



Portrait of Lt. Gen. Henry Clinton, 1777, by John Smart

Picture Source: *National Institute of American History and Democracy*

Stalemate at New York through Gen. Sir Henry Clinton's Departure for Charleston, South Carolina, Jan. 1 -Dec. 31, 1779



Reproduction 22nd Regt., 42nd or Royal Highland Regt. and 64th Regt. Uniform Buttons

General Order Issued for Promotion of Lt. David Anstruther, 26th Regt., to a Company in the 42nd Regt., New York, Jan. 2, 1779

Head Quarters New York 2 Jan^{ry} 1779...

The Commander in Chief has been pleased to make the following promotions...

22nd Regiment

Captain Arch^d Erskine from the 42nd Regt. to be Major by Purchase vice [Rawlins] Hillman who retires } 6 Dec^r 1778

42nd Regiment

Lieutenant [David] Anstruther from the 26th Reg^t to be Captain } 6th Dec^r 1778
by purchase vice Erskine preferred }

Ensign [Henry David] Fraser from 64th Reg^t to be Lieutenant } 23rd Nov^r 1778...
vice [James] Graham removed }

64th Regiment

Lieutenant James Graham from 42nd Reg^t to be Lieutenant vice } 23rd Nov^r 1778...
[Peter] Murdoch promoted... }...

Source: "Orders, 1778-1782," *Sir Henry Clinton Papers*, Vol. 266, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan.

**General Orders Issued Seconding Brevet-Lt. Col. and Company Commander
Duncan M^cPherson, 42nd Regt., to Supervise the General Hospital, New York, Jan. 5, 1779**

Head Quarters New York 5th January 1779...

The Commander in Chief has been pleased to make the following appointment.

[Brevet] Lieu^t Colonel [Duncan] M^cPherson, of the 42nd Regiment to examine and settle the affairs of the General Hospital.

Source and Note: "Orders, 1778-1782," *Sir Henry Clinton Papers*, Vol. 266, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan. M^cPherson ranked as a Brevet-Lt. Col. in the army, but was still ranked as a Captain in the 42nd Regt. His new position pulled him from the regiment. On Sept. 11 of that year, while the 42nd Regt. was posted at Stony Point on the North River, Capt. John Peebles wrote in his journal that "*Brig^d [Thomas] Stirling in N: York. Come down from Stony point two or 3 days ago – L^t Col: M^cPherson desir'd to join his Reg^t some days ago in a very ungracious manner...*"

**Excerpt of a Separate Letter from Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Commander-in-Chief,
North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American
Department, Reporting the Location of the Rebel Army, New York, Jan. 11, 1779**

New York 11 Jan. 1779

My Lord,

I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship the heads of our intelligence from the rebel country, divested from the too sanguine reports of the zealous friends of His Majesty's government.

[Rebel] General [George] Washington's Army is huddled and cantoned for the winter: the troops of the southern colonies on the west side of Hudson's River, those of the New England government on the east side, headquarters are at Middlebrook, and Washington in person at Philadelphia...

Signed

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution*, Vol. XVII, *Transcripts 1779*, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1977, pp. 28-29 from TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1778-1779* at CO 5/97, f. 75.

**Excerpts of a Secret Letter from Lord George Germain, Secretary of State
for the American Department to Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Commander-in-Chief,
North America, with Objectives for 1779 Campaign, Jan. 23, 1779**

Whitehall, 23 January 1779

Sir,

...And in order to your being more fully possessed of the King's wishes and intentions respecting the employment of the forces under your orders in the present year, I will state to you the outlines of the plan for the future conduct of the war in North America submitted to the King and which His Majesty has thought fit to approve; but at the same time I am commanded to say to you that His Majesty has such entire reliance upon your wisdom, zeal for his service, and great military abilities, that he leaves it to your judgment to make such alterations either in the plan itself or in the mode pointed out for its execution as from your knowledge of many circumstances which cannot be known here you shall conceive to conduce more immediately and effectually to the attainment of the great end of all His Majesty's measures, the reestablishment of legal government in the revolted provinces.

It is most earnestly wished that you may be able to bring [Rebel Gen. George] M^r Washington to a general and decisive action at the opening of the campaign; but if that cannot be effected, it is imagined that with an Army of about 12,000 Men in the field under your immediate command you may force him to seek for safety in the Highlands of New York or the Jerseys and leave the inhabitants of the open

country at liberty to follow what the commissioners represent to be their inclinations and renounce the authority of the Congress and return to their allegiance to His Majesty,...

But besides these immediate good effects which your success in that quarter might be expected to be attended with, the operations proposed to be carried on in other pans would be greatly facilitated by your obliging General Washington to keep the whole of his regular troops together to oppose your Army; and on the other hand, those operations could not fail to prevent his receiving succours from the countries attacked. It is therefore intended that two Corps of about 4000 each, assisted by a naval force, should be employed upon the seacoasts of the revolted provinces, the one to act on the side of New England and New Hampshire, and the other in the Chesapeak Bay, and by entering the rivers and inlets wherever it was found practicable, seize or destroy their shipping and stores and deprive them of every means of fitting out privateers or of carrying on foreign commerce...

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution*, Vol. XVII, *Transcripts 1779*, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1977, pp. 43-45 from TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1777-1778* at CO 5/97, f. 12.



Detail Showing Gov. Livingstone's Quarters in Elizabeth Town from "From New-York (41) to Brunswick" in "A survey of the roads of the United States of America, Pub. 1789, by Christopher Colles

Picture Source and Note: *Library of Congress, Geography and Map Div.* The map is oriented with North to the lower right hand corner.

Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling's Raid on Elizabeth Town (Now Elizabeth), New Jersey, Feb. 25, 1779



Detail of Maj. Gen. Sir Thomas Stirling by Benjamin Marshall

Picture Source and Note: The Black Watch Castle & Museum.

Letter from Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling, 42nd Regt., to Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Commander in Chief, North America, Reporting His Raid on Elizabeth Town, New Jersey, Feb. 25, 1779 with Complaint from Rebel New Jersey Gov. William Livingston, Elizabeth Town, Mar. 31, 1779 and Gen. Clinton's Response to the Governor, New York, Apr. 10, 1779

Newtown Feb^{ry} 26th: 1779

Sir.

We landed undiscovered at half past two in the morning, but an Inhabitant having been alarmed on our march, gave [Rebel Brig.] General [William] Maxwell notice of our approach an hour before we could get to Elizabeth Town, who immediately marched off with his two Pieces of Cannon & troops, taking the road to Amboy, his baggage and Waggons being sent off some days before, the Rebel Governor Livingston had notice sent him & left his House before we got there. Having missed our stroke, I proceeded to burn the Barracks, destroy an Armoury and their Stores, in one of which 100 Barrels of Flour, with a Quantity of salt Beef, Pork, Soap, Candles & 25 Puncheons of rum were burnt, in another betwixt 20 & 30 Barrels of Flour, near 1000 Loaves of Bread with some Tierces of Beef was destroyed; after giving as much bread as the Troops chose, having previously sent [Capt. William] Lord Cathcart [17th Dragoons] to Crane's ferry with a Company of the 33^d to make a Signal for the boats. I proceeded with the troops for that place; as soon as we left the town some straggling fellows began to fire from behind the houses. I ordered the Light Company of the Guards to the rear, who covered it effectively and repeatedly drove them off. in the meantime Captain Hanger came to acquaint me that the boats were aground, that the wharf was broke up, and that the troops would with difficulty get embarked at that place, I then determined to make a vigorous push at the Enemy and keep them at Bay until the tide should answer, and had ordered the 33^d up, & made the 42^d throw off their Blankets and form; just as this was done Capt. [Robert] Clayton [17th Regt.] came to me & told me that the troops could reembark with great safety from the Meadow to the North of Ferry.

