Excerpt of Letter No. 26 from Gen. Sir William Howe, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Reporting the Battle of Brooklyn, Long Island, Aug. 26-27, 1776

Newtown, Long Island 3rd September 1776

My Lord...

On the 26th [Hessian] Lieutenant-General [Leopold] de Heister took post at Flatbush, and in the evening [Lt. Gen. Charles,] Lord Cornwallis with the British drew off to Flatland. About 9 o'clock the same night the van of the Army, commanded by Lieutenant-General [Henry] Clinton, consisting of the Light Dragoons and Brigade of Light Infantry, the Reserve under the command of Lord Cornwallis excepting the 42^d Regiment which was posted to the left of the Hessians, the first Brigade and the 71st [Highland] Regiment, with fourteen field-pieces, began to move from Flatland across the country through the New Lots to seize a pass in the heights extending from east to west along the middle of the island and about three miles from Bedford on the road to Jamaica, in order to turn the Enemy's left posted at Flatbush.

General Clinton, being arrived within half a mile of the pass about two hours before daybreak, halted and settled his disposition for the attack. One of his patrols, falling in with a patrol of the Enemy's Officers, took them; and the general, learning from their information that the rebels had not occupied the pass, detached a Battalion of Light Infantry to secure it and, advancing with his Corps upon the first appearance of day, possessed himself of the heights with such a disposition as must have ensured success had he found the Enemy in force to oppose him.

The main body of the Army, consisting of the Guards, 2^d, 3^d and 5th Brigades, with ten field-pieces, led by Lord Percy, marched soon after General Clinton and halted an hour before day in his rear. This column (the country not admitting of two columns of march) was followed by the 49th Regiment with four medium twelve-pounders, and the baggage closed the rear with a separate guard.

As soon as these Corps had passed the heights they halted for the soldiers to take a little refreshment; after which the march was continued and about half an hour past eight o'clock, having got to Bedford in the rear of the Enemy's left, the attack was commenced by the Light Infantry and Light Dragoons upon large bodies of the rebels, having cannon, who were quitting the woody heights before Mentioned to return to their lines upon discovering the march of the Army; instead of which they were drove back, and the Army still moving on to gain the Enemy's rear, the Grenadiers and 33^d Regiment being in front of the column soon approached within musket shot of the Enemy's lines at Brooklyn, from whence these Battalions without regarding the fire of cannon and small arms upon them pursued numbers of the rebels that were retiring from the heights so close to their principal redoubt and with such eagerness to attack it by storm that it required repeated orders to prevail upon them to desist from the attempt. Had they been permitted to go on, it is my opinion they would have carried the redoubt, but as it was apparent the lines must have been ours at a very cheap rate by regular approaches I would not risk the loss that might have been sustained in the assault and ordered them back to a hollow way in the front of the works out of the reach of musketry.



Detail of Portrait of Lt. Gen. Leopold von Heister, 1776, by Johann Werner Kobold

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from *Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel*

Lieutenant-General de Heister began soon after daybreak to cannonade the Enemy in his front, and upon the approach of our right ordered Colonel [Carl von] Donop's Corps to advance to the attack of the hill, following himself at the head of the Brigades. The Light Infantry about that time having been reinforced by the Light Company, the Grenadier Company and two other Companies of the Guards, who joined them with the greatest activity and spirit, had taken three pieces of cannon and were warmly engaged with very superior numbers in the woods when, on the Hessians advancing, the Enemy gave way and was entirely routed in that quarter.

On the left Major General [James] Grant, having the fourth and sixth Brigades, the 42^d Regiment and two companies of New York Provincials raised by Governor [William] Tryon in the spring, advanced along the coast with ten pieces of cannon to divert the Enemy's attention from their left. About midnight he fell in with their advance parties and at daybreak with a large Corps, having cannon and advantageously posted, with whom there was skirmishing and a cannonade for some hours, until by the firing at Brooklyn the rebels, suspecting their retreat would be cut off, made a Movement to their right in order to secure it across a swamp and creek that covers the right of their works; but being met in their way by a part of the 2^d Grenadiers who were soon after supported by the 71st Regiment, and General Grant's left coming up, they suffered considerably. Numbers of them, however, did get into the morass where many were suffocated or drowned.

The force of the Enemy detached from the lines where General [Israel] Putnam commanded was not less from the best accounts I have had than ten thousand Men who were under the orders of Major General [John] Sullivan, Brigadier-Generals [Alexander] Lord Stirling and [Nathaniel Woodhull] Udell. Their loss is computed to be about three thousand three hundred killed, wounded, prisoners and drowned, with five field-pieces and one howitzer taken. A return of the prisoners is.

On the part of the King's troops, five Officers and fifty-six noncommissioned Officers and rank and file killed, twelve Officers and two hundred and forty-five non-commissioned Officers and rank and file wounded, one Officer and twenty Grenadiers of the Marines taken by mistaking the Enemy for the Hessians.

The Hessians had two privates killed, three Officers and twenty-three rank and file wounded. The wounds are in general very slight. Lieut.-Colonel [Henry] Monckton is shot through the body but there are the greatest hopes of his recovery.

The behaviour of both Officers and soldiers, Hessians and British, was highly to their honour. More determined courage and steadiness in troops has never been experienced or a greater ardour to distinguish themselves, as all those who had an opportunity have amply evinced by their actions.

In the evening of the 27th the Army encamped in front of the Enemy's works – on the 28th at night broke ground six hundred yards distant from a redoubt upon their left, and on the 29th at night the rebels evacuated their Entrenchments and Redhook with the utmost silence and quitted Governor's Island the following evening, leaving their cannon and a quantity of stores in all their works. At daybreak on the

30th their flight was discovered, the picquets of the line took possession, and those most advanced reached the shore opposite to New York as their rearguard was going over and fired some shots among them.

The Enemy is still in possession of the town and island of New York in force and making demonstration of opposing us in their works on both sides of King's Bridge.

The inhabitants of this island, many of whom have been forced into rebellion, have all submitted and are ready to take the oaths of allegiance.

This dispatch will be delivered to your lordship by Major [Cornelius] Cuyler, my first aide-de-camp, who I trust will be able to give your lordship such further information as may be required.

Signed. [W. Howe]

PS. I have omitted to take notice in its proper place of a Movement made by the King's ships towards the town on the 27th at daybreak with a view of drawing off the attention of the Enemy from our real design, which I believe effectually answered the intended purpose.

Source and Note: *Documents of the American Revolution*, Vol. XII, Transcripts 1776, pp. 216-218 from TNA, *Colonial Office, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches* at CO 5/93, f. 257. Lt. Col. Stirling considered the 42nd Regt. to be a separate attack as opposed to being attached to Maj. Gen. James Grant's left flank diversionary attack.

Battle of Brooklyn, Maj. Gen James Grant's Attack, Long Island, New York, Aug. 26-27, 1776



Detail from View from Battle Hill, Brooklyn, 19th Century, by James Smillie

Picture Source: From the *New York Public Library*

Excerpt of Letter from Maj. Gen. James Grant of Ballindalloch to Richard Rigby, Paymaster to the Forces, Describing the Attack of the Rebel Right Flank, Brooklyn, Long Island, Aug. 26-27, 1776

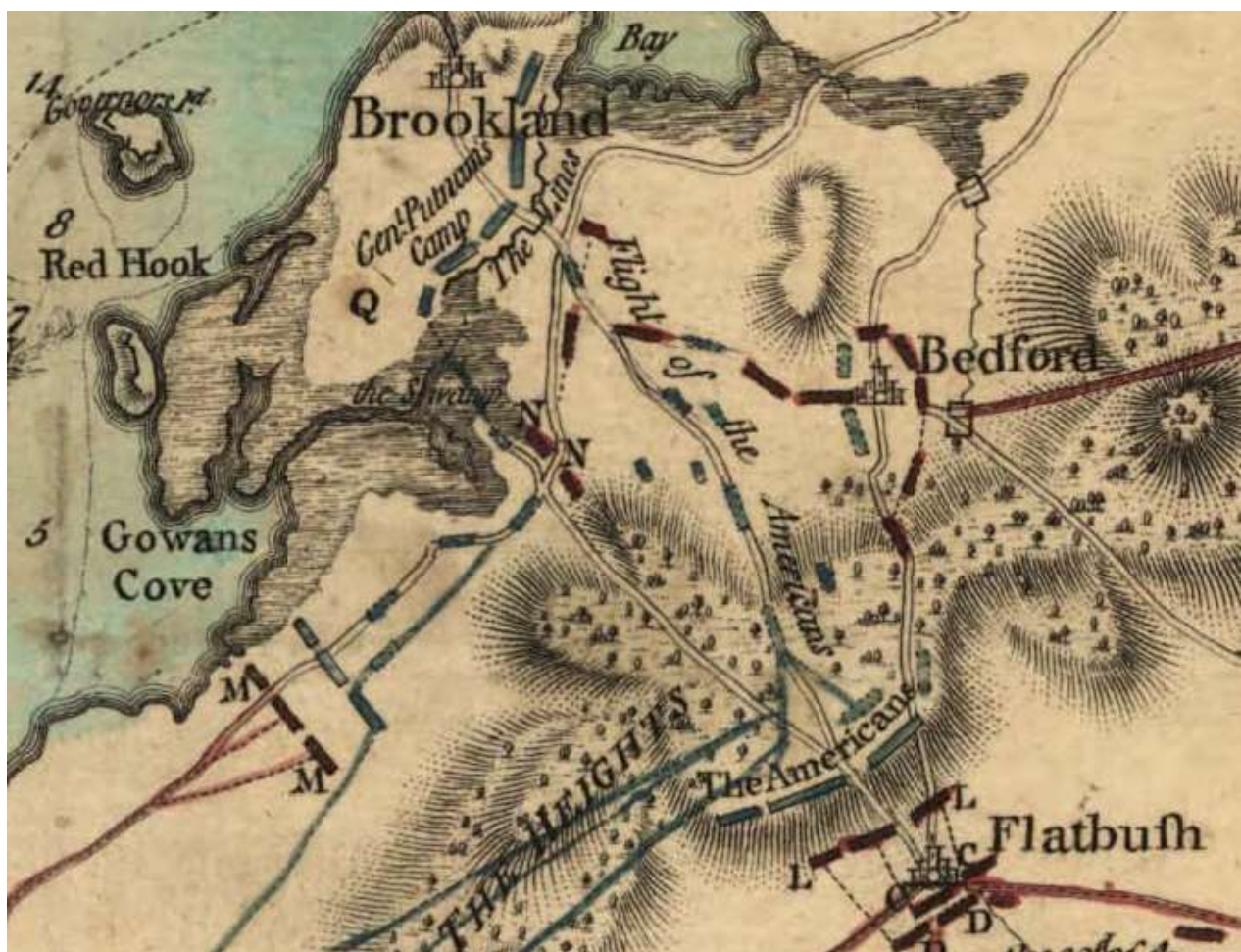
Long Island, 2 Sept^r., 1776

...You will be glad and Lord North not displeased that we have had the field day I talked of in my last letter and if a good Bleeding can bring those Bible-faced Yankees to their Senses -- the Fever of Independence should soon abate. We marched the 26th at night, the General [Sir William Howe] and the army turned the left Flank of the Rebels. I was detached with eight Battalions and ten pieces of Cannon to turn their Right Flank, [Hessian Lt.] General [Leopold] de Heister remained at Flatbush which was the

centre with orders to penetrate when the opportunity offer'd -- I fell in with some of the Rebels advanced Guards upon the March and in the course of the night took a Major and thirty prisoners..... The 27th about six in morning I took an advantageous position in sight of all the Rebell's Works, we had skirmishing and a Canonade for some hours, which drew their whole attention to my Detachment and by that means did not discover the General's March and Disposition till they were surrounded.

The General's plan answered to his wish, it was formed with Secrecy and precision no Body was entrusted with any part of it but those who were to carry it into Execution nor an officer or man knew where they were going but at large to take the Rebell's Redoubts. We think the Disposition was as good as could have been made and that the General from the Abilities he has shown deserved the success he has met with in obtaining a cheap and compleat Victory...

Source and Note: "Letter from Gen. James Grant to his friend Richard Rigby, Paymaster to the Forces. Dated at Long Island, 2 Sept. 1776" in *General James Grant, Scottish Soldier and Royal Governor of East Florida*, Paul David Nelson, University Press of Florida, 1993, pp. 85-86. The 42nd Highlanders joined the right flank of Grant's attack.



Detail showing "M.M. Maj^r. Gen^l. Grant with the 4th. & 5th. [6th] Brigades, the 42^d. Reg^t. & 2 Companies of N. York Provincials [Loyalists], with 10 Pieces of cannon, attacking a large Corps on the Enemy's Right." from "A Plan of New York Island, with part of Long Island, Staten Island & east New Jersey, with a particular description of the engagement on the woody heights of Long Island, between Flatbush and Brooklyn, on the 27th of August 1776 between His Majesty's forces commanded by General Howe and the Americans under Major General Putnam, shewing also the landing of the British Army on New-York Island, and the taking of the city of New-York &c. on the 15th of September following, with the subsequent disposition of both the armies," 1776, by William Faden.

**Excerpt of a Letter from Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling, 42nd Regt. to his Brother,
Sir William Stirling, Bart., of Ardoch, Describing the Battle of Brooklyn,
Long Island, Aug. 26-27, 1776**

Camp near Bloomingdale, Island of New York, Sep^t 22, 1776

My Dear Sir Will^m:

I wrote you since my arrival here... the night of 26 and 27th the whole army marched in four columns toward the Enemy who were posted within their lines at Brookland & Bedford which is the road that leads to New York Ferry, early in the Morn^g the 4th & 6th Brigades which marched by the waterside and in which poor [Capt. Sir Alexander Murray, 17th Regt.] Sir A. M. [was killed] was come to their ground earlier than the rest of the Army by which means they met with an opposition which gave them a check I came up on their right about nine in the Morn^g being the next Column having marched without road or Guide and a pleasant sight we were to them. as they confess themselves it might have gone hard with them if we had not come up, about ten the other columns got engaged but the surprise was so great upon the Rebels that they made no great resistance our Reg^t at last marched into the woods where the rifle men were and receiving a Scattered fire we got in among them & had little more to do than take prisoners of which we made 160 having only 3 men wounded, [Maj. Gen. Alexander] Lord Stirling a Gen^l [John] Sullivan a Gen^l [Nathaniel Woodhull] Woodard with many field Officers & and about 1100 Rebels were taken and I suppose about half that number killed or drowned as they passed a [Gowanus] Creek to get to their works which they dug very precipitately & and in a great panicky & and I believe had we pushed their works they might have been taken and all in them which they themselves said were 40 Batt^{ns} on the Island that day, our loss is trifling (except in [Capt] Sir A[lexander]. Murray [17th Regt.] who is universally regretted he received a Cannons hot in the thigh & two grape in his body he lived half an hour sensible and ____desired all he has should be given to his Sisters & except his watch and purse which he gave his serv^t His baggage has not been looked in to but when it shall be taken care of I am adverse to putting his things to publick auction & and have advised disposing of Right things, private to the Officers that are good, any lumber or old things given to his serv^t and what is not disposed of that way sent home, I hope this will be approved of I saw him buried as decently as time & circumstance would allow ...

Source and Note: NRS, *Papers of the Family of Stirling Home Drummond Moray of Abercairny* at GD24/1/458/1. This letter is important as it shows Lt. Col. Stirling considered his regiment to be a separate column in the attack, while most accounts considered the 42nd Regt. to be attached to Maj. Gen. James Grant's column to attack the rebels' right flank.

**Excerpt of Memorial to Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling, 42nd Regt., Describing Actions of the 42nd Regt. in
the Battle of Brooklyn, New York, Aug. 26-27, 1776**

Memorial

L^t Col: Stirling 42^d Reg^t

... the 26th when a disposition having been made for a Gen^l attack the 42^d was relieved & being joined by the 1st Battⁿ, marched & remained all night on the road halfway between N Utrecht & Flat Bush, next Morning they marched directly through the Woods w^t out any guide to join Gen Grants Brigades w^h they did very opportunely those troops having received a check in attempting to pass a Gully on the right and soon after the B^h [British] troops being successful [illegible] was given for the 42^d to move on & attack the Riffle men in the woods w^h they did and took near 400 prisoners, after the day was over they were ordered to march back to N Utrecht w^h was done....

Source: Archives, *Regimental Headquarters, The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment)*, Balhousie Castle, “*Short account of the movements and engagements of the two battalions of the 42nd from 22nd August to 16th December 1776*” (Addressed to Col T Stirling commanding 42nd Royal Highlanders.) BWRA 0398 Stirling Papers /5.

Newspaper Excerpt of Letter from Officer of the 42nd Regt. with Account of Battle of Brooklyn, New York, Aug. 26-27, 1776

An Officer of the 42d regiment, in a letter to a friend, dated Long-Island, Sepr. 2, says. “I was upon a party who took above 100 prisoners, who upon their knees begged their lives, and many of them declared that they had been forced into the service. We could see the rebels preparing to evacuate New-York, and hear that they are in a great consternation lest a junction should be effected with General Burgoyne’s army. It is reported also, that many of the Loyalists in New-York have dared to lay down the arms which they have been compelled to carry against his Majesty’s army; so that I have no doubt of our being soon in possession of that city.”

Source: *General Evening Post*, London, Oct. 22-24, 1776, p. 1.



Miniature of Ens. William Leslie in 42nd Regt. Uniform, circa 1771-1773

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons

Excerpt of Letter from Capt. William Leslie, 17th Regt., to his Father, the Earl of Leven, Describing Maj. Gen. James Grant’s Left Column Attack at the Battle of Brooklyn, Aug. 26-27, 1776

Bedford Long Isl^d.
Sept^r. 2nd. 1776

My Dearest Father

Now that we have got a little Revenge I can write with more Satisfaction than when the rebels were insulting us on all hands with Impunity...

On the 26th Our Brigade (viz the 4th) commanded by Major Gen^l. Grant & the Brigade on our Right (the 6th.) commanded by B. Gen^l. [James] Agnew rec^d. Orders to be in readiness to March at night in one Division, marched at ten o’Clock from Denises along Shore...

Our Reg^t. marched in the front by files the advanced Guard consisted of a Cap^t. 2 Sub^{ns}. & 50 private: on our right we had 2 Comp^{ys}. composed of People who had made their escape f^m. New York, they scoured the Woods & Hedges; the Sea secured our left; about 12 o’clock they fell in with the Rebels advanced Piquet; out of which 7 were killed & several wounded, a few of our Men & Yorkers were wounded; a little after our Reg^t. was detached round a Wood where a Party of the Rebels were supposed to be lurking, we were challenged by a Sentry and upon not answering rec^d. a smart fire without doing us much harm

we return'd the fire but with what success is impossible to know, for it was quite dark; We took a number of Prisoners amongst the rest a Major & some Officers all Riffle Men, joined the Brigade and lay on our Arms till Day Light. I never wish to be concerned in a night attack a second time, of all things I think it is the most to be dreaded, & the number & disposition of the Enemy are not known, if we had had a regular Enemy to deal with every man of the two Brigades must have been cut off or taken – At 5 o'Clock we began our March again, and about 7 perceived the Rebels within Musquet Shot drawn up to a great Extent on the top of rising Ground with every advantage they could wish; their Right extended to a Marsh over which they could retreat under some Cannon; their left was covered with a very thick Wood in which were innumerable Riffle Men; it is supposed there were two lines in the Rear to support their main Body; in their front were two Field Pieces, and all the Bunkers, Hedges, Trees and Hollows were lined with Rifflers. Our Disposition was very soon made, Gen^l Grant ordered the 6th. Brigade to form upon a rising Ground on the Right; during their forming two field Pieces & a Howitzer fired incessantly at the Rebels, some grape shot dislodged them from y^e Bushes &c next our Front & from which they fired at our Regt. at a few Yards Distance. The 17th. was ordered to advance to a house 70 or 80 Y^{ds}. in our Front, the other three Reg^{ts}. of y^e 4th. Brigade took up the Ground betwixt our Reg^t. & 6th. Brigade; when we took Possession of the Ground at the House my Comp^y. was sent as a Reinforcement to the advanced Guard who were much incommoded by Rifflers from behind the Hedges; During all this time Showers of Grape went tumbling among us which wounded some of our Men. Thank God neither myself nor one of my Camp^y. were touched the whole Day, altho in the direct line of Fire... the Fire ceased by Degrees & the Rebels began to retreat in pretty good Order across the Marsh on their right, at last a company of grenadiers approaching in their rear a Panick sized [seized] them & they took to a precipitate retreat without the last [least] order; Shoals [Scores] of them ran over the Marsh, vast numbers took to the Woods... When we had time to breath and rest ourselves a little after being on foot for 12 hours, we heard by noise of Cannon & small arms that another part of the Army were engaged at Brookland about three miles from us, & had the pleasure to learn soon after, that the Rebels were forced behind their lines with great loss ...”

Source and Notes: TNA, *Papers of the Leslie family, Earls of Leven and Melville*, Military and Naval Papers at GD25/9/513/16 and “Letter from Capt. William Leslie of the 17th Regt. dated Sept. 2, 1776 to his father, David Leslie, sixth Earl of Leven.” in “Captain William Leslie’s Paths of Glory,” Sheldon S. Cohen in *New Jersey History*, Vol. 108, Numbers 1-2 (Spring/Summer 1990). Leslie had begun his service as an ensign in the 42nd Regt. in 1771 in Ireland until he was promoted into the 17th Regt. in 1773.

Account by Capt. William Bamford, 40th Regt., of Maj. Gen. James Grant’s Attack at the Battle of Brooklyn, New York, Aug. 26-27, 1776

26 the 4th & 6th Brigades under Gen^l Grant march’d from their cantonem^{ts} about IX at N^t they March’d toward Brookline ferry, the York Comp^{ys} march’d on y^r Flanks; surpriz’d some small posts of the Enemy on the road & took some prisoners. Maj^r Byrd taken.

27. About VII in the M^g we discover’d the Enemy drawn up on a hill on our right flank our Advanc’d Guard was fir’d upon from an Orchard; the Enemy were soon drove from thence; & we march’d to gain the Hills, the enemy firing on us from the woods, when we had possessed the Heights, the enemy pour’d a very heavy fire upon us from the woods, we drove them into the thickest part & there kept them in awe as we found they had great Numbers conceal’d in the woods we did not think it prudent to pursue them, but drew up on the Heights & lay on our Arms. About one the L^t Infantry & G^{ds} w^t part of G^l [Sir William] Howes Army from Flatbush having march’d to attack them by a road on the Right began to cannonade & attack w^t small Arms the rebels finding themselves attack’d on both sides after a good deal of resistance being very hard press’d gave way & ran in great confusion some were drown’d endeavoring to cross to a Mill on the opposite side, we took a number of Pris^{rs} & kill’d a great many Men. numbers are deserting. Our Loss very trifling. 50 kill’d 260 Wounded a number of them slightly.

Source: "Bamford's Diary. The Revolutionary Diary of a British Officer," in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, Maryland Historical Society, Vol. LXII, Baltimore, 1967, pp.241-243, 296-314.



Royal Governor of Virginia, John Murray, 4th Earl of Dunmore, 1765, by Sir Joshua Reynolds

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from Scottish National Gallery

**Excerpt of Letter from Royal Governor of Virginia, John Murray, 4th Earl of Dunmore,
to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State, with Account of Highlanders in Battle of Brooklyn;
Long Island, New York, Aug. 27, 1776**

Ship Dunmore, off New-York,
September 4, 1776.

My Lord...

I have offered my services here, in the mean time, to General [Sir William] Howe, and shall be happy if I can be of use. I have now only to congratulate your Lordship on the success of his Majesty's arms on the 26th ultimo [August]. I was with the Highlanders and Hessians the whole day, and it is with the utmost pleasure I can assure your Lordship that the ardour of both these corps on that day must have exceeded his Majesty's most sanguine wish; and I am well convinced, from everything I have heard, that the fervour of the rest of the army was in no ways inferiour to those I have just now mentioned, but of which I was not an eyewitness.

I am, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient, humble servant,
Dunmore

To Lord George Germaine

Source and Note: *American Archives*, Series 5, Vol. 2, p. 158. Because the 71st (Fraser's) Highland Regt. was also engaged in the battle, Dunmore's reference to the Highlanders is not clear to which regiment he was referring, however the 42nd Regt. was much closer to the Hessians than Fraser's Highlanders.



Maj. Gen. William Alexander, known as Lord Stirling

Picture Source: *The Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution*, Vol. II, Benson J. Lossing, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1855, Google Books, p. 603.

**Letter from Rebel Brig. Gen. William Alexander (Lord Stirling) to Gen. George Washington
With Account of Maj. Gen. James Grant's Attack, Rebel Right Flank, Long Island, New York,
Aug. 26-27, 1776**

Eagle. August 29th: 1776.

My Dear General

I have now an Opportunity of informing you of What has happened to me Since I had last the pleasure of Seeing you. About 3 o'Clock in the morning of the 27th: I was Called up and Informed by General [Israel] Putnam that the Enemy were advancing by the Road from flat Bush to the Red Lyon [Tavern], and ordered me to March with the two Regiments nearest at hand to Meet them; these happened to be [Col. John] Haslet's [1st Delaware Regt.] & [Col. William] Smallwood's [Maryland Battalion], with which I accordingly Marched, and was on the Road to the Narrows just as the day light began to appear. we proceeded to within about half a Mile of the Red Lyon, and there met Col: [Samuel] Atlee with his Regiment [Pennsylvania Musketry Battalion] who Informed me, that the Enemy were in Sight, indeed I then saw their front between us and the Red Lyon, I desired Colonel Atlee to place his Regiment on the left of the road and to wait their Coming up, while I went to form the two Regiments I had brought with me, along a Ridge from the road up to a piece of wood on the Top of the Hill, this was done Instantly on very Advantageous ground. Our Opponents advanced and were fired upon in the Road by Atlee's, who after two or three Rounds retreated to the wood on my left, and there formed, by this time [Lt. Col. Peter] Kichline's Rifle Men [Northampton County Flying Camp Battalion] arrived, part of them I placed along a hedge under the front of the Hill, and the rest in the front of the wood. The troops opposed to me were two Brigades of four Regiments Each under the command of [Maj.] General [James] Grant; who advanced their light Troops to within 150 yards of our Right front, and took possession of an Orchard there, & some hedges which extended towards our left this brought on an Exchange of fire between those troops and Our Rifle Men which continued for about two hours and then Ceased by those light troops retiring to their Main Body. In the Mean time [Rebel] Capt. [Benajah] Carpenter brought up two field pieces which were placed on the side of the Hill, so as to Command the Road, and the Only Approach for some hundred Yards; on the part of General Grant there were two field pieces one Howitzer advanced to within three Hundred yards of the front of our Right and a like detachment of Artillery to the front of our left on a rising Ground, at About 600 yards distance, one of their Brigades, formed in two lines opposite to our Right, and the other Extended in one line to top of the Hills in the front of our left, in this position we stood Cannonading each other 'till near Eleven o'Clock; when I found that General [Sir William] Howe, with the Main Body of the Army, was between me and our Lines, and saw that only Chance of

Escaping being all made prisoners, was to pass the Creek near the Yellow Mills, and, in order to render this the more practicable, I found it absolutely Necessary to Attack the Body of Troops commanded by [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis posted at the [Cortelyou] House near the Upper Mills: This I Instantly did, with about half of Smallwood's first ordering all other troops to make the best of their way through the Creek, we Continued the Attack for a Considerable time, the Men having been rallied and the Attack renewed five or Six Several times, and we were on the point of driving Lord Cornwallis from his Station, but large [reinforcements] arriving rendered it impossible to do more than provide for Safety, I endeavored to get in between that house and Fort Box, but on Attempting it, I found a Considerable body of Troops in my Front, and Several in pursuit of me on the Right & left & a Constant firing on me, I immediately Turned the point of a Hill which Covered me from their fire, and was soon out of the Reach of my pursuers; I found that it would be in Vain to attempt to make my Escape, and therefore went to Surrender myself to [Lt.] General [Leopold] de Heister Commander in Chief of the Hessians.

Source: *George Washington Papers at the Library of Congress*, Series 4, Gen. Corres. 1697-1799, Images 11-12.

Account of Maj. Gen. James Grant's Attack and Encounter with the 42nd Highlanders by Rebel Col. Samuel Atlee, Pennsylvania Musketry Battalion, Long Island, Aug. 26-27, 1776

Long Island, Tuesday, August 27th, 1776.

This morning before day, the Camp was alarmed by an attack upon the Pickett, stationed upon the lower Road leading to the Narrows, commanded by Major [Edward] Burd, of the Pennsylv^a flying Camp. About day light a part of [Brig. Gen. William Alexander] Lord Sterling's Brigade, to wit: Col. [William] Smallwood's [Maryland], Col. [John] Haslett's [Delaware], part of [Nicholas] Lutz's [Pennsylvania] & [Peter Kichline] Kirblin's [Pennsylvania] Flying Camp, and part of mine, in the whole about 2,300 men, under the Command of Maj. Gen. [John] Sullivan, and the Brigadiers, Lord Sterling and [Samuel] Parsons, march'd to support the Pickett attacked by the enemy. About ½ after seven, the enemy were discovered advancing, about 2 ½ miles from the lines at Brookline, in order – their field Artillery in front. This proved the left wing of the British Army, the 4th & 6th Brigades. composed of the following Regiments: the 17th, 23^d, 40th, 42^d, 44th, 46th, 55th, 57th and 64th under the Command of Major General [James] Grant.

I then rec'd orders from L^d Sterling, with that part of my Battallion in the Field, to advance and oppose the Enemy's passing a morass at the Foot, a fine rising Ground upon which they were drawing up, and give him time to form the Brigades upon the Heights. This order I immediately obeyed, exposed without any kind of Cover to the Enemy's Fire of Artillery charged with Grape. We sustained their Fire untill the Brigade was form'd. I then filed off to the Left and look post on a fine woody eminence on the left of the Brigade.

My troops just posted, when I received a Reinforcement of 2 Companies from the Delawares, with orders to file off further to the Left, and prevent, if possible, a large detachment of the enemy from turning the Left of the Brigade. Upon filing off to the Left, according to the orders rec'd, I espied, at the Distance of about 300 yards, a Hill of Clear Ground [Battle Hill, Greenwood cemetery, el. 220 ft.], a proper situation to oppose the Regiments endeavoring to flank us; which hill, I determined, if possible, to gain before them, judging they were likewise making for it. On marching up the Hill, and within about 50 yards of the summit, we unexpectedly rec'd a heavy Fire from the Enemy taken post there before me, notwithstanding the forced march I made. Upon receiving the heavy Fire, my detachment, under a continued and exceeding warm Fire of the Enemy, formed in order.

The 2 companies of the Delaware Reg't, excepting the Lieuts. Stewart & Harney, with about 16 privates, broke, and had nearly drawn after them the whole of my detachment. This caused a moment's Halt, but the Officers & men recovering from the surprise at receiving so rough & unexpected a salutation, upon receiving my orders to advance, immediately obeyed, with such Resolution that the Enemy, after a severe Conflict of a few minutes, left me master of the Hill, leaving behind them a Lieut. and six privates wounded, and fourteen privates killed. My troops flush'd with this advantage, were for

pushing after the flying Enemy, but perceiving at about 60 yards from the Hill we had just gain'd, across a Hollow way, a Stone Fence lined with wood, from behind which we might be greatly annoyed, I ordered not to advance but maintain the possession of the Hill, (which answered at this Time every necessary purpose.) The order was immediately obeyed, when we found by a heavy Fire from the Fence that it was lined as I expected. The Fire was as briskly returned by my brave Soldiers. The Enemy finding it too hott and our fire too well directed, retreated to and joined the Right of this wing of their army. In this severe conflict I lost my worthy Friend and Lt. Col. [Caleb] Parry, whom, in the midst of the action and immediately after he fell, I ordered to be bourn by four Soldiers off the Field into the Lines at Brook Line. The Enemies situation here was so advantageous that had they been marksmen, and directed their Fire with judgment, they might have cut off the greatest part of my detachment, I having left, for the security of my Right Flank and to protect my Rear in case of Retreat, a Company in a Wood upon my Right. After this first Attack which continued in a whole for about 15 minutes, we brought from the field such of their wounded whom I judged might be assisted, and about 25 stand of Arms. The wounded I placed in my Rear under the shade of some Bushes, it being intencely hott; the arms I distributed to such of my soldiers as were the most indifferently arm'd, and the wounded Lieut. taken at our first gaining the Hill I sent to L'd Sterling by a Drum & Fife. He died on the way. After placing the proper Guards, I ordered my fatigued soldiers to rest themselves. We continued in this situation about 20 minutes, when the Enemy was discover'd marching down to make a second attempt for the Hill. Both officers and soldiers immediately flew to arms, and with remarkable coolness and resolution sustained and returned their Fire for about 10 minutes, when the Enemy were obliged once more to a precipitate flight, leaving behind them. Killed, Lt. Col. [James] Grant [40th Regt.], a number of Privates, and great many wounded. These wounded not mortally, I likewise removed into my rear; one I sent to L'd Sterling that had rec'd a wound in the leg, I sent my Adjutant to his Lordship, with an acc't of my successive advantages, to know his lordship's further orders and to request a Re-inforcement. My Adjutant returned with 2 Companies of Riflemen of the flying Camp, who remain'd with me a few minutes, being soon order'd to rejoin their Corps. Very luckily, after this second engagement, an ammunition Cart belonging to Col. [Jedediah] Huntington's [17th Conn. Continental] Reg't arrived at my post, of which we stood in great need, having entirely exhausted our ammunition and fired many rounds from that taken from the Enemy every time we had the good fortune to beat them off the Field. The officers were extremely alert, and, from the ammunition so opportunely arrived, soon supplied their men with sufficient Stock to sustain another attack, should the Enemy think proper to make it. They did not suffer us to wait long. In about half an Hour we were alarm'd of their appearance the Third Time.

The eagerness of the Officers and Soldiers to receive them deserves my warmest acknowledgements and those of their Country. They were received as usual, and as usual Fled after a warm conflict of about 10 or 12 minutes. I now determined to pursue but observed a Reg't which proved to be the 22^d [42nd] or Royal Highlanders coming down to sustain the Royal Runners who were the 23^d and 44th [6th Brig.]. I halted, prepared to receive them likewise, but the drubbings their Friends had so repeatedly received, I believe, prevented them, and they seemed satisfied with protecting the Refugees and conducting such as were able to the army.

Major Burd, who was taken at the attack of the Pickett on the Right, and was at Gen'l Grant's Quarters during the above several attacks, informed me after each great numbers of Officers and soldiers came in wounded.

I fully expected, as did my Officers, that the strength of the British Army was advancing in this Quarter with intention to have taken this Rout to our Lines, but how greatly were we deceived when intelligence was received that the Center, composed of the Hessians and the Right wing, were rapidly advancing by our Rear, and that we were nearly surrounded.

This we were soon convinced of by an exceeding heavy Fire about a mile in our Rear, no Troops being in that Quarter to oppose the march of this Grand Body of the British Army but Col. [Samuel] Miles, 2 Battalions of Rifle men, Col. [Samuel Wyllys] Willis's Reg't of Connecticut, and a part of [Nicholas] Lutz's Battallion of Penn'a Flying Camp.

I once more sent my Adjutant to Lord Sterling to acquaint him with my last success and for further orders, but receiving no answer and after waiting for the Enemy more than half an hour, they not approaching in Front, those in the Rear drawing very near, I judged it most prudent to join the Brigade, where I might be of more service than in my present situation. I therefore ordered a march, leaving upon the Field, Killed. Lt. Col. Grant and upward of sixty men and great number wounded, beside those taken at Sundry times into my Rear. The World may judge my surprise when coming to the Ground where our Brigade had been drawn up, to find they had gone off without my receiving the least intelligence of the Retreat or orders what to do...

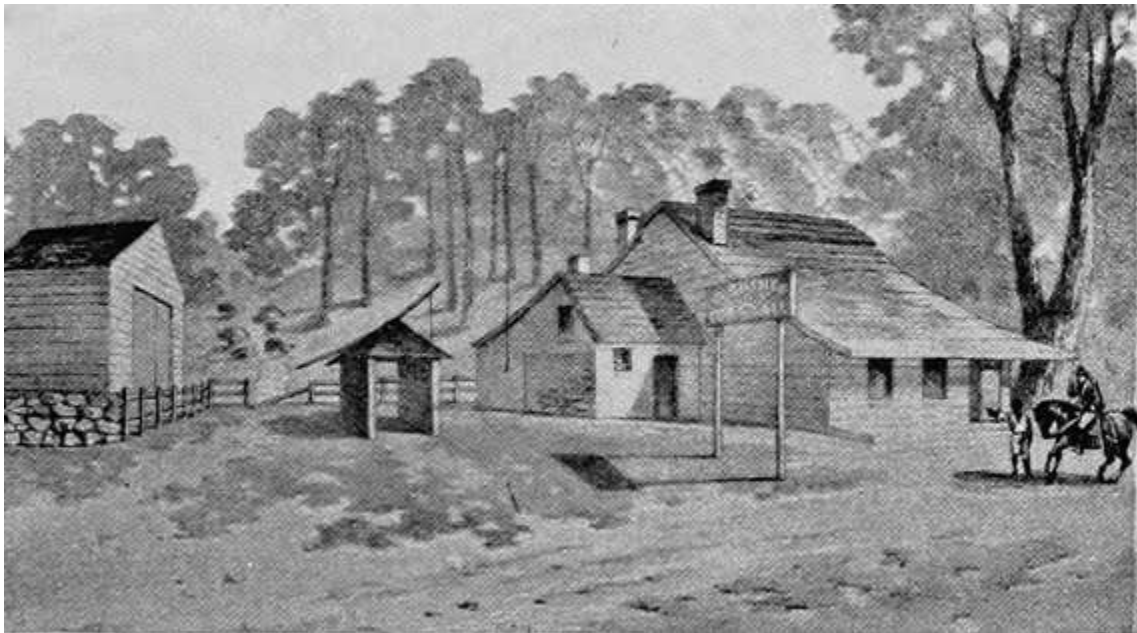
Source and Note: "Extract from the Journal of Col. Atlee" in *Pennsylvania Archives*, Second Series, Vol. I, Ed. John B. Linn and William H. Egle, M. D., Lane S. Hart, State Printer, Harrisburg, 1879, Google Books, pp. 512-515. Lt. Col. Stirling considered the 42nd Regt. to be a separate column in the attack and not part of MG Grant's column.

**Account of Maj. Gen. Grant's Attack by Rebel Capt. John Nice,
Col. Samuel Atlee's Pennsylvania Musketry Battalion, Brooklyn, Aug. 27, 1776**

...Our drums beat and the Battalion turned out and marched, with the Delaware and Maryland Battalions in advance, down the road to the Narrows. When we got within half a mile of a place called the Red Lion, we saw the enemy advancing towards us, and the brigade was drawn up on the left of the road, by order of General [William Alexander, Lord] Sterling. The general marched at the head of his battalion. As we came within three hundred yards of the enemy, where they were drawn up on rising ground with his field pieces in front, we received orders to file to the left, as we had the Bay close to our right, and to lay under cover of a fence, which we did for some considerable time. The enemy then began to pour grape-shot into us from his two field pieces, when our Colonel saw that it was vain for us to remain, as we could do no execution with our musketry; he therefore ordered us to retreat to the right, along the fence. In retreating we lost two men. We were next ordered to retire and incline more to the left, to keep two Battalions from surrounding us, as we observed they were filing off for that purpose. Taking post on an advantageous piece of ground, the enemy came down upon us, when we retreated from our position to the edge of a wood, where we lost our brave Lieut. Col. [Caleb] Parry, who was shot through the head by a musket ball, which killed him on the spot. Animated by seeing him fall, we regained our ground, repulsed and drove them back, killed [Lt.] Colonel [James] Grant (Fortieth Foot), wounded a lieutenant and killed nine soldiers. They retired behind a wood, but our Colonel did not think it prudent to follow them, as we had at that time not above fifty men and they had six times our number. We held our ground near half an hour, when we observed them coming down on us with all their force. We immediately prepared to receive them, not firing a shot until they were within fifty yards of us, when we gave them such a warm reception, that they found themselves under the necessity of retreating a second time to the wood. In this attempt they left forty dead on the field, but their wounded they carried off to the wood. In all these engagements we lost not a man, but our brave Colonel seeing a party of our men engaged in a field in our rear, we went to aid them, and became engaged with a company of Grenadiers near half an hour, while our brigade crossed at the mill-dam and got in, and we made them give way and incline to their right along a thick hedge. We kept engaged until a force of Hessians came down their left and attempted to surround us, when our Colonel ordered a party of Flying Camp riflemen of Col. [Nicholas] Lutz's [Pennsylvania] Battalion to join us and break through their lines, which we could easily have done if they had joined us, but they refused and would not come up, until we were obliged to retreat back in the wood. Here the Colonel called a council of the officers he had with him, to consider what was best to be done. Before we decided, the Hessians gave us a heavy fire from the edge of the wood, which caused us to disperse and every one make the best way he could to save himself. Col. Atlee, Ensign Henderson and myself kept together in the wood, then inclined to our left until we collected about twenty men of different battalions and decided to attempt to break through their lines. Coming up a hill out of the wood we saw a Highlander coming toward us. We called to him that if he would surrender, we would give him good quarters, which he did and delivered up his arms to our Colonel. We then proceeded about fifty yards, and

around the corner of a wood, came unexpectedly on a large party of Hessians, as they turned out to be; for we were deceived by their uniforms of blue and red, and taking them for our own people, allowed them to advance within fifty yards, when they fired a volley, fortunately not killing or wounding any of us. Being superior in numbers our Colonel decided not to make a stand. About one hundred and fifty yards distant we crossed a hedge, but no sooner were we over when we saw a Battalion of Highlanders drawn up with their backs to our left. Although within eighty yards, they did not see us at first, but they faced about and fired on us, and inclining to the right, we gained the point of a wood which covered us from their fire. We then ran through the wood, to the lowland, where another strong party of Hessians fired upon us, and one of them was so bold as to run into the center of our party, when one of my men fired and killed him. Finding we were pursued, we ran across a swamp where the water and mud was up to our knees, when we took up a rising piece of wood, where we were fired upon from our right. We then inclined a little to the left and still kept making for the Jamaica road, hoping that if we could cross it, we would get around the right of their lines. Advancing farther we were joined by Col. Lutz, of the Flying Camp, with a small party of his men. We now numbered twenty-five men and for half an hour lay concealed in the wood, where we held a council as to what was to be done. The Hessians were observed coming through the wood to surround us, and there being no way to retreat, we determined to push out before the Hessians and deliver ourselves up to the first British troops we met. On clearing the wood, we saw two Battalions of Highlanders drawn up on our front, and the Hessians firing at us all the way, we club'd our firelocks, followed our Colonel, and received good quarters from the Colonel of the Highlanders...

Source: "Extracts from Dairy of Captain John Nice" in *Pennsylvania-German Society, Proceedings and Addresses at Allentown, November 2, 1906*, Vol. XVII, Published by the Society, 1908, Google Books, pp. 62-67. Henry P. Johnston wrote in his 1878 book, *The Campaign of 1776 Around New York and Brooklyn*, (p. 187) that it was Lord Cornwallis with the 71st Highlanders and 2nd Grenadier Battalion that were blocking Lord Stirling's retreat on the Gowanus Road.



Howard's Tavern as it appeared in 1776; it was demolished in 1880

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons

Gen. Sir William Howe's Envelopment of the Rebel Left Flank, Brooklyn, Aug. 26-27, 1776

Excerpt of Letter from Lt. Col. Sir William Erskine of Torrie, 1st Battalion, 71st (Fraser's) Highland Regt. to Sir John Halkett of Pitferrane, Describing British Attack on Rebel Left, Bedford, Long Island, Aug. 26, 1776

My d^r Sir John

You'l pardon my incorrectness I write to you from the middle of a wood bit to death with all kind of flies... att this time I held post at Flatt lands on the Right of the Army with the Light dragoons the York volunteers two Battalions of Light infantry and Frasers Highlanders y^e 26th att 7 oClock in the evening Moonshines [Lt.] Gen^l [Henry] Clinton joined my corps with all the light Infantry the Grenadiers 2 Brigades of Infantry and y^e 33^d: Reg^t: we continued our March along the plain of Flatlands till we came to Howards House att the back of which the rising ground began we halted near Howards above two hours and att Break of day we enter'd the woods and fairly got in their Rear with our Corps, /supported by the Army/ by this time the Hessians and [Maj. Gen. James] Grant had made their Attacks gain'd ground but if we had not got in their Rear Grant would a difficult piece of work those Corps of Rebblers that were attack'd finding themselves surrounded dispersed in the woods and fired from all quarters our people enter'd the woods and met them with great spirit kill'd many and took many prisoners My best wishes attend you all

I'm Yours &c

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.12-15. Transcribed by Ed Brumby. Erskine uses the spelling "y^e" for the word "the" making use of the old English letter "y" or "thorn" having a "th" sound.

Col. Stephen Kemble's Account of Gen. Sir William Howe's Envelopment, Brooklyn, Aug. 26-27, 1776

...[Hessian] Gen. [Leopold] De Heister having joined us the day before, and taken post at Flat Bush, keeping [Hessian Col. Carl von] Donops Corps with him. We were ordered to March by the Right, Light Infantry in front, Grenadiers 23d. [33rd], 42d. 1st. Brigade, 71st. 3d. Brigade, 5th. and 2d. followed by Flat Land Church into Jamaica Road at the half way House, where we arrived at sunrise; pursued our Route, after a Short halt to Brookland, about a Mile before we came to Bedford saw the Rebels on our left; the Light Infantry ordered to Attack them, which they did with success, and drove them every way; the Grenadiers and Brigades continued the Road to Brookland, with the General at their head, in order to cut off the Enemy's Retreat from Brookland Heights, which was happily Executed...