I then requested he would order the boats there and finding the Rebels had no Inclination to stand, when we advanced, nor come to us, though formed in Columns with their two field Pieces. I ordered the troops to march to their boats covered by the L^t Company of Guards & part of the 33^d & 42^d, which they did in the greatest order, without the Rebels daring to advance except by a few Stragglers. Two men of the 33^d were unfortunately killed by a Cannon shot, and about 18 of the whole wounded, most of them slightly, a boat which had been run on shore, to serve as a Bridge to embark the troops upon, could not be got off, and the only regret I have is that two men, one of the Guards, and one of the 33^d were left behind, not having been perceived when the boats pushed off.

I have the Pleasure to assure your Excellency that no troops could have behaved with greater spirit than those under my Command, and no injury done to any inhabitant, or houses burnt except the Barracks, store-house and Guardhouse at the Ferry.

We were much indebted to Captⁿ Clayton for the order & security of our Reimbarkation & the Admiral himself honored us with his presence, and covered us with his own Galley.

I have the honor to be

Sir,
Your Excellency's
Most obedient humble Servant
Tho^s Stirling
L^t Col. 42^d Regiment

His Excellency Sir Henry Clinton
&c, &c, &c

P.S. 22 Prisoners were sent to town By a Serg^t Cameron of the Guards The Enemy's loss cannot be ascertained, but It must be more than ours, as they were closely pushed several times by the troops in the rear.

Source: Enclosure ii to Letter from Gen. Sir Henry Clinton (no. 44) to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, dated Mar. 2, 1779 at TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1778-1779* at CO 5/97, ff. 174-175.

[Gov. Livingston's Complaint to Gen. Sir Henry Clinton]

*Letter from Governor [William] LIVINGSTON, to Sir HENRY CLINTON.
Elizabeth-town, March 29, 1779.*

SIR,

After having apologized for my delaying your and Mr. [William] Franklin's dinner, by being accidently abroad when you did me the honour a few days ago to send Col. [Thomas] Stirling to wait upon me to New-York, I beg leave to acquaint you, that I am possessed of the most authentic proofs of a General Officer, under your command, having offered a large sum of money to an inhabitant of this state to assassinate me, in case he could not take me alive. This, Sir, is so repugnant to the character which I have hitherto formed of Sir Henry Clinton, that I think it highly improbable you should either countenance, connive at, or be privy to, a design so sanguinary and disgraceful. Taking it, however, for granted, that you are a gentleman of too much spirit, to disown any thing that you think proper to abet, I give you this opportunity for disavowing such dark proceedings, if undertaken without your approbation; assuring you at the same time, that, if countenanced by you, your person is more in my power than I have reason to think you imagine. I have the honour to be, with all due respect, your Excellency's most obedient humble servant,

WILLIAM LIVINGSTON

General Sir Henry Clinton

Source: *Remembrancer; or Impartial Repository of Public Events. For the Year 1779*, Printed for J. Almon, London, 1779, Google Books, p. 179.

[Gen. Sir Henry Clinton's Response to Rebel New Jersey Gov. William Livingston]

New-York, April 10, 1779.

Sir,

As you address me on a grave subject, no less than life and death, and your own person concerned, I condescend to answer you, but must not be troubled with any further correspondence with Mr. Livingston.

Had I a soul capable of harbouring so infamous an idea as assassination, you, Sir, at least could have nothing to fear; for be assured I should not blacken myself with so foul a crime to obtain so trifling an end.

Sensible of the power you boast of being able to dispose of my life, by means of intimates of your's, ready to murder at your command, I can only congratulate you on your amiable connections, and acknowledge myself,

Your most humble servant
H. Clinton

William Livingston, Esq; New Jersey.

Source: *Sir Henry Clinton Papers* 54:28, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan. Transcribed by Todd Braisted.

Pvt. John Shaw's Account of a Raid by Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling's Detachment of the 42nd Regt., Guards Lt. Infantry, and 33rd Regt., Elizabeth Town, New Jersey, Feb. 25, 1779

I joined the 33d regiment on Long-Island...when a detachment was called out, to perform as we supposed, some great exploit. This detachment consisted of the 33d and 42d regiments, with two companies of the body guards, commanded by the colonels, [James] Webster [33rd Regt.] and Frazer [Stirling]. We went on board the flat bottomed boats, just as it began to grow dark, and pursued our expedition, and landed on the beach about four miles from Elizabethtown point, with our pilot or guide, as we thought. – We had marched about a mile through the marsh, before we discovered the trick; – our pilot had left us in the snare; some times up to the middle in mud and water; some times over head and ears in the ditches, crawling one over another, in the greatest confusion. At length with much difficulty we made our appearance near Elizabethtown, just at day break, in woful pickle, all bedaubed with mud and mire, as black as chimney-sweepers; we looked more like frightening the people out of the town, than making them run for fear of the sword or bayonet. In this plight we advanced up to the town and took it; and as a further instance of British inhumanity, the barracks were set on fire and burnt down with about ten or twelve poor sick soldiers in them. This being the day the continental troops were to draw their provisions, the English officers called on the bakers for their bread, but the bakers very boldly answered: “This bread is for gentlemen and not for you d_ _ d bloody backs.” – Bread was therefore taken by force.

We then marched on to form a line between the river & the town, leaving two companies for a rear guard; but the Americans being reinforced with about 4000 troops, got between us and the river: now who dare say that the English never turned their backs, or fled from an enemy? – Colonel Webster was, it is true, for charging on the enemy, but colonel Frazer [Stirling], who was the oldest [senior] officer, and had the command, gave orders to face to the right, and make the best of our way to the boats. That moment the enemy fired with their artillery, and killed two men of captain [James] Campbell's company, of the 33d regiment, whose names were *Proctor* and *Keith*; and according to our colonel's account these men *died in glory*. Pursuant therefore to our orders, we took to our heels, and made our way to the boats in the utmost disorder. The bakers of Elizabethtown had now the satisfaction of seeing the English scattering and leaving behind them, the bread which they had forcibly taken away at the point of the bayonet. On this occasion we had two killed, as already mentioned, two wounded, and five taken prisoners; besides a considerable number wounded, as we made our escape down the East river. We hurried down with all possible speed, landed at Brooklin ferry opposite to New-York, and proceeded on to Bedford and lay there for some time.

Source and Notes: *A Narrative of the Life & Travels of John Robert Shaw, The Well Digger*, John Robert Shaw, Daniel Bradford, Lexington, Ky., 1807, Google Books, pp. 37-39. Shaw's book incorrectly places this event in the Fall of 1778. This account is written after Shaw deserted the British Army and joined the rebels which may account for his harsh account of the British troops.

**General Orders Recognize Performance of Troops, Including the 42nd Highlanders,
on Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling's Raid on Elizabeth Town, New Jersey, Feb. 25, 1779**

Head Quarters New York 27th February 1779...