Source and Note: "Journals of Lieut. – Col. Stephen Kemble" in *Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1883*, Printed for the Society, New York, 1884, Google Books, p. 85. Kemble confuses the units in the Reserve, substituting the 23rd Regt., which was with Maj. Gen. Grant, for the 33rd Regt. and including the 42nd Regt. which had been detached from the Reserve to support Grant's attack.

Account of the 1st Lt. Infantry Battalion (Including Capt. Hon. George Mackenzie's 42nd Lt. Inf. Co.) in the Battle of Brooklyn, by Ens. Henry Stirke, 10th Lt. Infantry Company, Long Island, New York, Aug. 26-30, 1776

- 26th March'd all Night, and took 5 Rebel officers [guarding Jamaica Pass] prisoners; they were mounted, and fell in with us in the dark; supposing us to be a party of their own troops.
- 27th This morning about 7 O'Clock we engag'd the *Rebels* in the Woods round *Bedford*; their Riffle Men were very numerous. By the acc^t we receiv's by prisoners, 3000 oppos'd the two battalions of light infantry which we drove with great slaughter, and very little loss on our side, 'tho their first fire was very heavy. The defeat of the *Rebels* now became general; and we have taken some

cannon (our [1st] Battalion one) with a great many Colours, and above 1000 prisoners; among which is [Maj. Gen. William Alexander] Lord Sterling and [Maj.] Gen^l [John] Sullivan. We are now in Search of more...

30th The 1st Battalion of L^t. Infantry took post at Hell-Gate Ferry. This day the Rebels abandon'd all their Works on long Island...

Source: "A British Officer's Revolutionary War Journal, 1776 – 1778," Ed. S. Sydney Bradford in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, Vol. 56, No. 2, Baltimore, June 1961, pp. 157-158.

**Account of Battle of Brooklyn by Vol. George Inman, 1st Lt. Infantry Battalion
(Including the 42nd Lt. Infantry Company), Brooklyn, Aug. 27, 1776**

"... on the 27th in the Morning ab^t 2 o'clock, I, with a few men being posted at a Cross Road, intercepted and took an American Patrol of Horse, composed of Five officers belonging to the New York Battalion, after delivering them up to [Lt.] Col. [John] Maxwell [27th Regt.] who commanded the Rear Guard, I joined the Comp'y with my party about nine, when they were warmly engaged and continued so with various success till near noon, when the Enemy retired to their works, losing many men. I rec'd no other injury than a contusion on my Knee pan, w^{ch} for a time was very painfull – a musket shot through my hat and another through my trousers near the hip...

Source: "George Inman's Narrative of the American Revolution" in *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. VII, No. 3, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, 1883. Google Books, pp. 237-239.



Col. Samuel Miles, Engraving by Henry Bryan Hall

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons

**Account of Gen. Sir William Howe's Envelopment and British Light Infantry
by Rebel Col. Samuel Miles, Pennsylvania Rifle Regt., Brooklyn, Aug. 27, 1776**

...I lay directly in front of the village of Flat Bush, but on the left of the road leading to New York, where the Hessians were Encamped... This was our situation on the 26th of August... The Hessians kept their position until 7 in the morning. As soon as they moved the firing began at our redoubt. I immediately marched towards where firing was, but had not proceeded more than 1 or 200 yards until I was stopped by Colonel [Samuel] Wylls [Connecticut Regt.]... I told him I was convinced the main body of the enemy would take the Jamaica road, that there was no probability of their coming along the road he was then guarding, and if he would not let me proceed to where the firing was, I would return and endeavor to get into the Jamaica road before Gen. [Sir William] Howe. To this he consented, and I immediately made a retrograde march, and after marching nearly two miles, the whole distance through

woods. I arrived within sight of the Jamaica road, and to my great mortification I saw the main body of the enemy in full march between me and our lines, and the baggage guard just coming into the road...

I immediately returned to the battalion and called a council of the officers and laid three propositions before them: *1st*; to attack the baggage guard and endeavor to cut our way through them and proceed to Hell Gate and so cross the Sound; *2d*, to lay where we were until the whole had passed us and then proceed to Hell Gate, or; *3d*, to endeavor to force our way through the enemy's flank guards into our line at Brooklyn...The *3d* proposition was therefore adopted, and we immediately began our march, but had not proceeded more than half a mile until we fell in with a body of 7 or 800 light infantry, which we attacked without any hesitation, but their superiority of numbers encouraged them to march up with their bayonets, which we could not withstand, having none ourselves. I therefore ordered the Troops to push on towards our lines.

Source: "Journal of Col. Samuel Miles Concerning the Battle of Long Island – 1776" in *Pennsylvania Archives*, Second Series, Vol. I, Ed. John B. Linn and William H. Egle, M. D., Lane S. Hart, State Printer, Harrisburg, 1879, Google Books, pp. 519-522.



Detail of the Commander, 4th British Grenadier Battalion from "*The Hon^{ble} Major General Charles Stuart*," 1794, after George Romney

Picture Source: Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection, Brown Univ.

Excerpts of Letter from Maj. Hon. Charles Stuart, 43rd Regt., Commanding 4th British Grenadier Battalion (Including Capt. Charles Graham's 42nd Grenadier Company), to his Father the Earl of Bute, Describing the Battle of Brooklyn; Long Island, Aug. 26-27, 1776

Newtown Camp, Sep^r 3, 1776

Our whole army landed upon this Island on the 22^d last month at Gravesend Bay, upon which the enemy retreated without firing a shot to the Heights of Flatbush.

The Corps of Grenadiers and Lt. Infantry pass'd thro' Utrecht and encamped just under this post. We stayed there till the 26th, and our men were much annoyed on account of the rebels' commanding situation; the road to Brooklyn and Red Hook was defended by these Heights,

In the evening of the 27th our Corps had orders to march; we marched accordingly. and the Hessians took our ground. About 1 ocl. in the morning we arrived at Bedford, and by 7 ocl. found we had gone considerably round and were within a mile of Brooklyn. We then fired two guns, the signal for [Maj.] General [James] Grant to attack, and the Hessians to storm the Hill, while we attacked them in Brooklyn.

The plan succeeded, the rebels were surrounded before they were aware; they made some resistance, and the skirmish continued all day, till, finding they could not ret ire, 1,400 gave themselves

up, and were taken prisoners. Amongst them were [Maj.] Gen. [John] Sullivan, [Maj. Gen. William Alexander] Lord Stirling, and another General, besides many of their best officers. By all accounts near 1,500 were killed. On our side we lost one Lt. Col., three Captains, some Subalterns, and about 200 men killed and wounded. I was ordered to draw up my Highland Grenadiers on the right of the Grenadiers, by doing which one of the squares blocked me and my men were gauled very much, 17 were killed and wounded, and I received a slight scratch upon my hip with a musket ball, which for three or four days was inconvenient, but at present is quite well.

This check has quite altered the face of affairs in this country. The next day we marched here, where we heard that the rebels had evacuated all their posts by stealth on this Island, and that the ships had drove them from Governor's Island. Prisoners inform us that near 15,000 of their best Troops were on Long Island, and had they not been surprised they would have fought it inch by inch.

The people of this place which is like the wooded parts of England, have returned to their homes. The country is in general flat, and there are large plains highly cultivated. The enemy thought they were invincible in the woods, and they amazed to see that we were bold enough to attack them in their own way, in defiance of redoubts, woods or anything...

This morning the [20-gun *HMS*] *Rose* Man of War passed up the East River, and is carrying 40 flat bottom boats, from which we imagine we shall cross the River tomorrow.

I am sure, my dearest Father, you will excuse the hurried manner in which this letter is wrote. I live in a soldier's tent; the ground is my table.

Source: *New Records of the American Revolution*, Sir Charles Stuart, L. K. Ashnor, London, 1927, pp. 10-11.



Detail of Portrait of Lord George Harris,

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from *Bombay and Western India*, by James Douglas (1893).

**Account of Gen. Sir William Howe's Envelopment by Capt. George Harris,
5th Grenadier Co., 1st British Grenadier Battalion, Brooklyn, Aug. 26-27, 1776**

...About four P.M. of the 26th struck tents, and lay on our arms during the night about three miles from Bedford; and though in summer, it was the coldest night I have experienced up to this time (25th November). Such sudden changes of climate are not uncommon here. The weather is now most unnaturally hot and close, after severe frosts.

At daybreak, the 27th the light infantry attacked and forced several small posts which the Americans had on the road leading to their lines at Bedford. This appeared to be the first notice they had of our being near to them. About nine we fired two signal guns to a part of the army under [Maj.] General [James] Grant, who was to make a feint in the front of the Americans, while we got round to their rear: and immediately marched briskly up to them, when, almost without firing a shot, they abandoned their post, and retreated to their lines under cover of their guns (these they also evacuated two or three days

after, retiring upon New York during the night). Our men were most eager to attack them in their lines, and I am convinced would have carried them, but we were ordered to retreat out of reach of their guns, and lay from about four P.M. till very near dark at the entrance of a small wood, exposed to the fire of their riflemen. During the whole evening they hit but one man, though their balls continually whistled over our heads, and lodged in the trees above us.

Source: *The Life and Services of General Lord Harris, G.C.B.*, The Right Hon. S. R. Lushington, John W. Parker, London, 1840, Google Books, pp. 76-77.

Excerpt of British Casualty Report, Battle of Long Island, Aug. 27, 1776

Return of the Killed, Wounded and Missing of the following Corps 27 August 1776

Brigade	Corps...	Killed	Wounded...
	1 st B. Light Infantry	[Rank & File] 4	[Sgts] 2 [Drum.] 1 [Rank & File] 21 ...
Reserve	{4 th [B. Grenadiers]	[Rank & File] 1	[Sgts] 1 [Rank & File] 11...
	{42 ^d [Regiment]		[Lts.] 1 [Rank & File] 9...
[Officers] Wounded...			
Lieut. [James] Crammond	42 ^d ...		

W. Howe...

Source and Note: TNA, *Colonial Office, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches* at CO 5/93, Pt. 2, f.263. Lt. Crammond had been seconded to the Adj. General's Office.

Naval Officer's Anecdote of the Battle of Brooklyn; Long Island, New York, Aug. 26, 1776

A letter from a sea officer at Long Island mentions the following anecdote. During the attack at Long Island, one of the Highlanders had straggled into a wood, where he was taken by a hundred of the provincials. He informed them, that the wood was surrounded by the Hessians who gave no quarter, and in a few minutes they would all be cut to pieces, but if they would follow him, he would follow him, he would conduct them to the commanding officer of the Highlanders, who would give them protection. They accordingly took his advice, and laid down their arms and surrendered. The Highlander demanded a commission for his reward, as he said he had raised a company in one day.

Source: *Edinburgh Advertiser*, Nov. 5, 1776, p. 294.

Gen. Sir William Howe's Siege of the Rebel Works and Escape of the Rebel Army, Brooklyn, Aug. 27-Sept. 14, 1776

Charles Stedman's Account of the Siege of Brooklyn and Escape of the Rebel Army, Long Island, Aug. 27-29, 1776

On the evening of the twenty-seventh, our army encamped in front of the enemy's lines; and on the twenty-eighth broke ground about six hundred yards from one of the redoubts on the left. The Americans finding that it was impossible to maintain their post on Long Island, evacuated their lines on the twenty-ninth, and made good their retreat to New York. At first the wind and tide were both unfavorable to the Americans; nor was it thought possible that they could have effected their retreat. On the evening of the twenty-ninth, until about eleven o'clock, the wind shifting, and the sea becoming more calm, the boats were enabled to pass. Another remarkable circumstance was, that on Long Island hung a thick fog, which prevented the British troops from discovering the operations of the enemy; while

on the side of New York the atmosphere was perfectly clear. The retreat was effected in thirteen hours, though nine thousand men had to pass over the river, besides field artillery, ammunition, provisions, cattle, horses, and carts.

Source "Account of the Landing of the British, and succeeding Engagement, by C. Stedman, an officer serving under Gen. [Sir William] Howe" in *The Battle of Long Island*, Thomas W. Field, Brooklyn, 1869, p. 458.

**Excerpt of a Letter from Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling, 42nd Regt. to his Brother,
Sir William Stirling 4th of Ardoch, Describing Regimental Actions After Rebels Withdrew,
Brooklyn, New York, Aug. 31 – Sept. 14, 1776**

Camp near Bloomingdale, Island of New York, Sep^t 22, 1776

My Dear Sir Will^m:

... the 31st the Rebels abandoned all their works about Brookland on Long Island, this army then moved to the Right along the East River to a place called Hell gate when it was proposed we should pass over to New York Island some of Ships of War having got that length through the sound...

Source: NRS, *Papers of the Family of Stirling Home Drummond Moray of Abercairny* at GD24/1/458/1.

**Excerpts of a Letter from Maj. Gen. James Grant to his Friend Paymaster Gen. Richard Rigby,
Describing Situation After Rebel Withdrawal, Brooklyn, New York, Aug. 31 – Sept. 14, 1776**

Long Island, 2 Sept^r., 1776.

Dear Sir,

...The 30th in the Morning the Rebels abandoned all their Works left Cannon, ammunition, Provisions of all kinds, Bread in their Ovens, Horses, Carriages, Cattle, and their Tents standing. We cannot yet account for their Precipitate Retreat, their Flight must be owing to a Quarrel amongst themselves or to an apprehension of being cut off their Retreat to New York which by the way was impossible, their works were very strong, the Ground not so well taken up as I expected to find it, but they might have waited with great safety and have given us much trouble. Having abandoned Brockland, Red Hook, Governors Island they fled to New York in great confusion...

I have the Honour to be Dear Sir,

Your most obedient Servant

James Grant.

Source: *General James Grant of Ballindalloch*, published privately by Alastair Macpherson Grant, London, 1930, pp. 85-86.

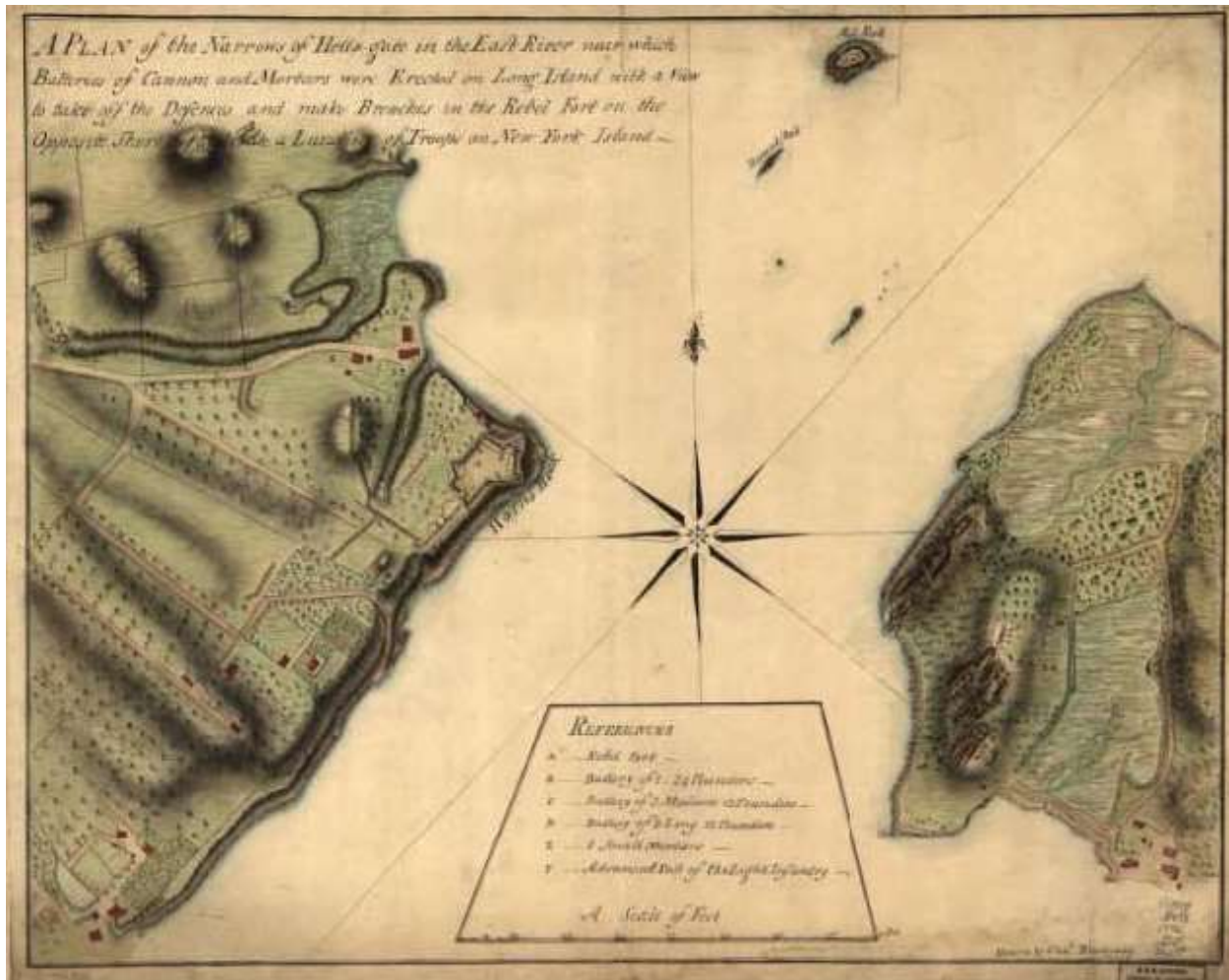
**Account of the Abandonment of the Rebel Fortifications, by Capt. Sir James Murray,
57th Lt. Infantry Company, Brooklyn, Aug. 30, 1776**

Newton Kilns Long Island

August 31st 1776

...The works at Brocland or Brocland's ferry which I have one or twice made mention of was still supposed to be an arduous undertaking. Redoubts upon redoubts and entrenchments as strong as they had at their leisure chose to make them...might be defended by whatever numbers they chose to employ. At this season of the year when every day becomes precious, even a week's delay and the necessary loss of men which the attack of works must have occasioned, was of the utmost consequence to the Rebel cause. What was our astonishment upon the morning of the 30th to find those stupendous works, which had been constructed with so much care and labour, and which were to have been destroyed with so much danger and expense, utterly abandoned and deserted by the poorest mean spirited scoundrels that ever surely pretended to the dignity of Rebellion...

Source: *Letters from America, 1773 to 1780*, Ed. Eric Robson, Manchester University Press, 1951, pp. 35-36.



"A plan of the Narrows of Hells-gate in the East River, near which batteries of cannon and mortars were erected on Long Island with a view to take off the defences and make breaches in the rebel fort on the opposite shore to facilitate a landing of troops on New York Island." 1776, by Charles Blaskowitz. The Light Infantry post is shown in the lower righthand corner.

Map Source: Library of Congress Geography and Map Div.

Account of the Reserve (Including the 42nd Regt.) Occupying Rebel Works and Encamping at Hell Gate by Capt. George Harris, 1st British Grenadier Battalion, Brooklyn, Aug. 30, 1776

On the 30th the reserve, with the light infantry, again left the army, which the next day took peaceable possession of all the American works on Long Island, and encamped near Hell Gate.

Batteries were soon erected to oppose a work they had on York Island, and though the East river is there 800 paces across, our artillery soon silenced theirs, and, as we afterwards found, dismounted most of their guns...

Source and Note: *The Life and Services of General Lord Harris, G.C.B.*, The Right Hon. S. R. Lushington, John W. Parker, London, 1840, Google Books, pp. 77-79. Capt. Harris commanded the 5th Grenadier Company. Hell Gate is located on the East River about fourteen miles northwest of Brooklyn Heights.

42nd Regt. Officer's Account of Long Island Activities, Sept. 2, 1776

An Officer of the 42d Regiment, in a Letter to a Friend, dated Long Island, Sept. 2, says, “I was upon a Party who took above 100 Prisoners, who upon their Knees begged their Lives, and many of them declared that they had been forced into the Service. We could see the Rebels preparing to evacuate New-York, and hear that they are in great Consternation lest a Junction should be effected with General Burgoyne’s Army. It is reported also, that many of the Loyalists in New-York have dared to lay down the Arms which they had been compelled to carry against his Majesty’s Army; so that I have no Doubt of our being soon in Possession of that City.”

Source: *St. James’s Chronicle, Or, British Evening-Post* (London), Oct. 22-24, 1776. The same article was also published in *General Evening Post*, Oct. 22-24, 1776.

**Journal of Maj. of Brigade and Capt. Frederick Mackenzie, 5th Brigade,
Notes the Positions of the 42nd Regt., Long Island, New York, Sept. 6, 1776**

6th Sept^r – Fine pleasant weather...

The posts now occupied by the Army extend from Flushing, round by Jamaica and Newtown, to Flatbush and Gravesend. The 17th Dragoons and 71st Regiment are at Flushing...The Guards, 1st brigade, Grenadiers, Light Infantry, and 33rd Regiment at Hellgate and on Communication from thence to Newtown... The 42nd Regiment at Flatbush, with Detachments at Gravesend and New Utrecht...

Source and Note: *Dairy of Frederick Mackenzie*, Vol. I, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1930 and reprinted by The New York Times & Arno Press, 1969, pp. 39-40.

**Account of the 1st Lt. Infantry Battalion after the Battle of Brooklyn, by
Ens. Henry Stirke, 10th Lt. Infantry Company, Long Island, New York, Sept. 8-14, 1776**

Sept^r

8th At day break we open’d our batteries at Hell-Gate ferry consisting of 3 Twenty four pounders, 3 Twelve pounders and 10 Royals...

10th At 7 O’Clock in the morning, the 1st and 2^d battalions of Light Infantry landed on Buchannons [Wards] Island, below Hell-gate; one of the Rebel Centrys fired three times at the boat I was in, before he retreated...

11th In the evening we took post on Montrossors [Randalls’s] Island. The 2^d battalion of Light Infantry landed their yesterday – part of the 1st Brigade succeeded us on the Island we left.

14th The two battalions of Light Infantry, return’d to Long Island at 10 O’Clock at Night.

Source: “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. 158.

**Journal of Maj. of Brigade and Capt. Frederick Mackenzie, 5th Brigade, Describes the Taking of
Buchanan and Montresor Islands by the Light Infantry, Including the 42nd Lt. Infantry Company,
New York, Sept. 10, 1776**



Detail showing Montresor's and Buchannan's Islands from "A section of a 1781 British map and nautical chart of New York and its harbor."

Map Source: Wikimedia Commons, from Norman B. Levinson Map Center, Boston Public Lib.

10th Se^p – Thick Weather...

At daybreak the 1st [including the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co.] and 2nd Battalions of Light Infantry embarked in flatboats (which came last night with the flood tide through Hellgate undiscovered by the Enemy) and landed on Montresor's [Randall's] and Buchannan's [Ward's] Islands, nearly opposite Haerlem. They met with no opposition except from one fellow, who staid to fire three shots at the boats, by which two men were wounded, (both by one ball). There was not more than 20 Rebels on the Islands, who retired and made their escape as soon as they saw our people landed...