Lieutenant Colonel [Thomas] Stirling [42nd Regt.] having reported to the Commander in Chief his satisfaction of the behavior of the Troops employed in the late excursion against Elizabeth Town, His Excellency returns his thanks to the light company of the Guards, the 33^d & 42nd Regiments, for the cheerfulness and spirit with which they went through the fatigue of that service.

Source and Note: "Orders, 1778-1782," *Sir Henry Clinton Papers*, Vol. 266, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan. Lt. Col. Stirling and his 1000-man detachment raided Elizabethtown, New Jersey on Feb. 25, 1779 to try to capture Gov. William Livingstone, however, the governor was not at home.

News Account of Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling's Raid on Elizabeth Town, New Jersey, Feb. 25, 1779

New-York, February 27...

On Wednesday night last, it was designed to surprize [Rebel Brig.] Gen. [William] Maxwell's encampment at Elizabeth Town, and the Light Infantry of the Guards, the 33d and 42d regts under Lieut. Col. [Thomas] Stirling, were landed for the purpose. The Rebels having gained intelligence before the troops had reached the Point where they might intercept them, made their escape towards Amboy. Col. Stirling proceeded to Elizabeth-Town, where the barracks and other buildings, made use of as such, were burnt, and all the baggage and papers seized, which – the rebels had left in their hasty retreat; after which they returned to the place of debarkation where the boats were waiting. The enemy shewed themselves in the rear on the return of the King's troops, and from a distance eminence fired a few cannon shot, but without effect. Some of the most adventurous were charged by the Light Infantry, and driven back again a considerable distance, 8 or 10 of that fine company were slightly wounded, and one mortally, whilst by their loose method of fighting the march of the column was kept uninsulted, and the embarkation performed with good order. Two stragglers were taken, and two men of the 33d killed.

Only 22 of the enemy were taken, the number of killed we are not acquainted with, 30 puncheons of rum, 100 barrels of flour, and some other stores were destroyed.

The mud was so deep at the landing place, that it was necessary to sacrifice a flat boat, to make a bridge for the troops to disembark...

Source: *Royal Gazette* (New York), Feb. 27, 1779

**New York Newspaper Account of Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling's Raid,
Elizabeth Town, New Jersey, Feb. 25, 1779**

NEW-YORK, Feb. 27.

On Thursday morning a detachment of the Light Companies of the Guards, 33d and 42d regts. under the command of Lieut. Col. Stirling, landed on the Jersey shore to surprize [Rebel Brig.] Gen. [William] Maxwell with his Brigade at Elizabeth Town; unfortunately they were discovered by an Inhabitant who gave immediate Notice to Mr. Maxwell, about an hour before the Troops got up, Maxwell decamped in the greatest hurry with two Field pieces, and took the road to Amboy, fearing his retreat might be cut off; the Rebel Governor [William] Livingston having been informed of this descent, made a Speedy retreat from his house; the Troops having missed their Principal aim, proceeded to destroy the Rebel stores, in which were above 100 barrels of flour, salt beef, pork, soap, candles, &c. and 30 puncheons of rum, which were burnt, in another store between 20 and 30 barrels of flour, with some tierces of beef, and near 1000 loaves were destroyed, after supplying the troops; nothing more being to be done, they marched to Crane's Ferry, but the wharf being intirely destroyed, the boats were ordered up to the meadows, when they re-embarked; The Rebels made no stand at any time, even after they had brought up their two pieces of cannon, and shewed two columns on the rising ground to the ferry, they dared not

to advance, but kept up a loose fire from behind houses, fences and trees, at a great distance, by a few straggling rascals, who were repeatedly drove back by the light company of Guards, and a few of the other troops, two men of the 33d were unfortunately killed by a cannon shot, a few wounded, most of them slightly, several of the Rebels were seen to fall, and many carried off wounded, a Rebel officer and twenty two prisoners were taken, the barracks were burnt, in which they had left some arms, and ammunition, pouches, &c.

Source: New-York Gazette and The Weekly Mercury, Mar. 1, 1779 from Documents Relating to the Revolutionary History of the State of New Jersey, Volume II, Extracts From American Newspapers Relating to New Jersey, Vol. III, 1779, Ed. William Nelson, John L. Murphy Pub. Co., Trenton (N.J.), 1906, p. 122.

Rebel Newspaper Account of Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling's Raid on Elizabeth Town, New Jersey, Feb. 25, 1779

TRENTON, MARCH 3...

Extract of a letter from an officer at Elizabeth-Town, dated March 1, 1779.

"A body of the enemy consisting of the 42d and 33d regiments, and the light infantry of the guards, in number about a thousand, commanded by Col. Stirling, attempted to surprize the troops and inhabitants of Elizabeth-Town on the morning of Thursday last [Feb. 25]. They embarked at Long-Island the evening before, about seven o'clock, and landed on the salt meadows, about a mile to the left of Crane's ferry, between two and three in the morning. From thence they were conducted through a very difficult marsh to Woodruff's Farms, which lies directly to the left of the town.

"The guard at Crane's-Ferry having discovered their landing, immediately despatched the intelligence to town, where the alarm being sounded, the troops were afforded an opportunity to collect. The number and movements of the enemy remaining doubtful by reason of darkness, our troops were marched to the rear of the town, where the whig-inhabitants likewise retired.

"A detachment of the enemy was despatched to the Governor's house, while the main body proceeded to the skirts of the town, and from thence along the rear until they fell into the Brunswick road on the right. The [Rebel] Governor [William Livingston] happened to be absent from home that night; but if he had not, they would have been unsuccessful in this instance likewise, as the family received timely notice of their approach.

"Finding themselves completely disappointed in every expectation, they made their visit in town very short; however, during their short halt, they set fire to the barracks, the school-house (in which were stored some few articles of provision) and a blacksmith's shop. So soon as they began their retreat to their boats, [Rebel Brig.] General [William] Maxwell marched such of his troops as were yet in reserve against their rear; the number of these, however, were small, several parties having been dispatched to hang upon them.

"About half way between the town and ferry, the enemy perceiving their rear in danger, from the sudden advance of our troops and the assembling of the militia, faced about and paraded, as if for action. A few well directed shot from our artillery induced them to renew their retreat, leaving two dead on the field. Perceiving an embarkation at the would be attended with considerable hazard, their boats were moved better than a mile up Newark bay, while the troops marched along the meadow's edge, in many places up to their middles in mud and mire. A galley and two or three gunboats covered their retreat at this place...

Source: New Jersey Gazette, Mar. 3, 177, pp. 2-3

Letter from Loyalist Brig. Gen. Cortland Skinner to Gen. Sir Henry Clinton Reporting on Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling's Raid on Elizabethtown (Now Elizabeth), New Jersey, Feb. 25, 1779

Sir

This Morning I gott the following Acct. from Jersey
 “You w^d. have compleatly Surprized [Rebel Brig. Gen. William] Maxwell, had you not lett Hez. Woodruff escape, he brought the intellig^{ce}. & then they had but just time to gett away. Their N^o. About 450 in the town who were immediately much dispersed, but at the close when the Guns were fired on the Meadows they had mostly collected, except Maxwell who its s^d. went off on the first Alarm, & was not to be found. When your troops Embarked, I then went off least I should be Noticed. Their loss they say is one killed & two or three wounded, [Rebel] Col^l: [Matthias] Ogden in the thigh & a Cap^l. in the Arm both slightly. They Confess it a lucky escape, but give themselves great Credit in Compelling you to retreat & leave the cattle behind you will hear a pompous Acc^t. in the Papers; Nothing new its s^d. to keep up the peoples spirits that Spain has lent the Congress 7 Million (Now Arrived) & all their Paper is to be sunk.”
 I am Your Excellency’s Most Ob^t. hu^l. serv^t.
 Cort^d Skinner

26: Feb. 1779.
 Sir Henry Clinton

Source: *Sir Henry Clinton Papers* 53: 6, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan, as posted at the On-Line Loyalist Institute. Transcribed by Todd Braisted.

**Rebel Brig. Gen. William Maxwell’s Account of the Raid on Elizabeth Town, New Jersey,
 Feb. 25, 1779**

Elizth Town Feb^y 27th 1779

Sir

Since my last, which was written imediately, after the affair of the day before yesterday, I have collected the following particulars – The party which attempted to surprise this post was Commanded by [Lt.] Col^o. [Thomas] Sterling of the 42nd Reg^t & composed of the folloowing Corps – to whit – 42^d & 33^d reg^{ts} – a party of Welch [23rd Regt.] together with a full company of Light Infantry of the 2nd Battalion of Guards – L^t Col^o [James] Webster commanded the 33rd – the Light Infantry was commanded by [Capt. and] L^t Col^o [George] Garth [1st Regt. Guards.]. [Brevet-Col.] Lrd [William] Cathcart [Loyalist British Legion] was also with them.

The whole, amounting (in my opinion) to a Thousand – embark’d about seven in the evening at Long Island, nearly opposite to New-York, and landed to my left, on a very wet & difficult salt meadow, between two & three oClock in the morning.

They speedily dispatched a party Com^d by L^d Cathcart to the Governors house – who luckily was not at home.

After surrounding the Town, and perceiving their design frustrated – they immediately marched for boats which were paraded at Crains ferry – They burned the Barracks. the schoolhouse (in which was a small quantity of provision) the armourers shop & two or three barns.

Upon our persuing them from the Town the cattle & horses they had collected fell into our hands – in order to affect a safe retreat, they moved thei boats from Crains ferry better than a mile up Newark Bay & marched their troops along the meadows edge to them – Our Artillery could not follow & their Gun boats covered their embarkation.

They made a small stand about half way between the Town & ferry, during which time their wounded were put on board their boats – amounting to about twenty or thirty – a few well directed shot from Cap^t. Randolph’s Artillery induced them to continue their retreat leaving two killed on the ground...

Two prisoners only were taken, I mean of the enemy – Five of ours were taken at the Governors house being part of a small guard stationed there. I am Your Excellency’s Very Humble Serv^t

W^m Maxwell

Source: *The Papers of George Washington Digital Edition*, Univ. of Va. Press, pp. 282-283.

**Positive Rebel Account of Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling's Character during the Raid
on Elizabeth Town, New Jersey, Feb. 25, 1779**

From the (Rebel) NEW-JERSEY JOURNAL, dated March 2.

CHATHAM, March 2.

*Extract of a letter from a correspondent relative to the enemy's last attempt on Elizabeth-Town, dated
February 25, 1779...*

“Colonel Stirling who commanded the detachment shewed himself throughout the whole expedition not only the officer, but the well bred gentlemen, and we learned to mute our energies in suppressing the praise due to real merit. We only lament it, that officers of such amiable character are embarked in so unjust a cause, and oblige us to keep company with so many of a very contrary turn.

“The buildings to which the enemy set fire were either of a public nature or containing stores, which we therefore consider in a very different light from the infamous and savage practices of general and indiscriminate conflagrations...

Source: *Royal Gazette* (New York), Mar. 10, 1779, p. 3.

Strength of 42nd Regt. Shown in Rations Report, New York, Mar. 18-24, 1779

Return of Men Women Children & Waggoners of the British Regiments, Hessian, New Levies & Civil Department Victualled at New-York and its Dependencies from 18 to 24 th March 1779				
Departments Victualled	Men	Women	Children	Waggoners...
Battalion of Grenadiers	924	155	129	8
Battalion of Light Infantry	761	130	38	18...
42 ^d or Royal Highland	700	89	68	11...
Total of British, Foreign &c	22,522	2792	2534	212
At Rhode Island-	7,108	594	562	

Daniel Wier
Commissary General

Source and Note: *Sir Henry Clinton Papers* 54:20, William L. Clements Lib., Univ. of Michigan. Transcribed by Todd Braisted and published at Loyalist Institute. The eight line companies of the 42nd Regt. were authorized 40 sergeants, 40 corporals, 16 drummers and 800 private men for a total of 896. The 42nd Grenadier and Light Infantry companies' strengths are included as part of the composite grenadier and light infantry battalions.



Detail of Portrait of Maj. Gen. Archibald Campbell, 1790-1792, by George Romney

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from *Nat. Gallery of Art*, Washington

**Excerpts of Letter No. 27 from Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American
Department to Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Commander-in-Chief, North America, Directing**

**Expedition to Capture Charleston, South Carolina and Georgia During the Winter of 1779-80,
London, Mar. 31, 1779**

Whitehall, 31 March 1779

Sir,

The recovery of South Carolina, is conceived here to be an object of so great importance that, should Lieut-Colonel [Archibald] Campbell [2nd Battalion, 71st Highland Regt.] find himself too weak to effect it this spring, it is hoped you will be able to send such a force there in the winter as will be sufficient to reduce Charleston and, cooperating with the troops in Georgia, obtain possession of the province. The assistance of the loyal inhabitants is essential to the success of all operations within land, and that is most likely to be obtained by the negotiations of persons well known to them and in whom they have confidence...

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution, Vol. XVII, Transcripts 1779*, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1977, pp. 89-90 from TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1778-1779* at CO 5/97.

**Excerpts of Letter No. 48 from Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Commander-in-Chief,
North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American
Department, Reporting Plans for Campaign of 1779, New York, Apr. 4, 1779**

New York 4 April 1779

My Lord,

At this period your Lordship may perhaps expect that I should give you some idea of the operations which I propose for the ensuing campaign. What measures I shall now pursue must depend so much upon circumstance that I cannot yet inform your Lordship to what point I shall direct the small force which I can spare from this post.

Our successes to the southward suggest an attempt against Charleston [South Carolina], and I believe a tolerable convoy could now be collected. But besides that the season is far advanced and that the motions of the French fleet in the West Indies are unknown to me, I have as yet received no assurances of any favourable temper in the province of South Carolina to encourage me in an undertaking where we must expect much difficulty.

The force which the present weakness of [Rebel] General [George] Washington's Army would enable me to detach might possibly get possession of Charleston (though that place would certainly require a siege) but I doubt whether they could keep it, and in the present stage of the war I do not think such a transitory advantage in that quarter would be beneficial to our interests; it might induce a number of persons to declare for us whom we might afterwards be obliged to abandon, and that might destroy a party on whom we may depend if circumstances will permit a more solid attempt in a proper season.