Source: *Dairy of Frederick Mackenzie*, Vol. I, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1930 and reprinted by The New York Times & Arno Press, 1969, pp. 42-43.

General After Orders and Reserve Orders to Prepare for the Amphibious Landing on Manhattan Island, New York, Sept. 13 – 14, 1776

General After Orders 13 Sept^r 1776 ½ past four O'Clock

An attack upon the Enemy being shortly intended, the Soldiers are reminded of their evident Superiority on the 27th Aug^t 1776 by charging the Rebels with their Bayonets even in Woods where they thought themselves invincible, they now place their security in Slight Breastworks of the weakest construction & which are to be carried with little loss by the same high Spirited mode of Attack. The Gen^l therefore recommends to the Troops an entire dependence on their Bayonets with which they will ever command that Success which their bravery so well deserves...

G:O: Head Q^{rs} Newtown Long Island 14th Sept^r 1776...

General After Orders 5 O'Clock

The Brigades Encamped in the Environs of Newtown will strike their tents at two in the Morn^g –

The Tents & Baggage to be put up in the Reg^{tal} Waggons & left upon the ground with a Small Guard from each Reg^t.

The Corps will form at the head of their respective Encampments having their Blankets & two days Provisions as formerly directed & there wait for further orders –

The Hessian Brigade from L^t Gen^l [Leopold Philip] D^eHeister's Corps will form at 4 in the Morn^g in the Rear of the 4th Brigade of British at Bedford & both Brigades will march immediately –

One Squadron of Dragoons will march so as to be at Newtown at Six in the Morning & to send forward an Officer to Head Q^{rs}. for orders –

The 71st [Highland] Reg^t will detach at Gun firing this Even^g a Guard for the Artillery park, of an Officer & 20 Men who will take their orders from Brig^r Gen^l [Samuel] Cleveland

L^t Gen^l [Henry] Clinton will command the first Embarkation –

L^t Gen^l [Hugh] Earl Percy will command the Second...

After Reserve O) The Reserve [including the four Brit. Gren. Bns., 33rd and 42nd Regts.] to be ready to march at 5 O'Clock tomorrow morn^g. The Commanding Officers of Battalions to see that the Tents & Baggage are pack'd up before that time, a proper Guard from each Corps to be left with them. The Troops to carry their provision with them, but it is left to the discretion of the Command^g Officers of Corps whether the men should carry their Blankets or leave them with the Tents. 42^d Reg^t to be at [Maj.] Gen^l [John] Vaughans Q^{rs} precisely at 5 O'Clock –

[4th British Grenadier Battalion Orders] B:O:) A Guard of 1 Serj^t 1 Corp^l & 12 private to be left with the Baggage –

Source and Note: NRS, “*Orderly Book, 4th Battⁿ Grenad^{rs}, 4th Battalion Grenadiers.*” This order gives directions for the British Army’s amphibious landing at Kip’s Bay on Manhattan Island (called York Island) on Sept. 15, 1776. New York City was taken soon after the landing.



“Kepp’s Bay 17th Aug^t. 1778 where the troops landed 15th Sept^r. 1776. Phoenix 44 Cap^t. H. Parker, Roebuck 44 Hammond. Carisford 28 Fanshaw. Rose 20 J^r. Wallace. 12th Aug^t. 1778,” by Archibald Robertson.

Picture Source: New York Public Library Digital Collection

Gen. Sir William Howe’s Amphibious Attack on Manhattan Island at Kip’s Bay, New York, Sept. 15, 1776

Excerpt of Letter No. 27 from Gen. Sir William Howe, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Reporting the Amphibious Assault on Manhattan Island; Kip's Bay, New York, Sept. 15, 1776

21 September, York Island

My Lord, I have the satisfaction to inform your lordship of His Majesty's troops being in possession of the City of New York.

Upon the rebels abandoning their lines at Brooklyn, the King's Army moved from Bedford, leaving [Hessian] Lieutenant-General [Leopold von] Heister encamped upon the heights of Brooklyn with two Brigades of Hessians and one Brigade of British at Bedford, and took five positions in the neighbourhood of Newtown, Bushwick. Hell Gate, and Flushing.

The two islands of Montresor and Buchanan were occupied and batteries raised against the Enemy's work at Horen's Hook commanding the passage at Hell Gate.

On the 15th instant in the morning three ships of war passed up the North River as far as Bloomingdale to draw the Enemy's attention to that side; and the first division of troops, consisting of the Light Infantry, the British Reserve, the Hessian Grenadiers and Chasseurs, under the command of Lieutenant-General Clinton, having with him Lieutenant-General Earl Cornwallis, Major General Vaughan, Brigadier-General Leslie and Colonel Donop, embarked at the head of Newtown Creek and landed about noon upon New York Island three miles from the town at a place called Kepp's Bay under the fire of two forty-gun ships and three frigates, as per margin, Commodore [William] Hotham having the direction of the ships and boats.

Phoenix [44],
Roebuck [44],
Orpheus [32],
Carysfort [28],
Rose [20]

The rebels had troops in their works round Kepps's Bay, but their attention being engaged in expectation of the King's troops landing at Stuyvesant's Cove, Horen's Hook, and at Harlem, which they had reason to conclude, Kepp's Bay became only a secondary object of their care. The fire of the shipping being so well directed and so incessant, the Enemy could not remain in their works and the descent was made without the least opposition.

The conduct of the Officers of the Navy does them much honour and the behaviour of the seaMen belonging to the ships of war and transports, employed to row the boats, was highly meritorious: much praise in particular is due to the masters and Men of six transports that passed the town on the evening of the 14th under a heavy fire, being volunteers to take troops on board for the more speedy disembarkation of the second division.

The British immediately took post upon the commanding height of Inclenberg, and the Hessians moving towards New York fell in with a body of rebels that were retiring from Stuyvesant's Cove; some firing ensued by which a brigadier-general, other Officers, and several Men of the rebels were killed and wounded with the loss of four Men killed and eight wounded on the part of the Hessians.

As soon as the second embarkation was landed the troops advanced towards a Corps of the Enemy upon a rising ground three miles from Inclenberg towards Kingsbridge, having McGowan's Pass in their rear, upon which they immediately retired to the main body of their Army upon Morris's Height.

The Enemy having evacuated New York soon after the Army landed, a Brigade took possession of the works in the evening. The prisoners made in the course of this day were about twenty Officers and three hundred Men. The enclosed return will show the artillery and stores taken.

The position the King's Army took on the 15th in the evening was with the right to Horen's Hook and the left at the North River near to Bloomingdale, the rebel Army occupying the ground with extensive

works on both sides of King's Bridge and a redoubt with cannon upon a height on the west side of the North River opposite to the Blue Bell, where the Enemy have their principal work, in which positions both armies still continue...

Major General [John] Vaughan was slightly wounded in the thigh on the 15th by a random shot as he was ascending the heights of Inclineburg with the grenadiers, and I have the pleasure of informing your Lordship that Lieutenant-Colonel [Henry] Monckton is so well recovered he has been walking about some days.

Captain [Nisbet] Balfour, my second aide-de-camp, will have the honour of delivering your lordship this dispatch.

Signed.

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution*, Vol. XII, Transcripts 1776, pp. 227-229 from TNA, *Colonial Office, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches* at CO 5/93, f. 274.



Account of Amphibious Landing by Midshipman Bartholomew James, 32-gun *HMS Orpheus*, Kip's Bay, Manhattan Island, New York, Sept. 15, 1776

The [15th], at six in the morning, we weighed in company with the former ships [44-gun *HMS Phoenix*, 44-gun *HMS Roebuck*, 28-gun *HMS Carysfort* and 20-gun *HMS Rose*], and anchored a little below Blackwell's Island [now Roosevelt Island, NY] on the York side, about fifty yards from the enemy's intrenchments, to which place the whole body as above immediately moved, frequently making signs and calling to us to come on shore. We continued without firing at each other till eleven o'clock, when the first division of flat boats appeared, coming down Bushwick [Newtown] Creek, having on board four thousand five hundred men under the command of General [Sir William] Howe. As soon as the boats arrived within fifty yards of the ships, the signal was made from the Phoenix to begin the attack on the enemy's lines.

It is hardly possible to conceive what a tremendous fire was kept up by those five ships for fifty-nine minutes, in which time we fired away, in the *Orpheus* alone, five thousand three hundred and seventy-six pounds of powder. The first broadside made a considerable breach in their works, and the enemy fled on all sides, confused and calling for quarter, while the army landed, but, as usual, did not pursue the victory, though the rebels in general had left their arms in the intrenchment. The havock was by no means so great as it would have been had we not been obliged to cease firing on the landing of the troops; however, the ground in some places was filled with the slain, and numbers got off with the loss of arms, &c.

As soon as the firing ceased from the ships I was sent in the barge to tow on shore the flat boats...

Source: *Journal of Rear-Admiral Bartholomew James, 1752-1828*, Ed. John Knox Laughton, Navy Records Society (U.K.), 1896, Google Books, p. 31.

**Account of Naval Support for Amphibious Landing at Kip's Bay
by Capt. Charles Hudson, 32-gun *HMS Orpheus*, East River, Sept. 15, 1776**

Sunday 15th at 4 AM weighed and made Sail in Company with the [44-gun *HMS*] Phoenix, [28-gun *HMS Carysfort*] Carrisford, [20-gun *HMS*] Rose, and [44-gun *HMS*] Roebuck, at Six came too with the best Bower [anchor] in 4 fm [fathoms] in Kips Bay. got in the Stream and kedge Anchors Astern & moored thence distance off Shore 300 yards close by the rebel Intrenchments at 10 the Flatt bottom Boats with the Troops came out of Newtown Creek Long Island Shore, and stopp's astern of the Five Transports in Bushwick Creek at Noon they put off, from thence our forces, on which We, with the Other Ships began to Cannonade the Rebel Lines, and scour the Coast. Mode and Cloudy with some rain. kept a Continual Fire of Cannon &c^a on the Rebel Intrenchm^t til ½ past 4 when the first Division of the Troops landed, in Ships Bay, sent the Boats with the Flat Boats to Bushwick Creek for the 2nd Division. Commodore [William] Hotham hoisted his Pendant on board the Phoenix, at 5 weighed the Stream Anchor, and hove up the B^t [best] Bower [anchor] in order to move further off. at ½ past the Ship grounded upon a Rock where she remained half an hour, then floated without receiving any Damage

Source: TNA, *Admiralty Captain's Logs: Orpheus*, at ADM 51/650 and *Naval Documents of the American Revolution*, Vol. 6, Ed. William James Morgan, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1972, p. 840.



A section of a 1781 British map and nautical chart of New York and its harbor, 1781, by John Lodge

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from Norman B. Levinson Map Center, Boston Public Library.

**Capt. William Evelyn's Account of 1st Light Infantry Battalion (Including the
42nd Lt. Infantry Company) Landing, Kip's Bay, New York, Sept. 15, 1776**

New York Island, September 24th, 1776

From the time of our driving the rebels out of Long Island, they daily expected an attack upon York, and had strengthened themselves with batteries and breastwork, that they looked upon a landing as impracticable,

By the disposition General [Sir William] Howe had made of the troops. They were deceived as to the place where he intended to make his attack. On the night of the 14th, the boats were sent quietly up the river to a creek [Newtown Creek], opposite to which five men-of-war were stationed. We marched at the same time, and embarked in the morning. We rowed a considerable way up the river, higher than where we were to land, and made fast the boats to some transports till the whole should come up, by

which the rebels were still deceived, and drew themselves up in their works to receive us. On a certain signal we all pushed off together, and at the same instant the men-of-war began such a fire as nothing could withstand. The Light Infantry, in the headmost boats, gained a high and steep rock, which they ascended, and secured a safe landing for the rest of the troops. They were followed by the Grenadiers, Hessians, and Artillery and afterwards by the body of the army. The rebels, upon the firing of the ships (which is not to be described), and upon seeing the troops gain the shore, fled in the greatest confusion. Their garrisons in New York abandoned it with the utmost precipitation, leaving their forts, their cannon, and a quantity of military stores, and that evening a brigade of ours took possession of the town. We advanced two or three miles, the rebels retiring before us, till they left us the ground which the General wished to occupy, which is a strong pass between the north and east rivers, about seven miles from New York. The rebels are on the opposite hills, and extend from thence to Kingsbridge, burying themselves in entrenchments, in which they place their only security. The taking of the island and town of New York without any loss, though above fifty thousand men were prepared to defend them, must be considered as a consummate piece of generalship; and the execution of it, between the amazing fire from the shipping, the confusion and dismay of the rebels, the Light Infantry clambering up the steep and just accessible rocks, the water covered with boats full of armed men pressing eagerly towards the shore, was certainly one of the grandest and most sublime scenes ever exhibited...

Your ever obliged and humble servant
W.G. Evelyn

Source: *Memoirs and Letters of Captain W. Glanville Evelyn of the 4th Regiment. ("King's Own,") from North America, 1774-1776*, Ed. G.D. Scull, James Parker and Co., Oxford, 1879, pp. 83-85.

**Account of the Landing of the 1st Lt. Infantry Battalion by Ens. Henry Stirke,
10th Lt. Infantry Company, Kips Bay, New York, Sept. 15, 1776**

15th The army landed on York-Island [Manhattan] about 11 O'Clock, in the morning a little above Turtle Bay, under cover of the Men of War. They Rebels appear'd on great numb^{rs} and seem'd inclin'd to make a Vigorous Opposition; but the heavy, and well directed fire, from the frigates that cover'd our landing, soon dispersed the; and the Army landed with^{out} the loss of a Man.

Source: "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. 159.



"The British landing at Kip's Bay, New York Island, Sept. 15, 1776," 1777, by Robert Cleveley,

Picture Source and Note: *Royal Museums Greenwich*. From the left the warships are 20-gun *HMS Rose*, 28-gun *HMS Carysfort*, 44-gun *HMS Roebuck*, 44-gun *HMS Phoenix* and 32-gun *HMS Orpheus* per “A new interpretation of a Robert Cleveley Watercolour,” Don H. Hagist, *Mariner's Mirror*, vol. 94, 2008.

**Capt. Frederick Mackenzie's Diary Records the Landing of the 42nd Regt.,
Kip's Bay, Manhattan Island, New York, Sept. 15, 1776**

15th Sep^r

Orders were given last night for the four brigades encamped in the Environs of Newtown to strike their tents at 2 o'Clock this morning, load their baggage, form at the head of their encampments, with their blankets and two days provisions, and wait for orders...

At 6 o'Clock the left Column of the Army began its march in the following order: – 42nd Regiment (which had been posted in the Environs of Bushwick) at its head, 33rd Regiment, park of Artillery, Brigade of Guards, 2nd brigade, 3rd brigade, 4th brigade (from Bedford) and a brigade of Hessians (from Gen^l [Leopold] De Heister's Corps at Brooklyn), 5th brigade, and 6th Brigade. This Column marched from Newtown through Bushwick, and at 8 in the Morning drew up in a Column of Battalions at Bushwick point. the 42nd and 33rd [from the Reserve] embarked immediately in board Six transports, which had passed the town, and came up the [East] River yesterday, in order to facilitate the landing the troops on the Island.

The Column on the right was composed of the British Light Infantry [including the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co.] and Grenadiers [including the 42nd Gren. Co.], the Hessian Grenadiers, and Jagers, and marched very early from the neighbourhood of Hellgate, to the head of Newtown Creek, where at 6 o'Clock they began to embark in 60 flat boats. When embarked they rowed down the Creek, and lay on their Oars at the mouth of it, until all was ready...

About 10 o'Clock the flatboats began to row from the mouth of Newtown Creek, and assembled astern of the 6 transports at Bushwick point in four Divisions...

A little before 11, upon a signal given, the five Ships of War [20-gun *HMS Rose*, 28-gun *HMS Carysfort*, 44-gun *HMS Roebuck*, 44-gun *HMS Phoenix* and 32-gun *HMS Orpheus*] opened their fire upon the Entrenchments, on the shore, and the adjoining woods. This fire was continued until the Boats began to move, and the troops to land. very few of the Rebels showed themselves, and those only in the most secure places...

At 12 o'Clock, everything being ready, the boats put off from Bushwick point, having on board three battalions of Light Infantry, four Battalions of British, and 3 battalions of Hessian Grenadiers, The Hessian Jagers, and the Brigade of Guards... They rowed over in 4 Divisions. This was a grand, and most interesting sight. The boats started off on four Columns, and passing under Cover of the Ships, which continued their fire, reached Kipp's bay, to the right of the Ships, in about half an hour, and immediately landed there, without firing or receiving a Shot. Parties were sent forward, who took possession of the ground in front and flanks. As soon as the troops were formed, they advanced to Murray's hill (or Ingleberg) and advantageous piece of ground about 3 ½ miles on the great Road from New York to Kingsbridge... On the right, a few stragglers fired on the British Grenadiers, by which Gen^l [John] Vaughan was wounded slightly in the thigh. He was the only person of the British hurt this day...

The boats, after landing the first Division, returned as quick as possible for the others and this was continued with such dispatch and diligence, that the whole of the Troops, with their Artillery, were landed at Kipp's bay about 5 o'Clock in the afternoon.

Source: *Dairy of Frederick Mackenzie*, Vol. I, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1930 and reprinted by The New York Times & Arno Press, 1969, pp. 46-48.



Period Sketch of Kip's House at Kip's Bay

Picture Source: *The Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution*, Vol. II, Benson J. Lossing, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1855, Google Books, p. 597

Excerpt of Letter from Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling, 42nd Regt. to his Brother, Sir William Stirling of Ardoch, Describing 42nd Regt. Landing at Kip's Bay, Manhattan Island, Sept. 15, 1776

Camp near Bloomingdale, Island of New York, Sep^r 22, 1776

My Dear Sir Will^m:

... some of Ships of War having got that length through the sound at last it was resolved to attempt it at a place called Kips bay three mile above New York for which purpose five frigates [20-gun *HMS Rose*, 28-gun *HMS Carysfort*, 44-gun *HMS Roebuck*, 44-gun *HMS Phoenix* and 32-gun *HMS Orpheus*] came up past New York with our flatbottomed boats & 6 Transports and on the 15th the army landed under Cover of these Ships fire, with out any opposition and got possession of the Heights of Inkleberg on this Island 3 mile from New York, part of the army then to New York & works about it which they found abandoned rest followed the Enemy toward Kingsbridge, our Reg't was ordered on the left of all which we fell in with the rear of Enemy killed a few and took 40 prisoners & had we been supported might have cut off 1500 of them they nailed up a Cannon on our approach & left 5 waggons with stores in them & we took Gen'l [Israel] Putnams own Waggon after his own people had plundered it; we got a union flag of the Colonys and the Colours of his Reg't with Appeal to Heaven for a Motto ...

Source: NRS, *Papers of the Family of Stirling Home Drummond Moray of Abercairny* at GD24/1/458/1.



Apthorpe Mansion, New York City, as it Appeared in 1790, by Samuel Hollyer, 1907

Picture Source: From the *New York Public Library, Digital Collection*

Excerpt of Memorial to Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling, 42nd Regt., Describing Actions of the 42nd Regt. at the Landing at Kip's Bay; New York, Sept. 15, 1776

Memorial

L^t Col: Stirling 42^d Reg^t

...Nothing material occurred untill the 15th Sept when the Army embarked at Bushwick Creek to attack Island of New York the 42^d were put on board transports which were to have stood close in shore for more speedy disembarkation of the troops but by some accident of wind or tide they were detained in their first position so that the 42^d did not land so early as was intended, but the Rebels being distracted w^t the uncertainty of what our operations were to be that they made no resistance so that the troops got possession of the heights of Inklberg w^t out loss the L.I. being ordered to advance the 42^d was ordered to support soon after the 42^d was ordered to extend to the left and take possession of [Loyalist Charles Ward] Apthorp's house on the road from New York by Bloomingdale which they effectuated and attacked the rear of a large Column of the Rebels retreating from N York which they drove killing some and taking upwards of 30 prisoners intercepted two Brass Cannon & 3 Artillery Waggons w^h the rebels drove in to a swamp not being able to carry it off w^h were found next morning. They likewise took [Rebel] Gen [Israel] Putnams baggage waggon in which among other things was a large Continental flag and the Colours of his Reg^t they then extended to [Loyalist] Gen [Oliver] Delancys House close to the North River ...

Source: Archives, *Regimental Headquarters, The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment)*, Balhousie Castle, "Short account of the movements and engagements of the 42nd from 22nd August to 16th December 1776" (Addressed to Col T Stirling commanding 42nd Royal Highlanders.) BWRA 0398 Stirling Papers /5.

Account of the British Landing by Chaplain James M^cLagan, 42nd Regt., Kip's Bay, Manhattan, New York, Sept. 15, 1776

Piscataway 31st May. 1777

My Lord...

– On the 15th of September the General [Sir William Howe] & Army followed them [the Rebels], and under the fire of some frigates Landed without opposition, a few of the Enemy were killed and taken at Some distance from the landing place; In the Dusk of the Evening two Rebel Officers got hold of Major William Murray [42nd Regt.] as he was looking for the best place for Sentries in the struggle he fell but got up again, drew the Sword of one of themselves and gave him a Stab with it, upon which they both fled under the favour of night, had one person been with him, he would have taken them both...

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: James M^cLagan to Lord John Murray, May 31, 1777 in the *Lord John Murray Papers*.



Detail of 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>

Anecdote of Maj. William Murray, 1st Battalion, 42nd Regt., Defending Himself Against Rebel Soldiers, New York, Sept. 15, 1776

This night [Sept. 15] Major [William] Murray was nearly carried off by the enemy, but saved himself by his strength of arm and presence of mind. As he was crossing to his regiment... he was attacked by an American officer and two soldiers, against whom he defended himself for some time with his fusil, keeping them at a respectful distance. At last, however, they closed on him, when unluckily his dirk slipped behind, and he could not, owing to his corpulence, reach it. Observing that the rebel officer had a sword in his hand, he snatched it from him, and made so good use of it, that he compelled them to retreat, before some men of the regiment, who had heard the noise, could come up to his assistance. He wore the sword as a trophy during the campaign...

Source: *Sketches of the Character, Manners and Present State of the Highlanders of Scotland; with Details of the Military Service of the Highland Regiments*, 2nd Edition, Vol. I, Col. David Stewart (Garth), Printed for Archibald Constable, Edinburgh, 1822, p. 374 note.