I must also remark that the detaching so large a body of troops as would be necessary for the purpose abovementioned would reduce me to the strictest defensive in this country; and should [Canada Commander Maj.] General [Frederick] Haldimand at that juncture make a requisition for reinforcement (which I have reason to expect from his letter of the 10th of November), my situation would be disagreeable. .

If the Spaniards do not interfere or the French throw troops into the country, if a sufficient fleet can be allotted, and if the state of this Army at that time will admit of the detaching 6000 Men, I think that in the month of October our success against South Carolina would be certain and decisive. In the hope that those circumstances may concur I shall keep the idea profoundly secret. In the meantime I believe our acquisitions in Georgia are perfectly secure.

Our winter is past and I shall soon begin to act, and howsoever our efforts may be turned it shall not be for want of indefatigable zeal upon my part if they do not answer the wishes of my royal master.

Signed.

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution, Vol. XVII, Transcripts 1779*, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1977, pp. 96-97 from TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1778-1779* at CO 5/97, f. 226.



Detail showing Staten Island, Shrewsbury and Middletown from "The Province of New Jersey, divided into East and West, commonly called the Jerseys," 1777, by William Faden, Bernard Ratzer and Gerard Bancker.

Map Source: Library of Congress Geography and Map Div.

**Expedition Report (Including 42nd Regt. Detachment) from Maj. and Col. West Hyde,
1st Regt. of Foot Guards, to Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Commander-in-Chief,
North America, Shrewsbury and Middletown, New Jersey, Apr. 26, 1779**

New York 27th April 1779

Sir,

The several Corps of the Detachment under my Command, consisting of 200 of the Royal Highland Regiment, 120 of the 71st. [Highland Regt.] [Lt.] Colonel [Joseph] Barton's [1st] Battalion of Jersey Volunteers and part of [Lt. Col. Abraham van] Buskirk's [4th] Battalion of Jersey Volunteers, assembled on Sunday 25th. at Staten Island, embarked on board Sloops, and dopped down with the Afternoon Tide to the Rendevous under the Stem of the Frigate at Sandy Hook – At the return of the Flood Tide, soon after Midnight, the whole set off in Flat bottomed Boats, and Captain [Patrick] Ferguson of the 70th. Regiment, with about 450 of the Detachment proceeded thro the narrow Channel or Gut of Sandy Hook and by the North Branch of the Shrewsbury River – From the difficulty of the Navigation it was daybreak before they could land, and tho' they proceeded with the utmost expedition to Shrewsbury, the [6th Maryland] Battalion of Continental Troops quartered there had timely Notice to make their Escape by Flight – Captain Ferguson however came up with their Rear Guard, of which he took between 20 & 30 Prisoners, and some of the Baggage of the Regiment. He pursued them as far as the Falls about 2 or 3 Miles higher up the River, where having destroyed several Houses made use of as public Stores_ He returned to his Boats, and crossing the River, proceeded to Middle Town – The Boats were then dismissed and returned down the River, with the Prisoners and a few Deserters who had come in. They were pursued and fired at from the Shore almost the whole way, but an occasional Shot now and then from 2 Gun Boats under the direction of Captain Tonkin, who commanded the Naval Part of this Excursion, kept the Rebels at sufficient distance and not one Man on board those Boats was hurt.

The rest of the Detachment landed between 2 and 3 in the Morning at Shoal Harbour, 4 Miles from Middletown, and marched directly thither, where it was supposed a Part of the Continental Regiment was quartered, but they had been withdrawn the day before – I therefore took Post on the Heights above that Town, and remained till one o’Clock in the Afternoon, when Captain Ferguson joined us with his Detachment from Shrewsbury – After allowing time for his Men to refresh themselves, the whole returned by the Never Sunk Hills to a part of the Beach between Sandy Hook & Shoal Harbour where the Boats and Sloops were ready to embark them.

A few of the Rebel Militia had assembled during our Stay at Middletown, followed us in the Return, and affected to harass the Rear, but from the judicious Disposition of the Rear Guard, under the Command of Captain Ferguson, he kept them at so respectful a Distance, that only one Man [Pvt. John M’Kinnan, Capt. George Dalrymple’s Co.] of the [42nd or] Royal Highland Regiment was killed, and one of Colonel Barton’s Jersey Volunteers wounded. The rest were embarked by Sunsett yesterday evening and have return this Morning to their respective Quarters.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your Excellency’s Most obedient and most humble Servant
Signed West Hyde Col

Source and Note: TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1778-1779* at CO 5/97, pp. 507-509. Shrewsbury is located about 22 miles southeast of Perth Amboy.

Excerpts of Letter No. 41 from Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department to Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Commander-in-Chief, North America, Reporting King George III’s Approval of Maj. and Col. West Hyde’s Raid on Shrewsbury and Middletown, New Jersey, Apr. 25, 1779

Whitehall, 25 June 1779

Sir,

Since my letters to you of the 2^d instant I have received and laid before the King your dispatches...

The enterprise against the rebel forces at Shrewsbury and Middletown, though prevented by an unfavourable change of the weather from succeeding in its principal object, appears to have been conducted by Colonel Hyde with much spirit and judgment and must have its share in keeping up the apprehensions of the rebels and preventing the militia of the country, exposed to such attacks, from sending draughts to [Rebel Gen. George] M^r Washington’s Army; and I have not failed to lay before His Majesty your recommendation of that Officer...

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution, Vol. XVII, Transcripts 1779*, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1977, pp. 150-152 from TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1778-1779* at CO 5/97, f. 333.

Excerpts of Notebook of Capt. John Peebles, 42nd Grenadier Company, Record a Detachment of the 42nd Regt. Taking Part in Expedition Under Maj. and Col. West Hyde, 1st Regt. of Foot Guards, Shrewsbury and Middletown, New Jersey, Apr. 25 – 27, 1779

Sunday 25th. fine wr... 200 of the 42^d. march’d this morn^g. to the narrows & embark’d on board small craft to be join’d by Cap^t. [Patrick] Ferguson & the men under his command & some others for a little private expedition into Jersey...

Tuesday 27th. Cap^t. Fergusons party returned from Jersey they went into Monmouth County in the prospect of being join’d by a number of friends to Government & destroying some magazine, but they were disappointed in both, had a skirmish with the Rebels, bro^t. in about 30 pris^{rs}. & some plunder...

Source: NRS, *Peebles Journal* Entries for Apr. 25-26, 1779, and as published in *John Peebles' American War*, Ed. Ira Gruber, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg (Pa), 1998, pp. 257-258.



Detail of Portrait of Vice Adm. Sir George Collier, 1795, by John James Hinchliff

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from UK National Maritime Museum,

Commodore Sir George Collier's Raid on Portsmouth, Virginia, Apr. 27 – May 29, 1779

Excerpt of Letter from Rebel Maj. Gen. Alexander M^cDougall to Commander-in-Chief Gen. George Washington Reporting Movement of the 42nd Regt., New York Area, May 8, 1779

Head Quarters Pecks Kill [NY] 8th May 1779.

Sir

I received your Excellency's Favor, of the 6th. Instant [May], in due time... The inclosed extract, of a Letter from Major Hull, will shew you, the uncertainty We are in, about the late Embarkation. If one has been made, it must be principally from Long-Island and Staten Island and the City. The Troops about the Bridge and Fort Washington remain the same as in Winter. The 42^d. has left its Cantonment and its Judged by some of the Deserters that its one of those of which have Embarked with the 7th. and Irish Volunteers [Loyalist Vols. of Ireland Regt.]...

Alex^r M^cDougall

Source: *Papers of George Washington Digital Edition*, American Founding Era Collection, Univ. of Va. Press, pp. 382-283.

Excerpts of Notebook of Capt. John Peebles, 42nd Grenadier Company, Record the Departure of the 42nd Highlanders for Commodore George Collier's Raid on Portsmouth, Virginia, Apr. 27 – May 5, 1779

Tuesday 27th... The 42^d. have got orders to march & embark tomorrow at Brooklyn

Wednesday 28th. April 1779 – The follow^g. Troops Embark'd for some secret expedition viz^t. four flank Companies of the Guards, 42^d. Reg^t., [Col. Francis] Lord Rawdon's [Loyalist Volunteers of Ireland] Corps, and two Hessian Bat^{ns}. the Transports lay off red hook...

Thursday 29th. Warm w^r. & So^{ly}: [southerly] winds the Expedition not sail'd yet they have taken their tents & some baggage enough for several months...

Wednesday 5th May cool Wind NW...I hear the Expedition have sail'd out of the [Sandy] hook...The troops comm^d. by M:[aj.] Gen^l. [Edward] Mathew The [HMS] Reasonable 64 [guns] the [44 gun HMS] Rainbow & some others gone with the Expedition, supposed to Virginia

Source and Note: NRS, *Peebles Journal* Entries for Apr. 25-May 5, 1779, and as published in *John Peebles' American War*, Ed. Ira Gruber, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg (Pa), 1998, pp. 258-259. Comm. Collier's May 22, 1779 report to Lord George Germain listed the following units: "Grenadiers and Light Company of the Guards, the 42^d Regiment, the Royal Volunteers of Ireland, and the Hessian Regiment of Prince Charles."

Loyalist Residents of Newtown, Long Island Compliment the Conduct of 42nd Regt. During Winter Quarters, with Brevet-Col. Thomas Stirling's Response, Newtown, Long Island, Apr. 28, 1779,

The following very polite testimony of the good behavior of the FORTY-SECOND or ROYAL HIGHLAND REGIMENT we are happy having an opportunity of laying before our readers.

"THE inhabitants of Newtown beg leave to make their hearty and grateful acknowledgement to Colonel Stirling, and the officers of the 42d regiment, for their equitable, polite, and friendly conduct, during their winter's stay among them. They will ever retain an affectionate esteem and regard for them; and will never forget that they have been treated with all the justice and cordiality due to fellow citizens and subjects.

"They, at the same time request the favour of Colonel Stirling, to return their thanks to the regiment in general, for their orderly regular and honourable behavior, so conformable to the true character of the gentleman and the soldier. They part with the 42d regiment with regret and wish them glory and success."

Newtown, April 28, 1779

[Brevet] COLONEL STIRLING's ANSWER.

"IT gives Colonel Stirling a very sensible pleasure to find the orderly and good behavior of the 42d or Royal Highland regiment, under his command, during their winter quarters in Newtown, has drawn so honourable acknowledgement from the inhabitants of that district.

"It has ever been Colonel Stirling's wish and study to protect the peaceable subjects to the utmost of his power at a time when the civil law, owing to the unhappy rebellion, is suspended from giving that protection, so enviable, and so much to be wished for, by every one who has tasted the sweets of it.

"Colonel Stirling begs to assure the inhabitants of Newtown of every protection in his power as a soldier, and every good wish as a fellow citizen, for their welfare and happiness.

THOMAS STIRLING"

Source and Note: *Edinburgh Advertiser*, Nov. 9, 1779, p. 301. Stirling was appointed Aide de Camp to the King on Feb. 19, 1779. This largely honorary title carried the equivalent rank as a colonel in the Army. The title was not published in orders in America until May 1779.

Instructions from Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to Maj. Gen. Edward Mathew to Conduct Invasion of Virginia; New York, Apr. 29, 1779

Instructions for Major General [illegible - Mathew]

Sir

The purpose of the expedition [illegible words] give you the Command are these, Firstly to [illegible – draw] back to Virginia any Troops which the Enemy may have detached from that Province [illegible word] to the Southward or Westward, Secondly to prevent the march of the reinforcements of Virginian Troops destined for [Rebel Gen. George] Washingtons Army their number and the example which they would give the other Provinces, making this an object of importance; Lastly to destroy in Elizabeth and Nansemond Rivers, the Sips & Magazines with which I understand they mean to supply

their Army in South Carolina. To compass these Ends, a short & desultory invasion of the province of Virginia, will be sufficient. I therefore shall expect you back in the last week in May at the very latest. / I will not give you positive Orders upon this Head, least any unforeseen change of Affairs to the Southward, should make your longer stay there so necessary, as to be superior to every other consideration But I must again mention explicitly, that unless [illegible – notice?] of extraordinary importance arise, I must have the Troops again before June.

I have great reason to believe that about the time of Your arrival in Virginia, the Indians will be in great force in the frontiers of that Province.

I am Sir &c

Signed – H. Clinton

Head Quarters, New York

April 29th 1779 –

Source: *Records of the British Colonial Office Class 5, Part 5: The American Revolution, 1772-1784*, Ed. Randolph Boehm, University Publications Inc., Frederick, MD, 1972, Part IV, pp. 857-858 from TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1778-1779* at CO 5/97, ff. 239-242.



Detail of Portrait of George III of the United Kingdom, 1771, by Johann Zoffany

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from the *Royal Collection*

General Orders Publish War Office Announcement of Promotion of Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling, 42nd or Royal Highland Regt., to be Aide-de-Camp to King George III, New York, May 1, 1779

Head Quarters New York 1st May 1779...

A List of promotions received from the War Office...

To be Aides de Camp to the King

L^t Col Thomas Stirling vice [John] Douglas ditto [19th Feb^{ry} 1779]...

Source and Note: "Orders, 1778-1782," *Sir Henry Clinton Papers*, Vol. 266, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan. Lt. Col. Stirling's promotion was an honorary appointment for meritorious service equivalent to the brevet rank of colonel in the army. Stirling was listed eighth of ten ADCs. This promotion did not impact his position as Lt. Col. of the 42nd Regt.

Letter No. 52 from Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Reporting Commodore Sir George Collier's Raid on Norfolk, Virginia, Which Included the 42nd Regt., New York, May 5, 1779

New York 5 May 1779

My Lord,

Until I received your Lordship's dispatches by the Carteret and Grantham packet boats I could form no judgment of what reinforcement I was to expect, and till that reinforcement arrives I cannot I determine upon any certain plan of operations. In the meantime the commodore [Sir George Collier] and I from information we have received have thought an expedition into Chesepeak will operate at this time, most essentially. The commodore will conduct it himself and I have detached two thousand five hundred Men under the command of Major General [Edward] Mathew from whose exertions I have everything to expect. I cannot better describe the object of this expedition than by sending your Lordship a copy of the instructions given to Major General Mathew. With what troops are left, should any opportunity offer before the arrival of the reinforcement from Europe, we shall not remain with our arms across; and when it arrives I shall determine on such measures as the situation of affairs at that time may render most likely to operate essentially. The commodore is gone to sea this morning with a fair wind.