Lt. Col. Stephen Kemble's Account of the Landing, Kip's Bay, New York, Sept. 15, 1776

Sunday, *Sept. 15th*. About 9 in the Morning the Reserve, 33^d. and 42^d. Regiments excluded, Embarked in Flat Boats in Newtown Creek. The rest of the Army marched to the point of Land opposite to Kipps's Bay and embarked there; the 1st. Brigade and 71st. [Highland Regt.] excepted, who were Left at Hell Gate. About 12 the whole first Landing pulled to the Shore, consisting of the Reserve and Donop's Corps, covered by two 40 Gun Ships and three Frigates, whose fire was both terrible and pleasing, and so terrible to the Rebels that they dare not come within half a Mile of the Shore instead of defending their Lines on the Shore. As we were going on Shore we saw a party of about 500 hundred Rebels, who were marching in great haste to take possession of their Works in the Rear of Stuyvesant's House; suppose them to be the People that afterwards fell in with the Hessians. The Light Infantry landed upon the Right of the Bay, got up a Rock, the Grenadiers, &c. in it; the Light Infantry took possession of the Post on their Right; the Grenadiers, 33^d. and 42^d. Marched thro' to Incline Hill, and the Hessians to the left, where they met with a party of the Rebels, of whom they Killed 30 or 40 and took about 60 Prisoners. The Grenadiers met with a small party and exchanged a few shot, Maj. Gen. [John] Vaughan the only Person Wounded and that Slightly. Our loss the whole day about 3 Killed and 16 or 18 wounded. The advance of

our Army Marched to the Black Horse, and across from thence by Aphthorp's House to North River, and had very near cut off Mr. [Israel] Putnam's Retreat, who brought off the Rebel Rear Guard from New York, most of whom and their Troops in general got off by the North River Road...

Source: "Journals of Lieut. – Col. Stephen Kemble" in Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1883, Printed for the Society, New York, 1884, Google Books, pp. 88-89.

**Account of the Reserve (Including the 42nd Regt.) Landing at Kip's Bay by
Capt. George Harris, 1st British Grenadier Battalion, New York, Sept. 15, 1776**

... Our landing on York Island was effected without the loss of a man, for the moment they saw us ashore, they retreated to their works at Kingsbridge. A lieutenant of theirs, who was that night my prisoner, informed me that a body of 3,000 had got round to our right, with the intention of attacking us before we could form after landing, but so little eager were they to commence the assault, that, upon their falling in with two companies of Grenadiers, who had by accident been posted on the same road, they fled with the utmost haste; not even taking time to put on their packs and blankets, which they had thrown off on a thorough conviction of beating us. Their blankets were a great prize, as several of our men had thrown off their's on the 27th, when pursuing the enemy. Here they amply made up their losses...

After landing in York Island, we drove the Americans into their works beyond the eighth mile-stone from New York, and thus got possession of the best half of the island. We took post opposite to them, placed our picquets, borrowed a sheep, killed, cooked, and ate some of it, and then went to sleep on a gate, which we took the liberty of throwing off its hinges, covering our feet with an American tent, for which we should have cut poles and pitched, had it not been so dark. Give me such living as we enjoy at present, such a hut and such company, and I would not care three farthings if we stayed all the winter, for though the mornings and evenings are cold, yet the sun is so hot as to oblige me to put up a blanket as a screen.

Source and Note: *The Life and Services of General Lord Harris, G.C.B.*, by The Right Hon. S. R. Lushington, John W. Parker, London, 1840, Google Books, pp. 77-79. Capt. Harris was assigned to the 5th Grenadier Company.

Excerpts of Letter from Maj. Hon. Charles Stuart, 43rd Regt. and Commanding the 4th British Grenadier Battalion (Including the 42nd Grenadier Company), to his Father the Earl of Bute, Describing the Landing, Kip's Bay, New York, Sept. 15, 1776

Blomindel Heights Camp, Sep^r 26, 1776

On the 16th [15th] of this month we marched from Newtown Camp, and the Corps de reserve consisting of the three Battalions of L^t. Infantry, the German Jagers, my Battalion of Highland Grenadiers, the 42nd and 32nd [33rd] Reg^{ts}., embarked on board flat-bottomed boats in Newtown Creek, from whence we proceeded on our way to land upon New York Island. A 50 gun ship and two frigates were drawn up to cover the landing.

Upon the enemy perceiving our boats, they sent several columns of men to line sunk breast-works that they had previously made to prevent a landing. We steered to the right and landed about three miles above the town under an incessant fire from the shipping.

A more glorious scene I never beheld; the thunder of the ships, the appearance of the enemy, the ardor of our troops, the whole army drawn up on Long Island ready to support us, surpassed everything of magnificence. So well did the army do their business that the enemy evacuated their lines, and we landed without opposition.

We immediately rush'd for wood and took possession of a Hill about a mile from the spot where we landed. In our way we had some skirmishes in which our Brigadier Gen. [Hon. John] Vaughan was wounded, and some few men of the Hessians; when the whole army was landed we proceeded on the

Harlem road to these Heights. The enemy made a show of giving us battle several times as they retreated; we lay on our arms that night...

Your dutiful and affectionate son,

Ch. Stuart

Source and Note: *New Records of the American Revolution*, Sir Charles Stuart, L. K. Ashnor, London, 1927, pp. 11-12. Maj. Stuart is incorrect in stating the 42nd Regt. crossed to New York in flatboats. Rather the 42nd Regt. embarked on the six transports designated for the second wave.

**Excerpt of Memorial of Brig. Gen. Oliver DeLancy for Damage by British and Hessian Troops,
New York, Sept. 15, 1776**

The Memorial of Brigadier General Oliver DeLancy

Humbly Sheweth,

That on the 15th of September, 1776, he came with the Army, then commanded by His Excellency The Honorable Sir William HOWE, to New York Island... That Part of the Army consisting of the Hessian Regiments of Colonel Block, Hackenberg, De Loos, Donop, Gosen, the Hessian Grenadiers and Artillery under the immediate Command of General [Johann Daniel Stirn] Stern; the 28th Regiment, the 42^d, part of the 71st the Grenadier and Light Infantry of the Army were then, or great part of them, with their Waggons and Numberless Horses encamped on Your Memorialist's Farm at Bloomingdale and the adjoining Grounds; that having himself a Command on Long Island his Property lay open to the Will of the Army and was destroyed and taken away to a considerable Amount. ..

[28 November 1777]

Source: TNA, *Audit Office: American Loyalists Claims, Series II* at AO13/3, pp.287-289 at The On-Line Institute for Advanced Loyalist Studies at www.royalprovincial.com.

**Excerpt of letter from Rebel Gen. George Washington to the Continental
Congress with an Account of Kip's Bay Landing, New York, Sept. 15, 1776**

...as soon as I heard the firing, I road with all possible dispatch towards the place of landing, when to my great surprize and mortification, I found the Troops that had been posted in the Lines, retreating with the utmost precipitation, and those ordered to support them, [Gen. Samuel] Parsons's and [Gen. John] Fellows's Brigades, flying in every direction and in the greatest confusion, notwithstanding the exertions of their Generals to form them. I used every means in my power, to rally and get them into some order, but my attempts were fruitless and ineffectual and on the appearance of a small party of the Enemy, not more than Sixty or Seventy in Number, their disorder increased and they ran away in the greatest confusion without firing a single Shot. Finding that no confidence was to be placed in these Brigades and apprehending that another part of the Enemy might pass over to Harlem plains and cut of the retreat to this place, I sent orders to secure the Heights in the best manner with the Troops that were stationed on and near them, which being done; the retreat was effected with but little or no loss of Men, tho' of a considerable part of our Baggage occasioned by this disgraceful and dastardly conduct...

Source: *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799*. Ed. John C. Fitzpatrick, Vol.6, American Memory Collection, U.S. Library of Congress.



Harlem Plains 1812, by George Hayward

Picture Source: From the *New York Public Library, Digital Collection*

Battle of Harlem Heights, New York, Sept. 16, 1776

Excerpt of Letter No. 27 from Gen. Sir William Howe, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Reporting the Battle of Harlem Heights; Manhattan Island, New York, Sept. 16, 1776

21 September, York Island

My Lord...

On the 16th in the morning, a large party of the Enemy having passed under cover of the woods near to the advanced posts of the Army by way of Vanderwater's Height, the 2^d and 3^d Battalions of Light Infantry supported by the 42^d Regiment pushed forward and drove them back to their Entrenchments, from whence the Enemy observing they were not in force attacked them with near three thousand Men, which occasioned the march of the reserve with two field-pieces, a Battalion of Hessian Grenadiers, and the Company of Chasseurs [Jägers], to prevent the Corps engaged from being surrounded; but the Light Infantry and 42^d Regiment with the assistance of the Chasseurs and field-pieces repulsed the Enemy with considerable loss and obliged them to retire within their works. The Enemy's loss is not ascertained, but from the accounts of deserters it is agreed that they had not less than three hundred killed and wounded, and among them a Colonel and Major killed. We had eight Officers wounded, most of them very slightly, fourteen Men killed, and about seventy wounded...

Signed.

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution, Vol. XII, Transcripts 1776*, pp. 227-229 from TNA, Colonial Office, Secretary of State, *Military Dispatches* at CO 5/93, f. 274.



Site of Principal Action of the Battle of Harlem Heights Looking North, circa 1897 ("Buckwheat Field" at top of Photograph)

Picture Source: *Battle of Harlem Heights, September 16, 1776*, Henry P. Johnston, McMillan Co., 1897, opp. p. 88.

Excerpt of Letter from Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling, 42nd Regt. to his Brother, Sir William Stirling of Ardoch, Discussing Battle of Harlem Heights, New York, Sept. 16, 1776

Camp near Bloomingdale, Island of New York, Sep^r 22, 1776

My Dear Sir Will^m:

... Next day the Light Infantry brought themselves into a scrap ____us and had we not marched up to their support 6 or 700 of them would have been cut to pieces or taken, in this affair our Reg't had 2 Cap^{ts} [Brevet-Maj. Duncan M^cPherson and Capt. Lt. John M^cIntosh] 1 Sub 2 Serg^{ts} 2 Drum^{rs} & 46 wounded & 2 men killed [Pvt. Angus Cameron and Pvt. James Grant] one of the officers Ensⁿ [Alexander] M^cKenzie died of his wounds this day. I have since been very ill with a bloody Flux and the something better today far from being well, we are up on an advanced post so that even common comforts are not to be had I therefore think of going to New York for a few days if not soon better, the Rebels sent in incendiaries which set that town on fire in several places yesterday and about 500 houses are burnt - [Capt. and Brigade Maj.] Archie [Erskine] and all your acquaintances are well ____the kindest to all my Friend & I ever ____

Source: NRS, *Papers of the Family of Stirling Home Drummond Moray of Abercairny* at GD24/1/458/1.



Detail from *View of the North River, looking north toward Fort Washington. 16 October 1781*, by Archibald Robertson

Picture Source and Note: *Archibald Robertson: his diaries and sketches in America, 1762-1780*, From the New York Public Library, Digital Collection. The inlet shown is *Martje David's Fly* and leads to Harlem Plains on the right.

Excerpt of Memorial to Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling, 42nd Regt., Describing the 42nd Regt. in the Battle of Harlem Heights, New York, Sept. 16, 1776

Memorial

L^t Col: Stirling 42^d Reg^t

... they then extended to Gen [Oliver] Delancys House close to the North River next morning the [2nd and 3rd] L.I. having discovered a body of the Rebels turn out to attack them & drove them before them sending to the 42^d to support them unfortunately the Lights through too much ardour pursued too far untill they found themselves opposed by Washingtons Army the 42^d marched up to bring them and one [battalion] taking post on an advantageous ground the other [battalion] marched up to the Height of [Vanderwater] to cover the L^t Inf^y as they came off which they effectually did, and tho the Rebels advanced in great force & if they came to the ground they were ordered to in great order bringing of all their killed and wounded the other Battⁿ maintained itself on its Ground till the Rebels retreated The Reg^t lost 1 Off K 2 W & 46 K&W ...

Source: Archives, *Regimental Headquarters, The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment)*, Balhousie Castle, "Short account of the movements and engagements of the two battalions of the 42nd from 22nd August to 16th December 1776" (Addressed to Col T Stirling commanding 42nd Royal Highlanders.) BWRA 0398 Stirling Papers /5.

Chaplain James M^cLagan's Account of the Battle of Harlem Heights, New York, Sept. 16, 1776

Dated Piscataway 31st May. 1777

My Lord...

On the 16th [Sept.] the Battalion of 42^d were engaged in a very serious affair. Some companies of light infantry pursuing a party of Rebels too far, were almost Surrounded, when your Lordships Regiment was called to their assistance, here, about 700 British Troops were hotly engaged for sometime, and in the thick wood with about 9000 rebels, at length the Highlanders brought of the Light Infantry & Stopped the Enemies Course, here Ensign Alex^r M^cKenzie was Mortally wounded...

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*. Chap. M^cLagan was the Chaplain of the 42nd Regt. He was writing to the Colonel of the regiment, Gen. Lord John Murray in Britain.

Lt. John Macdonald's Account of 42nd Regt. in the Battle of Harlem Heights, New York, Sept. 16, 1776

The enemy finding us thus give way, came on furiously, and I had hot work. This was the first opportunity I had of seeing my son fairly engaged, and I will be allowed to say that it gave me pleasure to see him active and cool; but with only one company [battalion] there was no keeping of that ground, therefore we retreated in good order. In this engagement I had a ball through the cuff of my coat, which made a trifling contusion. We had two Captains wounded slightly, and Ensign [Alexander] Mackenzie mortally. In consequence of his vacancy I was advised to memorial the Commander-in-Chief, in order to push for my son.

Source: "Major John Macdonald – His Autobiography" by M.A. Rose in *Celtic Magazine*, Vol. X, Conducted by Alexander Mackenzie, F.S.A. Scot. , A. & W. Mackenzie, Inverness, 1885, Google Books. John Macdonald's son was William Macdonald, a volunteer who was later commissioned in the regiment.

Account of the 42nd Grenadier Company at the Battle of Harlem Heights, by Maj. Charles Stuart, 43rd Regt. and Commander of 4th British Grenadier Battalion, New York, Sept. 16, 1776

Blomindel Heights Camp, Sept. 26, 1776

... The next morning we were alarmed by some musquetry on the left, the grenadiers were ordered to march to the support of two Battalions [2nd and 3rd] of Lt. Infantry who, with more zeal than prudence, had ventured too near the enemy, which gave [American Gen. George] Washington the advantage of trying a ruse which had nearly proved fatal to them all.

Gen. [Sir William] Howe had sent a small party to take possession of a house, which was effected; then Washington, to decoy them still further, took possession of the next house, having flung a thousand men into the woods right and left hoping to surround them. Upon our coming to their assistance, we found our people smartly engaged, hemmed in and almost surrounded.

The Lt. Infantry were ordered to retire, which they were enabled to do under cover of three Companies of the 42nd.

In this brush we had more than 100 killed and wounded, three men of my Batt. wounded, and, what was more singular, my dog as he was lying by me. We afterwards encamped on this spot.

Source and Note: *New Records of the American Revolution, The Letters, Manuscripts and Documents sent by Lieut.-General Sir Charles Stuart, to his Father, the Earl of Bute, 1775-79...*, Published by L. Kashnor, London, 1927, p. 11. This letter is important for the information it provides on the arrangements of the two provisional battalions of the 42nd Regt.. With the mention of three companies it suggests the battalions were unevenly divided at this time due to the captivity of Capt. John Smith's company.

Excerpt of the Report by Gen. Sir William Howe, Commander in Chief, North America, of the Battle of Harlem Heights; New York, Sept. 16, 1776

FRIDAY'S POST.

From the LONDON GAZETTE EXTRAORDINARY. Whitehall, November 4, 1776. Head Quarters York Island, September 21, 1776. My Lord.... On the 16th in the morning, a large party of the enemy having passed under cover of the woods near to the advanced posts of the army by way of Vanderwater's height, the 2d and 3d battalions of light infantry, supported by the 42d regiment, pushed forward, and drove them back to their entrenchments, from whence the enemy, observing they were not in force, attacked them with near 2000 men occasioned the march of the reserve, with two field pieces, a battalion of Hessian grenadiers, and the company of chasseurs, to prevent the corps engaged from being surrounded; but the light infantry and 42d regiment, with the assistance of the chasseurs and field pieces, repulsed the enemy with considerable loss, and obliged them to retire within their works. The enemy's loss is not ascertained; but from the accounts of deserters, it is agreed that they had not less than 300 killed and wounded, and among them a Colonel and Major killed. We had eight officers wounded, most of them very slightly; fourteen men killed, and about seventy wounded...

Source: *Edinburgh Advertiser*, November 8, 1776.

Account of the 42nd Highlanders by Ens. Henry Stirke, 10th Lt. Infantry Company, Harlem Heights, New York, Sept. 16, 1776

16th The 2^d and 3^d Battalion of Light Infantry was attack'd from the skirts of a Wood, by a large party of Rebels, which they drove back, but advancing to near their Works, got a check; 'till a

reinforcement coming up (Consisting of a [42nd] Highland battalion, and a battalion of Grenadiers) soon turn'd the Scale, and planted Victory on our Side...

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. 159. This note reinforces description that only one 42nd Regt. battalion was engaged.

**Account of the Battle of Harlem Heights by Hessian Maj. Carl Leopold Baurmeister
Indicates the 42nd Highlanders Ran out of Ammunition, New York, Sept. 16, 1776**

In Detached Camp near Hell Gate
24 Sep^r. 1776.

On the 16th (Sept) the enemy encamped before Fort Washington in pretty good order; the left wing extending to Harlem. From Fort Washington an entrenchment to King's Bridge, by which they secured a further retreat under the protection of the said fort. The English Light Infantry advanced too quickly on the retreat of the enemy and at Bruckland Hill fell into an ambuscade of four thousand men, and if the Grenadiers and especially the Hessian Yagers had not arrived in time to help them no one of these brave Light Infantry would have escaped. They lost 70 dead and 200 wounded - the enemy must have lost very severely, because no Yager had any ammunition left, and all the Highlanders had fired their last shot...

Source: *Battle of Harlem Heights, September 16, 1776*, Henry P. Johnston, The Macmillan Co., New York, 1897, Google Books, pp. 226-227.



Detail of "View of Harlaem from Morisania in the province of New York, Septem^r. 1765," by Lord Adam Gordon

Picture Source: British Library (Creative Commons Attribution Lic.)

**Rebel Gen. George Washington's Account of the Battle of Harlem Heights, New York,
Sept. 16, 1776**

Head Quarters, Col. Roger Morris's House, September 18, 1776.

Sir:

As my Letter of the 16th contained Intelligence of an important Nature, and such as might lead Congress to expect, that the Evacuation of New York and retreat to the Heights of Harlem in the manner they were made, would be succeeded by some other interesting event, I beg leave to inform them, that as yet nothing has been attempted upon a large and general plan of Attack.

About the time of the post's departure with my Letter, the Enemy appeared in several large Bodies upon the plains, about two and a half Miles from hence; I rode down to our advanced posts to put matters in a proper Situation, if they should attempt to come on: When I arrived there, I heard a firing

which I was informed was between a party of our Rangers under the Command of Lieutenant Colonel [Thomas] Knolton and an advanced party of the Enemy. Our Men came in and told me, that the Body of the Enemy, who kept themselves concealed, consisted of about three hundred as near as they could guess; I immediately ordered three Companies of Colonel [George] Weedon's [3rd] Regiment from Virginia, under the Command of Major [Andrew] Leitch and Colonel Knolton with his Rangers, composed of Volunteers from different New England Regiments, to try to get in their Rear, while a Disposition was making as if to attack them in front and thereby draw their whole attention that way. This took effect as I wished on the part of the Enemy. On the appearance of our party in front they immediately ran down the Hill, took possession of some fences and Bushes and a smart firing began, but at too great a distance to do much execution either side. The Parties under Colonel Knolton and Major Leitch unluckily began their Attack too soon, it was rather in flank than in Rear. In a little time Major Leitch was brought off wounded, having received three Balls thro' his side, and in a short time after Col: Knowlton got a Wound, which proved Mortal.

Their Men however persevered and continued the Engagement with the greatest Resolution. Finding that they wanted a support, I advanced part of Colo: [Henry] Griffith's and Colo: [William] Richardson's Maryland Regiments, with some Detachments from the Eastern Regiments, who were nearest the place of Action. Those Troops charged the Enemy with great Intrepidity and drove them from the Wood into the plain, and were pushing them from thence (having silenced their Fire in a great measure), when I judged it prudent to order a retreat, fearing the Enemy (as I have since found was really the case) were sending a large Body to support their party. Major Leitch, I am in hopes, will recover but Col: Knolton's fall is much to be regretted, as that of a brave and good Officer. We had about forty wounded, the Number of Slain is not yet ascertained, but it is very inconsiderable.

By a Serjeant who deserted from the Enemy and came in this Morning, I find that their party was greater than I imagined. It consisted of the 2^d Battalion of Light Infantry, a Battalion of the Royal Highlanders and three Companies of the Hessian Rifle Men, under the command of Brigadier General [Hon. Alexander] Leslie. The Deserter reports that their Loss in wounded and missing was 89 and 8 killed. In the latter his Account is too small, as our people discovered and buried double that Number. This Affair I am in hopes will be attended with many salutary consequences, as it seems to have greatly inspirited the whole of our Troops. The Serjeant further adds, that a considerable body of Men are now encamped from the East to the North River, between the 7 and 8 Mile Stones, under the Command of General Clinton. General Howe he believes has his Quarters at Mr. Apthorp's House.

I have the Honor to be etc.

Source and Note: *The George Washington Papers at the Library of Congress*, George Washington to Continental Congress, September 18, 1776, *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799*, Vol. 6, John C. Fitzpatrick, Editor. Washington confirms other information that only one battalion of the 42nd Regt. was engaged.

**Rebel Gen. George Washington's Account of 42nd Regt. Casualties
at the Battle of Harlem Heights, New York, Sept. 16, 1776**

Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, October 8, 1776.

Sir:

... Yesterday afternoon the exchange between Lord Stirling and Governor Browne was carried into execution and his Lordship is now here; he confirms the Intelligence mentioned by Capt: Souther ... he further adds, that he had heard it acknowledged more than once, that in the Action of the 16th. Ulto [Sept.]. the Enemy had a Hundred men killed, about sixty Highlanders of the 42^d. Regiment, and 40 of the light Infantry. This confession coming from themselves, we may reasonably conclude did not exaggerate the number.

Source: *The George Washington Papers at the Library of Congress*, George Washington to Continental Congress, October 8, 1776, *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799*, Vol. 6, John C. Fitzpatrick, Editor.



Detail from "Positions of the American and British Armies near Harlem," 1897, by Henry Phelps Johnston

Map Source: Wikimedia Commons, from "The Battle of Harlem Heights, September 16, 1776," Henry Phelps Johnston, Columbia Univ. Press, New York, 1897. opp. p. 70

Rebel Account of the Battle of Harlem Heights, New York on Sept. 16, 1776

ANNAPOLIS, *October 3.*

Extract of a letter, dated at [American] headquarters, September 17, 1776...