Signed.

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution, Vol. XVII, Transcripts 1779*, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1977, pp. 117-118 from TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1778-1779* at CO 5/97, f. 239.



Detail of "Plan des environs de Williamsburg, York, Hampton, et Portsmouth," 1781

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

**Expedition Report from Commodore Sir George Collier, to Gen. Sir Henry Clinton,
Commander-in-Chief, North America; Virginia, May 5-16, 1779**

[64-gun *HMS*] *Raisonable*
[May 16, 1779]

Sir,

After leaving New York the 5th Instant, with the Men of War and Transports under my Command, I proceeded towards the place of our destination with the most propitious Winds, and on the fourth day (from our Sailing) made the Capes of Virginia; The Fleet anchored that Night between the Sands near Willoughby Point, which they had hardly done, when the most terrible Flurry of Thunder, Lightning,

Wind, and Rain, came on, that I ever recollect, its continuance, however, was not more than half an hour, and the Ships were all so fortunate as to escape driving on Shore; At Sunrise we saw some Rebel Ships and Vessels in Hampton Road, with their Sails loose, who, as soon as the Tide admitted of it, got under Weigh, and run up Elizabeth and James Rivers: Our Fleet also Weighed, and the Reasonable Anchored shortly after in Hampton Road, her great draught of Water not admitting of her going further with conveniency. I immediately Shifted my Broad Pendant to the [44-gun *HMS*] Rainbow, and proceeded with the Fleet up Elizabeth River, 'till a Contrary Wind and the Ebb tide obliged us to Anchor; The following Morning being Calm, prevented the Ships from Moving with the flood, on Account of the narrowness and intricacy of the Channel; and as the intended place of Descent was not more than five or Six Miles distant, the [Maj.] General [Edward Mathew] (anxious to lose no Time) embarked the first Division in the Flat Boats, and covered by the [5-gun *HMS*] Cornwallis Galley, and two Gun-Boats (that carried a Six-pounder at each end) proceeded up, and Landed without opposition at the Glebe, which is distant about three Miles from the town of Portsmouth. The Fort fired some heavy Guns at the Galley, which the distance rendered of no Effect; a favorable Breeze having arose, brought the Ships up, even before the first Division had got on Shore, and the remainder of the Troops, with the Field Artillery, &c. were landed immediately with the utmost Expedition.

The Movements of the Army afterwards, General Mathew will best explain to your Excellency; the Rebels still kept their Colours flying upon the Fort, from which circumstance we judged they intended making some defence, Tho' we did not expect much; To give them, however, no time for throwing up fresh Works, or for waiting to be reinforced by more Rebel Troops, it was agreed between the General and myself, that the Rainbow should move up with the Morning Tide before the Fort, and that the Troops, at the same time, should Attack it on the Land side.

The Enemy, however, saved us the trouble by quitting it that Evening, and we took possession of the Fort and town of Portsmouth, as also of Norfolk (which is on the opposite side of the River) without the least opposition.

The Enemy by this surrender lost several Ships and Vessels which fell into our hands; some were burned by themselves, among which were two large French Ships, who were said to be loaded with a thousand Hogsheads of Tobacco.

Apprehending that many more Rebel Vessels had pushed up the River, I dispatched the Cornwallis Galley, two Gun-Boats, four flat-Boats manned and Armed, together with four Privateers which had desired to receive orders from me, under the Command of Lieutenant Bradley, assisted by Lieutenants Hitchcock and Johnson, in pursuit of them; they were very successful in their Enterprize, taking and burning a great Number of the Enemies Vessels, many of which were on the Stocks ready for Launching, amongst the captures was the Black Snake, a Rebel privateer of fourteen Guns, who, after being Cannonaded by the Gun boats, was carried by Boarding, with the loss of some of the Rebels, but on our side two Men only were wounded.

I had sent some small Ships, under the direction of Captain Creyk of the [14-gun sloop *HMS*] Otter, up the Main branch of the Chesapeake, at the same time I entered Elizabeth River the Movements of this little Squadron were so judicious, that the Enemy were much harassed and distressed; they destroyed many Vessels and Captured others, among which were two with about two hundred hogsheads of Tobacco.

The Reasonable remaining stationed before the Town of Hampton, with some Armed Tenders, blocks up that Port, and the Navigation of James River; Elizabeth River is already taken effectual care of, and Captⁿ Creyk's little Squadron, renders the ingress and regress of the Chesapeake almost impracticable for the Rebel Vessels without their being taken.

I have now informed Your Excellency of the detail of our Military Operations by Sea, to the present time; Our Success, and the present appearance of things infinitely exceed our most Sanguine expectations; and if the various accounts the General and myself have received can be depended upon, the most flattering hopes of a return to obedience to their Sovereign may be expected from most of this Province; the people seem importunately desirous that the Royal Standard may be erected, and they give the most positive assurance that all Ranks of Men will resort to it. You are too good a Judge, Sir, of the

very great Importance of the pass we now hold, to render my saying much upon that Subject necessary, permit me, however, (as a Sea Officer) to observe, that this Port of Portsmouth is an exceeding Safe and Secure Asylum for Ships against an Enemy, and is not to be forced even by great Superiority, the Marine Yard is large and extremely Convenient, having a considerable Stock of Seasoned Timber, besides great Quantities of other Stores.

From these considerations, joined to many others, I am firmly of opinion, that it is a measure most essentially necessary for His Majesty's Service, that this Port should remain in our hands, since it appears to me of more real consequence and advantage than any other the Crown now possesses in America; for by securing this, the whole trade of the Chesapeak is at an end, and consequently the Sinews of the Rebellion destroyed.

I trust and hope, Sir, you will see this matter in the same important Light I do, and give such directions for Reinforcements to be sent here as you may think necessary, in order for Our pursuing and improving those advantages, which we have with so much good Fortune acquired.

General Mathew proposing to write to you by this Express Boat, I shall leave to his Pen to inform you of the destruction of the considerable Magazines in Suffolk, (intended for the Rebel Army) by a detachment of the King's troops under [2nd Maj. and Brevet] Colonel [George] Garth [1st Regt of Guards]; and, before I conclude my letter, permit me to express my great Satisfaction in the choice of the Officers you were pleased to name for co-operating with me on this Expedition, as too much praise cannot be given General Mathew for his Indefatigable Zeal and Attention for the King's Service; and I have the pleasure in acknowledging the perfect Harmony and understanding which subsists between his Majesty's Land and Sea Officers.

I have the honour to be Sir,
With the most perfect respect,
Your most obedient and most humble Servant
Signed Geo: Collier

His Excellency Sir Henry Clinton K B &c &c &c

Source: TNA, *Original Correspondence, Secretaries of State: America*, Military dispatches, 1778-1779 at enclosed in letter from Sir Henry Clinton dated May, 19, 1779 in TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches*, 1778-1779 at CO 5/97.



Detail showing Fort Nelson on the right and Fort Norfolk on the left, with the original rebel works marked in yellow from "*A plan of Portsmouth Harbour in the province of Virginia shewing the works erected by the British forces for its defence, 1781,*" by James Stratton

Map Source: Library of Congress Geography and Map Div.