"Yesterday morning [Sept. 16] the regulars came within half a mile of our lines, and made a stand; A few of our scouts, who were out, attacked, and drove them off; in two hours after about 2000 of them returned; General Beal sent out three companies of rifle-men, under the command of Major [Peter] Mantz [Maryland Flying Camp], who attacked them; immediately General [George] Washington reinforced, with the remainder of our brigade, together with the remainder of our brigade, together with Col. [George] Weedon's regiment from Virginia, Major Price's three independent companies, and one regiment of Rhode Islanders – never did troops go on the field with greater cheerfulness and alacrity ---- when there began a heavy fire on both sides; it continued about one hour, when our brave southern troops dislodged them from their posts; the enemy rallied, and our men beat them the second time; they rallied again, our troops drove them a third time, and were rushing on them, but the enemy had got on an eminence, and our troops were ordered to retreat, the General considering there might be a large number of the enemy behind the hill concealed, which was the case; we were informed by a prisoner, that our men took, there were about 8 or 1000 concealed.

"From the number of the enemy that I saw lay on the field dead and wounded, I think their loss must be three or four times ours. I have not yet been able to get a full account of our loss, only of our brigade, which is as follows: Capt. [John] Lowe wounded through both his thighs, twelve privates wounded and three missing; Major [Andrew] Leitch, of Col. Weedon's regiment, received three balls through his belly; more is the pity, for never was a braver hero; he stood the field with the greatest bravery till the third shot, when he was obliged to fall; he appears to be in good spirits; the Doctors are of opinion he will recover; Col. [Thomas] Knowlton, from Boston, killed in the field, who distinguished himself at Bunker's Hill, as well as in the engagement; he will be interred today with all the honours of war. From our present situation, it is firmly my opinion we shall give them a genteel drubbing, in case the Yankies will fight with as much spirit as the southern troops.

“As near as I can collect, our loss, killed, wounded, and taken, amounts to 50 men. We expect every hour when the general engagement will come on, and if we prove successful, the campaign will be settled for this present year.

“General Washington gave great applause to our Maryland troops, for their gallant behavior yesterday.”

Source: *Virginia Gazette*, Dixon and Hunter, Oct. 11, 1776, p. 3.

Rebel Account of the Battle of Harlem Heights, New York on Sept. 16, 1776

BALTIMORE, Sept. 23...

By a Gentleman of undoubted veracity, just come to town from the camp at Harlem, we have the following intelligence, viz...By the above Gentleman we are favoured with the following extract of a letter from a General officer, who was present at the time of action, viz...On Monday morning the enemy appeared in several large bodies on the plain, about two miles and a half from our lines: About noon a firing began between a party of our rangers, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel [Thomas] Knolton, and an advanced party of the enemy, who were supposed to be about 300: Three companies of Col. [George] Weedon's regiment of Virginians, under the command of Major [Andrew] Leitch, and Col. Knolton, with his rangers, composed of volunteers from different New England regiments, were ordered to get into the rear, of the enemy whilst dispositions were making as if to attack them in front, and and there by draw their attention that way; this took effect. On the appearance of our BRAVE TROOPS in front, the enemy immediately ran down the hill, took possession of some fences and bushes, and a smart firing began, but at two great a distance to do much execution on either side. The parties under Col. Knolton and Major Leitch began their attack too soon, as it was rather in flank than in rear. In a little time Major Leitch was brought off wounded, having received three ball through his side, and in a short time after Col. Knolton got wounded, which proved mortal. Our men, however, persevered and continued the engagement with the greatest resolution. Part of Col. [Henry] Griffith's and Col. [William] Richardson's Maryland regiments, with some volunteers from the northern regiments, who were nearest the place of action, advanced to support our men. – These troops charged the enemy with great rapidity, and drove them from the wood into the plain, and were pursuing them from thence, having silenced their fire in a great measure, when it was thought prudent to order a retreat, fearing the enemy (as it was since found to be really the case) would send a large body to support their party...We had about 40 wounded; the number slain is not yet ascertained, but is very inconsiderable.

“By a serjeant who deserted from the enemy, and came in this morning, we were informed, that their party consisted of the 2d battalion of light infantry, a battalion of royal Highlanders, and three companies of Hessian rifle-men, under the command of Brigadier General [Hon. Alexander] Leslie. The deserter reports, that their loss in killed and wounded amounts to upwards of 140, about 40 of which we found dead on the field, and buried...”

Source: *Virginia Gazette*, Oct. 4, 1776.

General Orders Complimenting Troops who Fought in the Battle of Heights, Including the 42nd Highlanders, New York, Sept. 17, 1776

Head Q^{rs} New York Island Tuesday 17th Sept^r 76

Parole Blenheim C^r Sⁿ Marlborough

A Return of killed and wounded & missing on the 15th & 16th ins^t to be given in tomorrow at orderly time distinguishing the loss of each day.

The Commander in Chief entertains the highest opinion of the bravery of the few Troops that yesterday beat back a very Superior body of the Rebels & he desires to return his thanks to the Battalions & to the Officers and Men of the Artillery that came to their Support, with that expedition which so

Strongly marks the prevailing Spirit in this Army & which of properly temper'd must always insure Success to His Majesty's Arms, but at the same time he finds himself under a necessity of disapproving of want of Attention in the Light Companies pursuing the Rebels without that proper dissention to be observ'd where there are not Troops to Support ...

Source and Note: NRS, *Peebles Journal*, "Orderly Book, 4th Battⁿ Grenad^{rs}, 4th Battalion Grenadiers." The 2nd and 3rd Light Infantry Bns. (the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co. was in the 1st Bn.) are being criticized for being pulled too far forward as part of the Rebel plan to flank them with circling units. The Rebel army took positions on Harlem Heights and were able to prevent further British movement up the island



Detail showing McGowan's house and road to Harlem from "A topographical map of the northn. part of New York Island, exhibiting the plan of Fort Washington, now Fort Knyphausen, with the rebels lines to the southward, which were forced by the troops under the command of the Rt. Honble. Earl Percy on the 16th. Novr. 1776, and survey'd immediately after by order of His Lordship," 1777, by Claude Joseph Sauthier.

Map Source: Library of Congress Geography and Map Div.

Maj. of Brigade and Capt. Frederick Mackenzie, 5th Brigade, Records the Locations of the 42nd Regt. Companies, Manhattan Island, New York, Sept. 17, 1776

17th Sept^r ...

The Camp Equipage and Baggage of the Army has not yet been brought over from Long Island, owing to the difficulty of transporting so many Waggons and horses Most of the troops therefore remain without tents, but they have made Wigwams or other shelter for themselves. Some Corps lie in Barns which are near their posts...

18th Sept^r –

The Army is now Encamped, and is posted as follows. The three Battalions of Lt. Infantry [including the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co. in the 1st Bn.], four Battalions of Grenadiers [including the 42nd Gren. Co. in the 4th Bn.], 33rd, & 42nd Regiment, three Battalions of Hessian Grenadiers, and the Jagers, with some Artillery, from the 1st Line, in front, with their right at McGowan's House, on the road to Haerlem, and their left at [Nicholas] Jones's house on the North River.

Source: *Dairy of Frederick Mackenzie*, Vol. I, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1930 and reprinted by The New York Times & Arno Press, 1969, pp. 52, 55-56.

Excerpts of Private Letter from Gen. Sir William Howe, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Reporting the Status of the Campaign, New York, Sept. 25, 1776

25 September, York Island

My Lord,

From the present appearance of things I look upon the farther progress of his Army for the campaign to be rather precarious, an attack upon Rhode Island excepted which I would willingly defer for a short time in case it should be thought advisable to employ our whole force together. The duration of the campaign must be short, and the 2^d division of Hessians not arrived, nor have I any dependence upon General [Sir Guy] Carleton's approach to act with influence this year upon the main rebel Army opposed to us...

The Enemy is too strongly posted to be attacked in front and innumerable difficulties are in our way of turning him on either side. Though his Army is much dispirited from the late success of His Majesty's arms, yet have I not the smallest prospect of finishing the contest this campaign, nor until the rebels see preparations in the spring that may preclude all thoughts of further resistance. To this end I would propose eight or ten line of battle ships to be with us in February with a number of supernumerary seamen for manning boats, having fully experienced the want of them in every Movement we have made. We must also have recruits from Europe, not finding the Americans disposed to serve with arms, notwithstanding the hopes held out to me upon my arrival at this post...

An exchange of prisoners has taken place and Major General [Richard] Prescott in consequence of it is with me, being exchanged for Major General [John] Sullivan of the rebel Army. Governor Mountfort Brown is to be returned for [Maj. Gen. William Alexander] Lord Sterling and Governor [Phillip] Skene for an inhabitant of Boston [James Lovel] taken in to custody by General [Thomas] Gage.

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution*, Vol. XII, *Transcripts 1776*, p. 32 from TNA, *Colonial Office: Secretary of State, Military Dispatches* at CO 5/93, f. 283.

Capt. Hon. George Mackenzie's 42nd Lt. Infantry Company Advances with the 1st Lt. Infantry Battalion to Drive Rebels from Harlem, New York, Sept. 26, 1776

26th Sep^t – The 1st Battalion of Light Infantry advanced last night from McGowan's house as far as Haerlem, from whence they drove the Rebels posted there with little or no opposition. As it is a post which cannot be kept in the present situation of the Army, and otherwise of no material consequence, they abandoned it, and returned at daylight without any loss.

Source: *Dairy of Frederick Mackenzie*, Vol. I, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1930 and reprinted by The New York Times & Arno Press, 1969, p. 64.

Maj. of Brigade and Capt. Frederick Mackenzie Records the Withdrawal of the 42nd Regt. Companies from the Front Lines to Prepare for Movement and the Disbanding of the 4th British Grenadier Battalion, Harlem, New York, Oct. 2 and 8, 1776

2nd Oct^r – The Grenadiers and other troops composing the first Line [including all companies of the 42nd Regt.] moved from their position this morning and took up the ground of the 3rd & 4th Brigades, and Stirn's brigade of Hessians, which Brigades marched forward and took up the ground of the 1st Line. The Light Infantry cantoned in the farm houses and Barns near Bloomingdale. It is probable from this movement, that the three brigades now advanced, are to remain in that position, when the rest of the Army moves.

8th Oct^r ...

The Grenadier Company of the 42^d Regiment, and the two Grenadier Companies of the 71st [Highland] Regiment, have hitherto formed the 4th Battalion of Grenadiers. As the last two Companies are sickly, that Battalion is now broke up, & the 71st Companies ordered to join their Regiment. The 42^d Company is ordered to join the 3rd Battalion.

Source: *Dairy of Frederick Mackenzie*, Vol. I, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1930 and reprinted by The New York Times & Arno Press, 1969, pp. 68 and 74.

**Account of the Preparation for Movement of 1st Lt. Infantry Battalion by
Ens. Henry Stirke, 10th Lt. Infantry Company, New York, Oct. 2 – 11, 1776**

Oct^r

2^d The Light Infantry march'd from the Pass near Harlem and took up their Quarters, on the North Side of the Island about 4 miles from New-York. The 10th Reg^t succeeded them, in the advanc'd post.

11th The Light Infantry, Grenadiers and part of the Army, embark'd in flat boats, at Turtle bay about 11 O'Clock at night; and remain'd in they boats, 'till morning.

Source: "A British Officer's Revolutionary War Journal, 1776 – 1778," Ed. S. Sydney Bradford in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, Vol. 56, No. 2, Baltimore, June 1961, pp. 159-160.



Detail showing Flatbush and New Utrecht from "Sketch of the country illustrating the late engagement in Long Island," 1776

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

**General Order Returning Two 42nd Regt. Detachments at Flatbush and New Utrecht, Long Island,
to the Regiment, New York, Oct. 7, 1776**

G:O: Head Q^{rs} New York Island 7th Oct^r 76

Parole Brandenburg C^r Sⁿ Kinsale

The Detachm^{ts} of 42^d Reg^t at Flat Bush and New Utrecht are to join their Reg^t as soon as relieved by Detachments from Brig^r Gen^l [Oliver] Delancys Brigade.

A Detachm^t of an Officer, 2 Serj^{ts} & 20 Men of Brig^r Gen^l [Oliver] Delancy's Brigade, will march immediately After they have got their arms to Utrecht & Flat Bush & relieve the 42^d doing duty there, taking charge of all Stores &c^a that may belong to His Majesty ...

Source and Note: NRS, "Orderly Book, 4th Battⁿ Grenad^{rs}, 4th Battalion Grenadiers." "Brig^r Gen^l Delancys Brigade" was a Loyalist brigade from New York.

General Order Disbanding the 4th British Grenadier Battalion and Assigning the 42nd Grenadier Company to the 3rd Grenadier Battalion, New York, Oct. 8, 1776

G:O: Head Q^{rs} New York Island 8th Oct^r 1776...

The two 71st Grenadier Company's of the 4th Battⁿ Grenad^{rs} being very Sickly are to join their Reg^t. The 42nd Grenad^r Company of said Battⁿ will join the 3rd Battⁿ of Grenad^{rs} under the Command of Major [James] Marsh [46th Regt.] and Major [Hon. Charles] Stewart [43rd Regt.]...

Source: NRS, "Orderly Book, 4th Battⁿ Grenad^{rs}, 4th Battalion Grenadiers."

Excerpt of Letter from Dr. J. Mervin Nooth to his Father, Mr. Nooth, Sen., New York, Describing the Sickness of the Highland Regiments, New York, Oct. 1776

Dear Sir,

...As our army is very numerous, amounting to thirty-six thousand men at present in the field, it must occur to you that y situation must be very fatiguing, and particularly when I tell you that I have every day eleven hundred sick to provide for. You are not, on this account, to conclude that the army is very sickly; on the contrary, it is, on the whole, remarkably healthy, and as to the English marching regiments, they have scarcely a man in the hospital. The sick list is composed of the Guards and Highlanders belonging to the 42nd and 71st Regiments...

I am Dear Sir,

Yours most dutifully,

J. Mervin North [Nooth]

Source: "Letters relating to the American Revolutionary War," Read by William Kingsford, L.L. D, in *Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada for the Year 1893*, Vol. XI, John Durie & Son, Ottawa, 1894, Google Books, pp. 69-70.

General Orders to Prepare the Army to Move by Water to Throggs Neck, New York, Oct. 11, 1776

G:O: Head Q^{rs} N. York Island 11th Oct^r 1776...

Gen^l After Orders 5 O'Clock

As soon as the Troops move against the Enemy Lieu^t Gen^l [Henry] Clinton will Command the 1st Division Consisting of the light Infantry, Reserve, Hessian Grenad^{rs} and Chasseurs [Jägers]– Lieu^t Gen^l [Hugh] Earl Percy is to Command on N. York Island & Posts depending His Lordship will give his Orders Accordingly.

The Troops that are under orders for March^g will Strike their Tents at Six this Evening, put their Baggage on Board & be ready to March immediately...

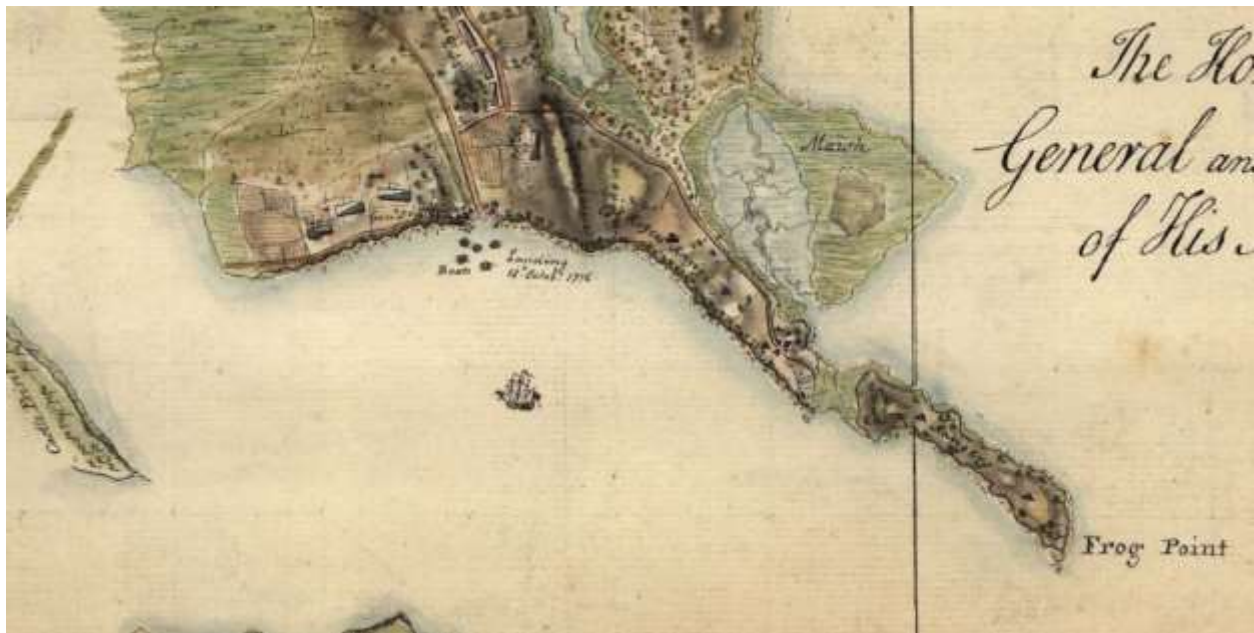
Source and Note: NRS, "Orderly Book, 4th Battⁿ Grenad^{rs}, 4th Battalion Grenadiers." Blocked by the strong Rebel positions at Harlem Heights, on the night of Oct. 11, Gen. Howe moved his forces around the Rebels by water up the East River and through Hell Gate. The British troops landed at Throggs Neck (also called Frog's Neck), a peninsula jutting into Long Island Sound about ten miles east of Harlem.

Maj. of Brigade Frederick Mackenzie, 5th Brigade, Records Preparations for Part of the Army to Move to the Mainland, New York, Oct. 11, 1776

11th Oct^r ...

The Majors of brigade and orderly officers having received directions to attend at 5 in the afternoon at the Dove [Tavern] for orders, the orders they received at that time were, that the Troops under orders for march (which were the whole of The Army except the 3rd, 4th, & 5th brigades of British Infantry, and Stirn's brigade of Hessians) should strike their tents at 6 in the Evening, put their baggage on board, and be ready to march immediately. It was also ordered, that as soon as the Troops move against the Enemy, Lieutenant General [Henry] Clinton should Command the first Division, consisting of the Light Infantry [with the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co. in the 1st Bn.], Reserve [with the 42nd Gren. Co. in the 3rd Gren. Bn. and the 42nd Regt.], Hessian Grenadiers & Chasseurs [Jägers]; Lieu^t Gen^l [Hugh] Percy to Command on York Island & posts depending...

Source and Note: *Dairy of Frederick Mackenzie*, Vol. I, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1930 and reprinted by The New York Times & Arno Press, 1969, pp. 76-77. The *Dove Tavern* was located near the five mile stone (about 66th St.) on the Post Road (now 3rd Ave.) and the site of the Artillery Park.



Detail from "A survey of Frog's Neck and the rout of the British Army to the 24th of October 1776, under the command of His Excellency the Honorable William Howe, General and Commander in Chief of His Majesty's forces, &c., &c., &c.,," 1776 by Charles Blaskowitz

Map Source: Library of Congress Geography and Map Div.

Gen. Sir William Howe Moves to the Mainland, New York, Oct. 12-Nov. 15, 1776

Excerpts of Letter No. 31 from Gen. Sir William Howe, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Reporting the Movement to Throggs Neck, New York, Oct 12- 18, 1776

New York 30 November 1776

My Lord,

The service in which I have been employed since the departure of Captain [Nesbit] Balfour with advice of the reduction of New York would not allow of an earlier time to send an account to your lordship of the progress made from that period.

The very strong positions the Enemy had taken on this island and fortified with incredible labour determined me to get upon their principal communication with Connecticut, with a view of forcing them to quit the strongholds in the neighbourhood of King's Bridge and if possible to bring them to action.

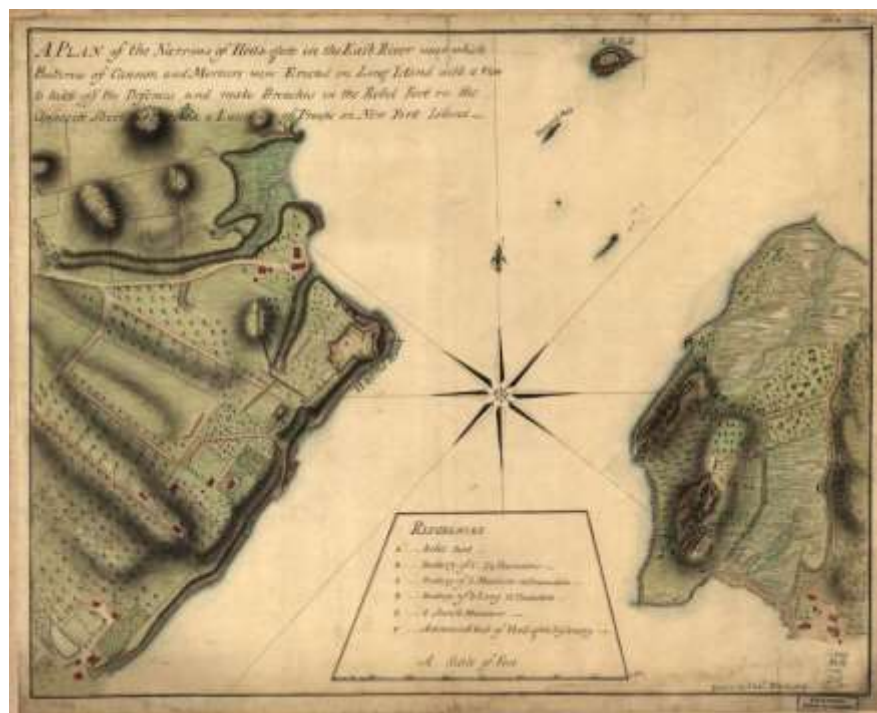
All previous arrangements being made, the Army [including the 42nd Regt.] embarked on the 12th October in flatboats and other craft, and pressing through the dangerous navigation of Hell Gate in a very thick fog, landed on Frog's Neck near the town of West Chester about 9 in the morning, the Carysfort frigate being placed to cover the descent... Only one artillery boat was overset, having three six-pounders on board which were lost, and three Men drowned.

Lieutenant-General [Hugh] Earl Percy remained with two Brigades of British and one of Hessians in the lines near Haerlem to cover New York.

The Army remained in this situation until the stores and provisions could be brought up and three Battalions of Hessians drawn from Staten Island, which together with some bad weather intervening occasioned a delay of five days...

Signed

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution, Vol. XII, Transcripts 1776*, pp. 258 - 264 from TNA, Colonial Office: Secretary of State, Military Dispatches at CO 5/93, f. 294.



"A Plan of the Narrows of Hells-gate in the east River..." 1776, by Charles Blaskowitz

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

Maj. of Brigade and Capt. Frederick Mackenzie, 5th Brigade, Records Embarkation of Part of the Army, Including the 42nd Regt. Companies, to Move to Throgg's Neck, New York, Oct. 12, 1776

12th Oct^r – Frost last night. The first this Season.

The troops marched from their ground at 10 o'Clock last night, and soon after began to embark at several places in the east River, particularly Turtle-bay, Marston's wharf, General [Sir William] Howe's quarters, and several other wharfs up that way. Many of the troops went in transports, but the principal part in the Boats, Sloops, and Schooners. About 4 this morning they began to move with the tide, and

passed up the East river and through Hellgate with great rapidity, and without any other accident than the loss of a Gunboat, in which were a Detachment of artillery with 3. 6 p^{rs} by which 4 men of the artillery were drowned and the guns lost... Having passed Hellgate, the whole proceeded up the [Long Island] Sound with a fair wind, and at 12 at noon landed at a place called Frog's [Throgg's] point in West-Chester County, without any opposition. The rebels had a post of an officer and 30 men there, who, as soon as they found the troops were going to land, took to their heels without firing a Shot. We hear that Gen^l [Sir William] Howe advanced two miles into the Country after landing, and encamped on the ground he intended, without meeting any opposition.

Source: *Dairy of Frederick Mackenzie*, Vol. I, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1930 and reprinted by The New York Times & Arno Press, 1969, p. 77.

Corp. Thomas Sullivan's Account of Preparations for the Army's Move to Throgg's Neck, New York, Oct. 12, 1776

Oct. 12th. The 2^d. and 6th. Brigades British and aforesaid 3 battalions of Hessians, marched from Jamaica early in the morning: When we came to y^e. Ferry on the East River, three miles above Hellgate, we were joined by the 42^d. Regiment, and a Battalion of the 71st. Regiment...

All previous Arrangements being made, the Brigade of Guards, 1st. Brigade British; British Grenadiers and Light Infantry, and the Chasseurs, embarked early in the morning, in Flat boats, and other craft, and pressing through the dangerous Navigation of Hell-gate, near the town of Westchester, about nine in the morning; the Caryssort [28-gun *HMS Carysfort*] Frigate was placed to cover the descent.

Source: *From Redcoat to Rebel, the Thomas Sullivan Journal*, Ed. Joseph Lee Boyle, Heritage Books, Bowie (Md.), 1997, p. 60. Corp. Sullivan was in the 49th Regt.

Account of the Landing of 1st Lt. Infantry Battalion by Ens. Henry Stirke, 10th Lt. Infantry Company, Throgg's Neck, New York, Oct. 12 – 18, 1776

Oct^r

12th proceeded down the rapids call'd Hell gate, and landed at ½ after 9 O'Clock in the Morning at Frog [Throggs]-Neck, about 5 mile below Kings Bridge without the least Opposition...

17th The L^t Infantry, grenadiers, and one Brigade, with a body of Hessians; march'd at 1 O'Clock but the morning setting in with very heavy rain, and the wind high; oblig'd us to return to our Quarters, at ½ after 3 O'Clock.

Source: "A British Officer's Revolutionary War Journal, 1776 – 1778," Ed. S. Sydney Bradford in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, Vol. 56, No. 2, Baltimore, June 1961, pp. 159-160.

Account of Throggs Neck Movement by Capt. George Harris, 1st British Grenadier Battalion, Hell Gate, Oct. 12, 1776

We remained in camp till the 10th October, waiting for redoubts to be formed across the island. [Lt. Gen. Hugh] Lord Percy was left to defend these with three brigades of British and Hearne's brigade of Hessians. At eight P. M. of the 10th, the reserve [including the 42nd Regt.], the light infantry and 1,500 Hessians, embarked in boats, under [Lt.] General [Henry] Clinton, went up the East river, passed Hell Gate, and landed at Frogneck without opposition. I cannot here help noticing a part of the river we went through, called Devil's Pans, at the point of an island, which here divides the river into two rapid streams, and causes a very dangerous whirlpool. The suction is so great, that at times the river on that side is impassable. This danger we avoided, though with difficulty, for, through the ignorance of our pilot, we were on the edge of the pool when too late to avoid the suction, and found ourselves, circle after circle,

attracted to the centre, in spite of all our efforts, till at last the boatmen were on the point of quitting their oars, despairing of escape, when, animated I suppose by the love of life, I began to storm at them for their cowardice, and made them stick to their oars. We at length perceived that we made progress, and emerged from the whirlpool, escaping without other accident than the dislocation of a man's wrist, who very foolishly attempted to fend off a large wherry, containing fifty men, which, by the force of the stream, was carried against our boat.

Source: *The Life and Services of General Lord Harris, G.C.B.*, by The Right Hon. S. R. Lushington, John W. Parker, London, 1840, Google Books, pp. 80-81.



Detail of *Admiral of the Fleet Howe, 1st Earl Howe*, 1794, by John Singleton Copley

Picture Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, from National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London

Adm. Richard, Viscount Howe's Account of the Landing on Throggs Neck and Pell's Point, New York, Oct. 11 and 18, 1776

Admiralty Office, December 30, 1776.

CAPTAIN [Christopher] Mason, of his Majesty's [16-gun] sloop the *Tamar*, arrived yesterday at Dartmouth, and came to town this morning with dispatches from Lord Viscount Howe, of which the following is a copy.

Eagle, off New-York, November 23, 1776.

SIR,

THE General thinking fit to move with a large part of the army to the right of the rebel forces, who were preparing to establish themselves for the winter on the heights above King's bridge, as well as on the north part of York Island, the embarkation of the troops in the flat boats and small vessels provided, was made from Kep's Bay, in the night of the 11th of last month, under the direction of Commodore [William] Hotham, with the Captains of the ships from which the boats were manned, as in the former instances; and the troops were landed in the morning on the peninsula of Frogs Neck, in the Sound, about ten miles Eastward from New York, without opposition.

A thick fog prevailing when the boats entered the dangerous passage through Hell Gate, every ill consequence was to be apprehended; but it fortunately happened, that no other injury was sustained besides the oversetting of an artillery boat, by which accident two field pieces and three men were lost...

The General judging it necessary to make a second movement with the troops he conducted further to the Eastwards of Frogs Neck, the light infantry, grenadiers, and other corps of the first embarkation, were again taken into flat bottomed boats, and landed on the 18th on Pell's Neck, separated from Frogs Neck by Hutchinson's River. The rest of the army, which had only a narrow stream to pass, were conveyed over with the artillery and baggage a few hours after. And the second division of the Hessians, that came under convoy of the [32-gun *HMS*] *Diamond* the 19th, were carried up in flat boats,

and landed the 23d on Myers Neck, the post of communication with the fleet last established nearer to New Rochelle...

Source: *General Evening Post* (London), Dec. 29 -31, 1776.

**Account of 42nd Regt. on Throggs Neck Expedition by Capt. Henry Duncan,
64-gun HMS Eagle, Oct. 12, 1776**

About three o'clock Saturday morning, the 12th, the troops were embarked in the flat boats and bateaux, to the number of between four and five thousand men; the Guards and 42nd regiment, between fourteen and fifteen hundred men, were embarked on board sloops under my direction. At daybreak in the morning the boats set off, and no sooner had they put off, with an amazing strong tide, but it came on a fog equal to pitch darkness, with now and then an interval of light for a few seconds. The boats were put off; to attempt to stop them would have been very dangerous, for the headmost boats must have anchored, and the boats that followed would in all probability run foul of them, to the imminent danger of sinking each other; the admiral [Richard, Viscount Howe], therefore, rather chose to run the risk of passing Hell Gate with all the boats in that rapid tide and dark fog. I went astern and ordered all the boats to move forward. Soon after their putting off, a galley towing one of the artillery boats, in endeavouring to cross a vessel lying in the passage, towed her athwart hawse; the boat ran directly up her cable, and upset instantly. Many of the people were picked up; there were three field-pieces lost, and I suppose five or six people. There were very few people in the flat boats had ever been through or knew anything of the passage of Hell Gate. This made the danger much the greater. To keep the starboard shore was the safest passage; straight through carried them upon the rocks, and the larboard shore would have brought them under the fire of the enemy, perhaps without being able to land or retreat; but the boats got all very luckily through, the one instance only excepted, and arrived at Frog Point, the place of their destination, about nine o'clock, where they landed without opposition. They marched up about two miles and a half in the country, but were there stopped very unexpectedly by a bridge being broke down across a small rivulet, and a causeway tore up that led across a morass. Our people remained in this situation, with the sentinels popping at each [other] from the time of landing to the 18th October...

Source: "The Journals of Henry Duncan Captain Royal Navy" in *Naval Miscellany*, Vol. I, ed. John Knox Laughton, Naval Records Society, 1902, Google Books, pp. 131-132

**Excerpts of Letter from Maj. Hon. Charles Stuart, 43rd Regt. and Commanding 4th Grenadier
Battalion, to his Father the Earl of Bute, Long Island, Describing the Landing at Throggs Neck,
New York, Oct. 11 -17, 1776**

East River, New York, Nov. 29, 1776

Upon the 11th Oct. we embarked on board the flat -bottomed boats at 7 ocl. in the evening, and at about daybreak the next morning we proceeded through Hell-Gate (a place so called from a considerable chute which renders the passage very dangerous) to Throg's neck, where we landed without opposition.

The rebels, observing our motion, destroyed a bridge and causeway which joined this neck to part of the continent called West Chester, and flung up entrenchments further to impede our march. It being thought improper to force their pass we encamped; one boat of artillery and a few lives were lost in the passage...

Source: *New Records of the American Revolution*, Sir Charles Stuart, L. K. Ashnor, London, 1927, p. 12.

American News Account of British Landing, Throggs Neck, New York, Oct. 12, 1776,

PHILADELPHIA, October 19 [1776]...
Extract of a letter from HARLEM, October 13.

“Yesterday morning about 4000 of the enemy [British troops] landed at Fagg’s or Fogg’s Point, in the Sound, about 6 miles above us; a detachment was immediately sent to oppose them: The enemy got possession of the point, but as I was informed last night had made no further progress. Our people, I am told, had taken up a bridge which was there, and felled trees across the road, to obstruct them till a reinforcement could arrive. In the afternoon 42 sail passed the mouth of Harlem river, in their way to the point; they consisted of sloops, schooners, brigs, and 9 ships. I expect there will be bloody work there to-day. From the number of men landed, and the ships which went up, I think this can be no feint, but that the main body of [Sir William] Howe’s army must be there, and that there he intends to make his *coup de main* [main attack]. This week will probably finish the campaign. Upon the arrival of the ships at Dobb’s ferry they landed some men and plundered a storehouse. I suppose those men who landed yesterday are to go across the country, and form a line from Fagg’s Point to Tarry-Town, four miles above Dobb’s ferry, where the ships lie, but in this I expect they will be mistaken.”

Source: *Virginia Gazette*, Dixon and Hunter, Nov. 1, 1776, p. 2.

**General Order to Prepare to Abandon Throggs Neck and Move by Water to Pell’s Point,
New York, Oct. 17, 1776**

Head Quarters Frog’s Neck 17th Oct. 1776...

The Troops under Order to march this Morning at One; will strike their Tents to-morrow at One o’Clock, and be in Readiness to march immediately. Those ordered to strike at 3 this Morning will strike their Tents at 3 tomorrow Morning, and be in Readiness to march immediately...

The Arms and Ammunition to be carefully inspected by the Commanding Officers of Corps.

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 order prepares the army to abandon Throggs Neck, where the rebels held a strong position on the causeway leading to the mainland and to move by water to Pell’s Point at Pelham Manor a few miles up the coast of Long Island Sound.



Detail from "A survey of Frog's Neck and the rout of the British Army to the 24th of October 1776, under the command of His Excellency the Honorable William Howe, General and Commander in Chief of His Majesty's forces, &ca, &ca, &ca.,," 1776, by Charles Blaskowitz

Map Source: Library of Congress Geography and Map Div.

Excerpts of Letter No. 31 from Gen. Sir William Howe, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Reporting the Movement to Pell's Point, New York, Oct. 18, 1776

New York 30 November 1776

My Lord...

On the 18th several Corps reembarked in flatboats, and passing round Frog's Neck, landed on Pell's Point at the mouth of Hutchinson's River, after which the main body crossed the mouth of that river to the same place, advanced immediately, and laid that night upon their arms with the left upon a creek opposite to East Chester and the right near to Rochelle.

On the march to this ground a skirmish ensued with a small Party of the Enemy posted to defend a narrow causeway who were pursued for a mile when, a considerable body appearing in front behind stone walls and in woods, some companies of Light Infantry and a party of the Chasseurs [Jägers] were detached to dislodge them, which they did effectually. Lieutenant-Colonel [Thomas] Musgrave commanding the 1st Battalion Light Infantry [including the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co.] and Captain [William Glanville] Evelyn of the 4th Regiment [Lt. Inf. Co.] were both wounded; the latter is since dead and much

to be regretted as a gallant Officer, but Lieut.-Colonel Musgrave is in a fair way of recovery. Three soldiers were killed and about twenty wounded. The Enemy's loss upon this occasion was a lieu tenant-colonel killed, a major wounded and about ninety Men killed and wounded...

Signed

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution, Vol. XII, Transcripts 1776*, p. 258 - 264 from TNA, *Colonial Office, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches* at CO 5/93, f. 294.

Excerpts of Letter from Maj. Hon. Charles Stuart, 43rd Regt. and Commanding 4th Grenadier Battalion, to his Father the Earl of Bute, Long Island, Describing the Landing at Pell's Point, New York, Oct. 18, 1776

East River, New York, Nov. 29, 1776

...On the 17th [18th] we again embarked and landed near Rochelle upon the continent; the rebels not expecting us, we proceeded near 3 miles unmolested, until the Lt. Infantry coming to the great road which leads from New York to New England they had a slight brush, in which [Lt.] Col. [Thomas] Musgrave [1st Lt. Inf. Bn.], three officers and a few men were wounded.

We encamped on the road side till the 22nd, when we marched from the right in two columns about 5 miles and encamped upon Chester Hill in East Chester. Here we perceived at 6 or 8 miles distance some large encampments, which we thought to be the main army of the enemy...

Source: *New Records of the American Revolution*, Sir Charles Stuart, L. K. Ashnor, London, 1927, p. 12.

**Account of Pell's Point Landing by Capt. George Harris,
5th Grenadier Co., 1st British Grenadier Battalion, New York, Oct. 18, 1776**

We lay on Frogneck till the 10th of October; on the 18th, at one in the morning, the van of the army, consisting of the light infantry and grenadiers, embarked for the continent, and landed without opposition. The boats soon brought over great part of the army, when we marched into the country, drove the enemy from some posts, and lay on our arms near New Rochelle. We lost here two light infantry officers and some men, owing to their too great haste to attack. The grenadiers did not suffer, being only exposed to the fire of the American batteries, which were very ill served. From this we marched to White Plains, being informed that 15,000 American troops were entrenched there.

Source: *The Life and Services of General Lord Harris, G.C.B.*, Right Hon. S. R. Lushington, John W. Parker, London, 1840, Google Books, p. 81.

**Account of the Landing of 1st Lt. Infantry Battalion (with the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co.)
by Ens. Henry Stirke, 10th Lt. Infantry Company, Pell's Point, New York, Oct. 18, 1776**

Oct^r

17th The L^t Infantry, grenadiers, and one Brigade, with a body of Hessians; march'd at 1 O'Clock but the morning setting in with very heavy rain, and the wind high; oblig'd us to return to our Quarters, at ½ after 3 O'Clock.

18th The body of men mention'd yesterday; march'd this morning at 1 O'Clock; embark'd in they flat boats, and landed at half after 8 O'Clock, on the opposite side of a small Creek below Frog Neck, (which divided it from Pells-neck) without opposition, (except a Centrys firing two shots) but had not advanc'd above a quarter of a mile; before we receiv'd a very heavy fire, as we march'd up a Hill, from behind Stone Walls, pickets &c. by which I had 1 Serj^t Kill'd, another, with a private man Wounded. The 1st Battalion of L^t Infantry push'd the Rebels from fence to fence, without being Sustain'd, 'till about 2 O'Clock when a battalion of Hessian Grenadiers came up; with the we took possession of some heights, about 6 miles below Kings-bridge. The Grenadiers, and 1st

brigade, mov'd on by our Right, and took post on the Heights of Rochell; about 1 mile further advanc'd....

Source: "A British Officer's Revolutionary War Journal, 1776 – 1778," Ed. S. Sydney Bradford in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, Vol. 56, No. 2, Baltimore, June 1961, pp. 159-160.



Detail from "A survey of Frog's Neck and the rout of the British Army to the 24th of October 1776, under the command of His Excellency the Honorable William Howe, General and Commander in Chief of His Majesty's forces, &ca, &ca, &ca.," 1776 by Charles Blaskowitz. The position of the 42nd Regt. on Oct. 20, 1776 is shown in the lower right hand corner.

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

Corp. Thomas Sullivan's Account of the Landing at Pell's Point and Movement to the Mainland, New York, Oct. 18 – 23, 1776

Oct. 18th. At 1 o'clock on the morning, the Light Infantry and Grenadiers struck their camp; and y^e. 1st. Brigade and Royal Highlanders at 3 o'clock; and at six re embarked in flat boats, and passing round Frog [Throgg's] Neck, land on Pell's-Point, at the mouth of Hutchinson's River, which joins the main-Land. The Brigade of Guards and Hessians landed at the same place at 8 o'clock; after which, they advanced immediately, and laid that night upon their arms, with the left upon the Creek opposite to Eastchester, and the right near to Rochelle.

The Enemy fired but two shots during the time of their landing, and then ran away from the shore with great Precipitation; cutting down Trees across the Road as they went.

On the march to this ground, a skirmish ensued with a small part of the Enemy posted to defend a Cause-way, which was very narrow; who were pursued for a mile, where a Considerable body appearing in front behind Stone walls, and in Woods; some Companies of Light Infantry, and a part of the Chasseurs [Jägers], were detached to dislodge them, which they did effectually, after a smart engagement.

October 23^d. The Lines got under Arms and advanced upon the Enemy, having the Light Infantry, Grenadiers and Highlanders on the Right; the 3^d. Battalion of Light Infantry, two squadrons of the 16th. and 17th. Regiments of Light Dragoons; the 1st. and 2^d. Brigades, and the York Companies on the left.

The Chasseurs [Jägers] which were on the right Flank, attacked the Enemy, and after an engagement of half an hour, supported by the Light Infantry, drove them to a small Battery, where they had four pieces of Cannon. Our Cannon played upon them for some time in our front: But the General thought adviseable to order y^e. Troops back to Camp.

The Light Infantry had a few men wounded; and the Chasseurs had an Officers and 4 men wounded, & as many men killed.

Source: *From Redcoat to Rebel, The Thomas Sullivan Journal*, Ed. Joseph Lee Boyle, Heritage Books, Bowie (Md.), 1997, pp. 62 and 64. Corp. Sullivan was in the 49th Regt. in the 2nd Brigade.



"Glover's Rock"

Picture Source: *Battle of Pell's Point*, William Abbatt, New York, 1901, Google Books, p. 5

Rebel Col. John Glover's Account of the Battle of Pell's Point, New York, Oct. 18, 1776

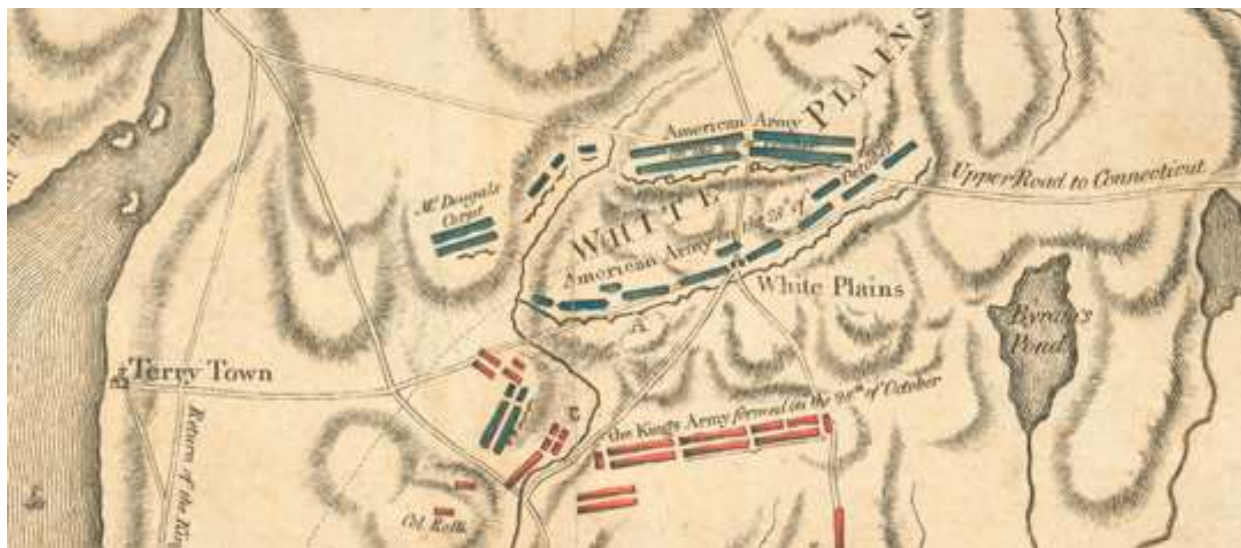
Extract of a letter from Mile-Square; dated October 22, 1776

"You no doubt heard the enemy landed their army on Frog's point [Throggs Neck], the 11th inst. (leaving only 1200 men in York) and there remained till the 18th, which was Friday. I arose early in the morning and went on the hill, with my glass, and discovered a number of ships in the Sound under way; in a very short time saw the boats; upward of 200 sail, all manned and formed in four grand divisions. I immediately sent off Major [William] Lee express to [Maj.] General [Charles] Lee, who was about three miles distance, and without waiting for his orders, turned out the brigade I have the honor to command, and very lucky for us I did, as it turned out afterwards, the enemy stole a march one and a half miles on us. I marched down to oppose their landing with about seven hundred and fifty men, and three field-pieces, but had not gone more than half the distance, before I met their advance guard, about thirty men: upon which I detached a Captain's guard of forty men, to meet them, while I could dispose of the main body to advantage. This plan succeeded very well, as you will hereafter see. The enemy had the advantage of us, being posted on an eminence which commanded the ground we had to march over; however, I did the best I could, and disposed of my little party to the best of my judgement. Col. [Joseph] Reed's on the left of the road – Col. [William] Shepherd's in the rear, slightly to the right of him; Col. [Loammi] Baldwin's in the rear and on the right of Shepherd's, my own regiment commanded by Capt. [William] Curtis... bringing up the rear with three pieces of field artillery; thus disposed of I rode forward... to the Advance guard and ordered them to advance, who did within fifty yards, and receive their fire, without the loss of a man; we returned it, and fell four of them, and kept the ground till we exchanged five rounds; their body being much larger than mine, and having two men killed and several wounded, which weakened my party; the enemy pushing forward, not more than thirty yards distance; I ordered a retreat, which was masterly well done by the captain that commanded the party; the enemy gave a shout & advanced; Col. Reed's laying under cover of a stone wall undiscovered till they came

within thirty yards, then rose up and gave them the full charge; the enemy broke and retreated for the main body to come up. In this situation we remained about an hour and a half, when they appeared about four thousand, with 7 pieces of artillery; they now advance, keeping up a constant fire with their artillery; we kept our post under cover of the stone wall before mentioned, till they came within fifty yards of us, rose up and gave them the whole charge of the battalion; they halted and returned the fire with showers of musquetry and cannon balls; we exchanged 7 rounds at this post, retreated and formed in the rear of Col. Shepherd, and on his left; they then shouted and pushed on till they came on Shepherd, posted behind a fine double stone wall; he rose up and fired by grand divisions, by which he kept up a constant fire, and maintained his post till he exchanged seventeen rounds with them, and caused them to retreat several times, once in particular, so that a soldier of Col. Shepherds leaped over the wall, and took a hat and canteen, off a Captain that lay dead on the ground they retreated from.

However, their body being so much larger than ours, we were for the preservation of the men forced to retreat, and formed in the rear of Baldwin's regiment; they then came up to Baldwin's, but the ground being much in their favour, and their heavy train of artillery; we could do but little before we retreated to the bottom of the hill, and had to pass through a run of water, the bridge had taken up before, and then marched up a hill the opposite side of the creek, where I left my artillery, the ground being rough & much broken, I was afraid to risque it over; the enemy halted and played away their artillery at us, and we at them till night, without damage on our side, and but little on theirs; at dark we came off and marched about three miles, leading to Dobb's Ferry..."

Source: *Freeman's Journal* (Portsmouth, New Hampshire), Nov. 26, 1776, p. 4.



Detail of "The Engagement on the WHITE PLAINS the 28th. of October 1776, between the American & British Forces," 1796, by D. Martin

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from New York Public Library, Digital Collection

Excerpts of Letter No. 31 from Gen. Sir William Howe, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Reporting the Movement to White Plains, Oct. 21, 1776

New York 30 November 1776

My Lord...

On the 21st the right and centre of the Army moved to a position about two miles to the northward of Rochelle on the road to the White Plains, leaving Lieutenant-General [Leopold von] Heister with two Brigades of Hessians and one of British to occupy the former ground...

Upon the Movement of the Army to Frog's Neck the Enemy detached a Corps to White Plains and quitted their position about King's Bridge with some precipitation, leaving two thousand Men for the defence of Fort Washington, extending their force behind the Brunx from Valentine's Hill to White Plains in detached camps, everywhere entrenched. Their left by this means covering an upper communication with Connecticut as well as the road along the North River, it was judged expedient to move to White Plains and endeavour to bring them to an action.

Lieutenant-General Heister with his Corps having orders to join on the march, the Army moved in two columns on the 25th and took a position with the Brunx in front, the right of the line being at the distance of four miles from the White Plains; upon which the rebels immediately quitted their detached camps between King's Bridge and White Plains, assembling their whole force at the latter place behind Entrenchments that had been thrown up by the advanced Corps.

The Army marched by the right in two columns towards White Plains early on the 28th, Lieutenant-General [Henry] Clinton leading the right and [Hessian] Lieutenant-General Heister the left column.

Before noon all the Enemy's advanced parties were drove back their works by the light infantry and chasseurs; and the Army formed with the right upon the road at Mamaroneck to the White Plains, about a mile from the centre of their lines, and the left to the Brunx near the same distance from the right flank of their Entrenchments...

A Corps of the Enemy was formed on a commanding ground, separated from the right flank of their Entrenchments by the Brunx, which also by changing its course nearly at right angles separated this Corps in front from the left of the King's Army.

Colonel [Johann Rall] Raille, who commanded a Brigade of Hessians on the left, observing the position of the Enemy and seeing a height on the other side of the Brunx unoccupied by them from whence their flank might be galled, he took possession of it with great alacrity to the approbation of Lieut.-General Heister who was acquainted with this Movement by Sir William Erskine.

Upon viewing the situation orders were given for a Battalion of Hessians to pass the Brunx and attack this detached Corps, supported by the 2^d Brigade of British under the command of Brigadier-General [Hon. Alexander] Leslie, and the Hessian Grenadiers sent from the right commanded by Colonel [Carl von] Donop, giving directions at the same time for Colonel Raille to charge the Enemy's flank as the Hessian Battalion advanced to them in front...

The right and centre of the Army did not remove from their ground: in this position the troops lay upon their arms that night and with very little alteration encamped next day...

The Enemy drew back their encampment on the night of the 28th, and observing their lines next morning much strengthened by additional works, the designed attack upon them was deferred, and the 4th Brigade, left with [Lt. Gen. Hugh] Lord Percy, with two Battalions of the 6th Brigade were ordered to join the Army.

These Battalions having joined on the 30th in the afternoon, a disposition was made for the attack next day, but the night and morning proving very wet it was postponed. In the meantime, the rebels having intelligence by a deserter of their danger most prudently evacuated their camp on the night of the 1st November after setting fire to all the houses in and near their lines, most of which were consumed, and retired with their main force towards North Castle, leaving a strong rearguard upon the heights and in the woods for one mile back from their Entrenchments, the possession of which was immediately taken and the Hessian grenadiers remained upon the ground.

All these motions plainly indicating the Enemy's design to avoid coming to action, I did not think the driving their rearguard further, back an object of the least consequence.

Lieutenant-General [Wilhelm von] Knyphausen, being ordered on the 28th October to leave the Regiment of Waldeck at Rochelle and to move with the six Battalions of Hessians of his Corps towards King's Bridge, took post at Mile's Square and Valentine's Hill and on the 2^d November encamped on the island of New York near to King's Bridge. The Enemy, quitting the heights of Fordham upon his approach, retired to Fort Washington...

On the 6th the Army encamped at Dobbs's Ferry upon the North River.

On the 12th the Army marched in two columns towards King's Bridge and encamped the day following upon the heights of Fordham, forming a line with the right to the Bronx upon the West Chester road and the left to the North River...

Signed

Source and Note: *Documents of the American Revolution, Vol. XII, Transcripts 1776*, p. 258 - 264 from TNA, *Colonial Office, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches* at CO 5/93, f. 294. The 42nd Regt. was not engaged in the battle.

**Account of the Movements of the 1st Lt. Infantry Battalion by Ens. Henry Stirke (10th Lt. Inf. Co.),
New York, Oct. 21 – 28, 1776**

- 21st The Army took post on the heights of New-Rochelle, without Opposition...
- 23^d About 1 O'Clock, the Light Infantry, some Battalions, with Hessian Chasseurs [Jägers], and a party of Light Horse [total of 2000 men under Lt. Gen. Henry Clinton]; were sent out to Examine the Ground between our Encampments, and y^e Rebels on the North [Hudson] River: The rebels appear'd in small partys at a great distance, but always retreated as we advanc'd. The Chasseurs lost two, or three men. We return'd about 6 O'Clock the same evening.
- 25th The Army march'd at 9 O'Clock in the morning, and towards evening Encamp'd Opposite a rebel Encampment: with a small Rivelet [Bronx River] between; they picquets within musquet Shot of each other. We did not meet with the least Opposition on our march...
- 27th At 2 O'Clock This Morning we observ'd that the Rebel fires were extinguis'd; and when day appear'd, that they had struck their Tents, and abandon'd their Ground. About 7 O'Clock we heard a very Cannonade, which we suppos'd to be from they men of war in the North River.
- 28th The Army march'd at ½ after 7 O'Clock for the White Plains...

Source: "A British Officer's Revolutionary War Journal, 1776 – 1778," Ed. S. Sydney Bradford in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, Vol. 56, No. 2, Baltimore, June 1961, pp. 161-162.

**Excerpts of Letter from Maj. Hon. Charles Stuart, 3rd British Grenadier
Battalion (Including the 42nd Grenadier Company), to his Father the Earl of Bute,
Describing the Movement to White Plains, New York, Oct. 25 -28, 1776**

East River, New York, Nov. 29, 1776

The Generals went daily a-reconnoitering, covered by the L^t. Infantry. The Brigade of the Chasseurs, the remainder of the Hessians and the Regt. of Woldsee joined our army on the ground which we quitted on the 25th Oct. We advanced 6 miles and encamped in one line, the left towards East River and the right towards White Plains, the whole fronting the Bronx River. On the 28th, we struck our tents, and after an 8 mile march arrived at White Plains, where to our surprise we beheld their army drawn up in order of Battle; a more glorious scene cou'd not have presented itself to a General of spirit and determination...

We were form'd in order of battle opposite the enemy and within cannon shot...

Source: *New Records of the American Revolution*, Sir Charles Stuart, L. K. Ashnor, London, 1927, p. 12.

**Hessian Jäger Capt. Johann Ewald's Account of Jägers and Light Infantry
Skirmishing with Rebel Party, Near White Plains, New York, Oct. 26-27, 1776**

On the morning of the 26th [Oct. 1776] a loyalist came to me and revealed that there was an enemy plantation along the road to White Plains which was guarded by only several hundred men, and which could be approached without discovery. He would guide me to it if I would give him a reward. I gave the man a small recompense, reported it to headquarters, and requested permission to carry out the stroke, although I had only some eighty jägers. But towards noon Quartermaster General [Sir William]

Erskine arrived at my post with a hundred dragoons from the 17th Regiment and the 1st Battalion of Light Infantry [including the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co.]. He ordered me to march with sixty jägers and form an advanced guard, which was to be reinforced by one officer and twenty dragoons.

We had marched scarcely an hour when we encountered an enemy patrol of riflemen which gave fire and ran back. Several dragoons gave chase, but could not overtake any of them.

Toward six o'clock in the evening we discovered the plantation, which lay on a hill. The jägers deployed, supported by the light infantry, with the dragoons following. The enemy guard drew up behind the stone walls which surrounded the plantation and received us with a lively fire. I quickly separated the jägers into four or five parts to surround the enemy and advanced under steady fire from wall to wall. The light infantry likewise divided into three or four parts and attacked the guard with the bayonet. Nearly everyone was struck down and only a few officers and men were taken prisoner. The loss on our side was not over thirty men.

As soon as the guard was disposed of, we marched forward a half an hour along the road leading to the enemy camp in order to cover the depot. As much as possible was carried away on wagons, and what could not was destroyed. Several enemy patrols which ran into our outpost withdrew quickly after a few shots. After midnight we withdrew, the light infantry covering the rear, and at daybreak we arrived back at the army...

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. 11.

Hessian Jäger Capt. Johann Ewald's Account of the Approach to the Battle of White Plains, New York, Oct. 27, 1776

The same morning [Oct. 27] the army set out in the following order to attack the enemy at White Plains. The first column on the right, under [Lt.] General [Henry] Clinton, consisted of the Donop [1st] Jäger Company, half of the 16th Regiment of Dragoons, the 1st [including the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co.] and 2^d Battalions of Light Infantry under [Lt.] Colonel [Robert] Abercromby, the three Hessian grenadier battalions, Linsing, Minnigerode, and Block, commanded by Colonel [Carl von] Donop, four light 6-pounders, and the English Guards. The [Capt. Duncan] Campbell [New York Volunteers] provincials covered the right flank. The second column on the left, under [Hessian Lt.] General [Leopold Philip de] Heister, consisted of my jäger company, half of the 17th Regiment of Dragoons, the 3^d Battalion of Light Infantry under Major [John] Maitland, six 12-pounders, the 1st and 2^d English brigades, eight 6-pounders, and the [Hessian] Lossberg and Mirbach brigades. The [Capt. Alexander] Grant [New York Volunteers] provincials covered the left flank, and the remainder of the dragoons followed the left column. The light baggage, which was covered by the 71st Scottish Regiment, followed both columns.

The army had marched scarcely two hours when the left column encountered an advanced corps of the enemy...

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, pp. 11-12.

Excerpt of Notebook of Lt. John Peebles, 42nd Grenadier Company (3rd British Gren. Battalion), Describes Battle of White Plains, New York, Oct. 28, 1776

...The army drawn up with the Brunse [Bronx River] & village of White Plains in front, a large body of the Enemy appeared in a hill on the opposite side of the Brunse to their Right of their works. After some time spent in reconoitring the Ground, a Cannonade began which came on to be very brisk on our side, then the 2^d. Brigade of British and some Hessians were ordered to pass the Brunse at a ford in their front which the Enemy seemed disposed to defend, when our Troops moved down, the Enemy rush'd towards the highbanks of the Brunse in great numbers & began a very heavy fire upon them as they pass'd y^e River which they kept up all the time they were forming & moving up the steep hill on t'other side but the

steadyness & intrepidity of our troops beat them from their strong grounds where they had taken advantage of fences & stone walls, & made them retire back on the remaining body that was posted on the hill before mention'd who immediately turned tail with the fugitives & ran off in the greatest confusion to their works on the other hills...

Source and Note: NRS, *Peebles' Journal* Entry Oct. 28, 1776 also published in *John Peebles' American War*, Ed. Ira D. Gruber, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg (Pa.), 1998, p. 59. No 42nd Regt. companies were engaged although the following pension account mentions Highlanders in the battle.

**Pension Account for Rebel Thomas Craige Describing Highlanders Using
Broadwords at the Battle of White Plains, New York, Oct. 28, 1776**

At Northampton, in the state of Massachusetts, on some day (not recollected) in the month of June, 1776, there came a requisition for men of the militia to join the army near New York...At this time a guard was every [day] detailed in charge of [Rebel] General [George] Washington's quarters...In this duty the declarant remained until the enemy made preparations to march to White Plains...The British came up to the opposite side of the ravine and in the afternoon opened a cannonade...General Washington ...ordered the men to dig a new entrenchment...Then the British sent infantry forward, down into the ravine, or hollow way, who then turned to their left and came up to storm the entrenchment last mentioned. The Americans twice repulsed the enemy's infantry back into the hollow. While they were rallying, the Highlanders came down, stacked their arms, drew their broadswords, and formed in the rear of the infantry. Then they all came up. Our men opened their fire as before, and soon the enemy's infantry opened, and the Highlanders marched into our entrenchments, and the Americans retreated down the hill westwardly...

Source and Note: *The Revolution Remembered, Eyewitness Accounts of the War for Independence*, John C. Dann, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1980, pp. 53-54. This report is suspect as the two Highland regiments are not known to have been involved in the battle.

**Letter from Gen. Lord John Murray, Col., 42nd Regt. to Secretary at War Viscount
Barrington, Forwarding a Return from the 42nd Regt., White Plains, Oct. 31, 1776**

My Lord

I have the honor to acquaint your Lordship have received a letter from Lieu^t. Colonel [Thomas] Stirling inclosing a Return, the first I have had Since the Royal Highland Reg^t. Sailed from Grenock, dated Camp at White Plains 31st. Oct^r: I case your Lordship has not yet got one, have inclosed an Extract. Beg permission of Sending my letters to America inclosed in your Lordships Pacquet, and under cover of Your Lordship at the War Office.

I beg leave most Sincerely to Wish Your Lordship the Compliments of the Season.
I have the honor to be with the Greatest Regard

My Lord

Banner cross
28th. Dec^r. 1776.

Your Lordships most faithfull and most obedient Serv^t.
John Murray

[Enclosure]

Extract Return 42^d. or Royal Highland Reg^t.
Dated Camp at White Plains 31st. October 1776.

All the Officers present Except Gen^l. L^d. J. M.
Cap^{ts}. {Duncan M^cPherson Major Wounded, at New York
{John M^cIntosh D^o D^o –

Ensign Alex^r. M^cKenzie died of his wounds 21st Sept^r. and Lieu^t. W^m Rose back sick after the Reg^t. Embarked, is in N. B. [North Britain or Scotland]

Promotions

Ensign Alex^r. Grant Lieu^t. vice Lieu^t John Graham promoted 27th. August 76 in 71 Reg^t. Volunteer [Allan] M^cLean from 43. Ensign vice Grant D^o. date

D^o. Neill Stewart appointed Lieu^t. in Gen Delancys Corps.

D^o. Alex^r. Brodie appointed Ensign by purchase in 10th. foot.

N.B. One Cap^t. 2 Lieut^s. 1 Ensign & 2 Drums or Pipers 87 privates Prisoners with the Rebels.

Killed 1 Piper 5 Rank & file

Wounded 3 Serjeants 2 Pipers or Drums 63 Rank & file

Present fit for Duty 725 Rank & file

Sick in Camp 18. Sick in Hospitals 158. 3 Volunt: promoted

N.B. Many of the Sick have fluxes.

Source: TNA, *War Office In-Letters: 3. General Correspondence: b. Series II: M-R, 1776* at WO1/993.

Excerpt of Letter from Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling, 42nd Regt., to His Brother, Sir William Stirling of Ardoch, Describing the 42nd Regt. Movement to Fort Washington, Oct. 21-Nov. 15, 1776

Camp at English Neighborhood in the Jersies near Fort Constitution [Approx. Nov. 18] 1776

I could not miss the opportunity of Keppendarris going home to write you as this may reach you before him as no doubt you may be uneasy about your friends here as we have had a very smart affair which may appear in the papers after chasing the Rebels from place to place we came up with them at an encampment they had on the white plains, 30 miles from N. York, our troops attacked them on very disadvantageous Ground and tho there were above 3000 of them two Reg^{ts} that only were engaged drove them from it, however this served no Great purpose only making them abandon lines which they thought not tenable, but which would have cost us much trouble and Blood to have forced, and retire to the tops of hills not accessible, then we left them after crossing this Country to Hudson's river & lying there a few days the army marched down to about Kingsbridge which the rebels had abandoned on the approach of a body of Hessians under the Command of [Lt.] Gen^l [Wilhelm von] Knyphausen retiring to a very strong post they had made further in the island of York called Fort Washington, there they expected to have withstood all our efforts as the Ground was remarkably strong & they had 3000 men to occupy it & winter there having a communication with the Jerseys from where they could at all times have supplies of every kind, this post was of importance for us to force as we could not be masters of York Island or indeed secure at New York while they had it...

Source: NRS, *Papers of the Family of Stirling Home Drummond Moray of Abercairny* at GD 24/1/458/5.

Account of the Movement of the 1st Lt. Infantry Battalion (Including the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co.) Towards Fort Washington by Ens. Henry Stirke (10th Lt. Inf. Co.), New York, Oct. 31-Nov. 15, 1776

31st This morning the Army was in motion at 5 O'Clock, in order to Attack the Rebels, and drive them from they Hills they are in possession of, opposite our Encampment; but the morning proving very Wet, we return'd to our Ground, about 7 O'Clock.

Nov^r

1st ...At half after 9 O'Clock we got under Arms, and push'd into the Village of the White plains, which y^e Enemy had just Abandon'd, and the Army Advanc'd at the same time: We receiv'd a few Stragling Shot, which did no execution. The 15th Reg^t had one man kill'd, and another

- Wounded by the Rebel Cannon; and the Hessians 4 or 5 men Kill'd and Wounded. This Village is 30 miles from New-York, on the Road to New England.
- 5th The Army march'd toward y^e North River, the Light Infantry grenadiers, and reserve, with the Hessian Chasseurs [Jägers] and some Light Dragoons brought up the rear; and took up the Ground, the Rebels had been drove from on the 18th of last month...
- 6th At ½ after 8 O'Clock this morning we began our march, and at 2 O'Clock encamp'd in the Rear of the Army, near the North River. The Rebels Contented themselves with observing our motions at a distance, without venturing to Attack us.
- 7th All the heavy Cannon mov'd on towards Kings Bridge, in order to Invest Fort Washington, on York Island; into which a body of the Rebels have retir'd, after abandoning y^e Bridge.
- 9th The 1st, and Second battalion of Light Infantry, with a small party of Hessian Chasseurs, to each battalion; march'd at 6 O'Clock in the evening, and about 12 O'Clock, encamped, near Co^l [Frederick] Phillips' House – 20 miles from New York.
- 12th This morning the Army march'd towards Kings bridge. And the 1st battalion of Light Infantry march'd to cover their left flank, and took post on a hill, about 3 miles, in the rear of our Encampment, towards y^e White plains: 'till the Army had pass'd, and about 4 O'Clock in the Evening, we return'd to our Ground.
- 13th At 9 O'Clock this morning we march'd to Valentine Hills; where we took post. Here the Rebels had a Square Fort, which they abandon'd and left a quantity of Rum, and other stores behind them.
- 14th Took post on some hills, about a mile above Kings bridge.
- 15th We march'd to head Quarters at De Lancys Mill; about 3 miles to the left of Kings bridge.

Source: "A British Officer's Revolutionary War Journal, 1776 – 1778," Ed. S. Sydney Bradford in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, Vol. 56, No. 2, Baltimore, June 1961, pp. 162- 164.



Philipsburg Manor in Sleepy Hollow, 2010, by Gryffindor

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons

**Journal of Maj. of Brigade and Capt. Frederick Mackenzie, 5th Brigade, Records
Army Movements Towards Fort Washington, New York, Nov. 7-15, 1776**

7th Nov^r

The weather has been with little exception, been very fine ever since we landed on this Island...
Gen^l [Sir William] Howe's Army [including the 42nd Regt. Companies] is at present at Phillipsburg, a house about 6 miles above Kingsbridge, and nearly on the bank of the N[orth]. River...

Our next operation will probably be against Fort Washington, in order to clear the Island entirely of Rebels...

9th Nov^r...

Gen^l Howe's Army has approached nearer to Kingsbridge, and is said to be encamped near the 17 mile Stone from New York...

13th Nov^r – Clear fine weather. Slight Frost...

The Army made a movement Yesterday, and again this day, nearer to Kingsbridge. The General seems now determined to take Fort Washington immediately...

The Situation of Fort Washington is very strong, as it Commands all the adjacent heights. It is said to be a regular Pentagon of considerable size, with some outworks...

15th Nov^r – Fair, mild weather

Above 30 flatboats went up the North River last night as far as Kingsbridge. They passed the Rebel's forts undiscovered...

Source: *Dairy of Frederick Mackenzie*, Vol. I, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1930 and reprinted by The New York Times & Arno Press, 1969, pp. 99-105.

General Orders to Prepare for the Attack on Fort Washington, New York, Nov. 15, 1776

Head Quarters De Lancey's Mill Nov. 15th 1776.

The Light Infantry and Guards to be under Arms at 4 o'Clock to-morrow with their Blankets and One day's Provision, leaving their Camp Standing. Guides will attend to conduct them.

The Grenadiers and Reserve to be under Arms an hour before day; they will receive their Orders from Lieut.-Gen. [Charles] Earl Cornwallis.

[Hessian] Lieut.-Gen. [Wilhelm von] Knyphausen's Corps will receive their Orders from His Excellency.

The Remainder of the Army is to be under Arms at day break...

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 order prepares the army for the successful four-pronged attack on Fort Washington on the high ground of the northern part of Manhattan Island. The 42nd Regt. made one of the four attacks, crossing the Harlem River to land near the Morris-Jumel Mansion. The 42nd Regt attack behind the Rebel lines caused the Rebel defense at Harlem Heights to collapse, enabling the success of Lt. Gen. Hugh, Earl Percy's attack from the south.