**Expedition Report from Maj. Gen. Edward Mathew to Gen. Sir Henry Clinton,
Commander-in Chief, North America, Including the 42nd Regt., Portsmouth, Virginia,
May 5-16, 1779**

Portsmouth, Virginia, May 16th. 1779

Sir

After a very favorable passage of four days, we entered the capes of Virginia the 8th Instant [May], contrary Winds prevented our landing 'till the 10th. – About 3 in the afternoon the Army was landed at the Glebe, on the Western Shore of the Elizabeth River, just out of Cannon Shot of the Fort [Nelson]. As the Troops landed the Column moved to invest the Fort. The Enemy, perceiving that their Retreat wou'd be cutt off, evacuated, before we could reach the South branch of Elizabeth River.

The Artillery and Stores taken in the Fort and Town, will appear by the Returns, I have the honor to enclose.

Having taken possession of the Fort and placed Guards in the Town, I encamped in Two Lines, Right to the Fort, and left to the South Branch.

On the 11th, The Flank Companies of the Guards took a strong position, Ten Miles in Front of the right Wing. The [Loyalist] Volunteers of Ireland took one equally strong, Seven Miles in front of the left Wing. The Centre of the Line was covered by an impenetrable Swamp.

On the 12th. The Guards marched at Night to Suffolk, 18 Miles, and arrived at daybreak. The Town was hastily deserted; and some Vessels, a very large magazine of Provisions, with Naval Stores, and Two Pieces of Cannon, were destroyed. The Returns, Sir, will ascertain the Quantities. M^r. Barrett, Volunteer, with one Light Infantry, were wounded.

The Volunteers of Ireland have had some slight Skirmishing, in which they have suffered little; The Enemy have lost in killed, Wounded and Prisoners Four and Twenty.

I am prosecuting Your Excellency's further Instructions, in which I have great reason to believe very many of the Inhabitants will contribute their assistance.

I have the honor to be Sir, Your Excellency's

Most obed^t h^{ble} Serv^t

Signed – Edw. Mathew

His Excell^{cy}.

General Sir Henry Clinton K.B.

&c &c &c

Source and Note: TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretaries of State: America, Military dispatches, 1778-1779* at CO 5/97, pp. 656-657(f. 317). Fort Nelson was located at the current location of the Portsmouth Naval Hospital.

**Rebel Account of Commodore Sir George Collier's Raid on Portsmouth, Virginia,
May 10 – 24, 1779**

WILLIAMSBURG, May 15.

BY a Gentleman who returned from Nansemond on Wednesday who had been sent to obtain intelligence respecting the enemy [British Commodore Collier's fleet, carrying the 42nd and other regiments] bring's the following account: That on Monday [May 10] about 2 o'clock, the enemy's ships got abreast of the mouth of the Western Bank, and under cover of their guns landed about 1200 men up the branch at Tinnie's Point (the glebe) that [Rebel Artillery] Major [Thomas] Matthews having intelligence of this, sent his ammunition up the Southern Branch to the Great Bridge, and immediately

evacuated the Fort, leaving his colours flying, and spiking up all his guns, except one field piece (supposed to be the brass one) which he carried with him. The large vessels off Portsmouth were burnt by the Major's orders, and the small ones proceeded up the Southern Branch. On Tuesday the enemy pursued them up the river, and burnt and destroyed them all; they also burnt several houses, and the same day Major Mathews, on receiving accounts that the enemy were near him on all quarters, destroyed all the powder that he had with him that he could not carry off, and ordered a retreat by way of the Northern Landing. He was at last account at Pequimina (North Carolina) and it will be some weeks before he can be expected in this state, as he must march quite round the Dismal Swamp. Yesterday at 11 o'clock the above Gentleman was at a Mrs. Straghn's, who told him that four of the enemy had been there about half an hour before him, and had plundered her money, clothes, and most valuable furniture, and shewed him her torn fingers from whence they had taken her rings. While he was there, two men came riding briskly up, and told him about eighty of the enemy with four waggons, were at that place, where they had halted for breakfast; that another party of them were at Hollidy's on the upper side of the Western Branch, about one or two miles from Hall's; that they were plundering, and the inhabitants in the greatest distress. He saw Mrs. Skinner, Mrs. McConnico, Mrs. Browne, Mrs. Calvert, Mrs. Ramsay, and Miss Calvert, with four of Mrs. Calvert's children, all on foot, except Mrs. McConnico, who were endeavouring to make their escape, and appeared in the utmost distress, and knew not where to fly to. The enemy have a chain of sentries from Tinnie's Point to Gosport, and confine the inhabitants of Portsmouth to the town. it is said they have forced three young Ladies on board their ships, to with: Miss Herbert, and two others, one of whom was on the point of being married."

Source: *Virginia Gazette*, May 15, 1779, p. 2.

**Expedition Report from Maj. Gen. Edward Mathew to Gen. Sir Henry Clinton,
Commander-in-Chief, North America, Including Brevet-Col. Thomas Stirling's
Return of Stores Taken at Kemp's Landing, Virginia, May 16 – 24, 1779**

On Board the [44-gun *HMS*] Rainbow
in Elizabeth River, May 24th 1779

Sir,

Since my last of the 16th. Instant, We have continued to collect Stores of all Sorts to a very great amount, Military, Naval, and Provisions; the last have been daily distributed to the numerous (distressed) Inhabitants of Portsmouth & its Neighbourhood.

Having been informed on the 16th, that some Parties of the Enemy were skulking about the Great Bridge, 7 Miles in front of Lieut^t. Colonel [Welborne Ellis] Doyle's Post [Loyalist Volunteers of Ireland], I ordered him to march suddenly to surprized them, having sent to me some Dragoons, under the Command of Captain [Frederick] Deimar [Capt. Deimar's Troop of Hussars] for that purpose. The Enemy was dispersed and Colonel Doyle took post at the Bridge. Intelligence was received, that there were many Public Stores at Kempe's Landing in Princess Ann County, and some considerable Vessels in the East Branch of Elizabeth River, and on the Stocks; a strong Detachment from the 42^d. Regiment was ordered to pass the River to Norfolk, and march to Kemp's Landing, 9 Miles; a Gun Boat and some Flats went up the Branch. [Brevet] Colonel [Thomas] Stirling was pleased to go up with this Detachment; their Success was complete as will appear in the Returns.

The Troops returned to their Camp the same Day, May 17th – From this time the 22^d. little more occurred, than embarking the Enemy Stores, that have fallen into our hands. The Engineer has been employed, for many Days, with near one hundred Blacks, to destroy the Fort, which was so substantially constructed as to give us a great deal of trouble in the Demolition.

May the 22^d. a Party of the 42^d. in two flat Boats, fell down the River to Tanner's Creek and destroyed Six Vessels on the Stocks, one of which was nearly compleated, for Sixteen Guns. (Having now no Object remaining) I determined to reembark the 24th to return to York according to your Excellency's Orders, by the first of June.

The outposts were this Day withdrawn, without being incommodated in the least by the Enemy, and the whole Embarkation was completed before Noon. I have the honor to be

Sir, Your Excellency's Most obedient and
Most humble Servant

Signed Edw. Mathew

The General Return not
being completed, I have enclosed
[Brevet] Colonel Stirling's particular one.

[Enclosure]

Invoice of Stores found at Kempe's by the 42^d. or Royal Highland regiment, May 17th 1779.
8 Cannon, 2 Cowhorn, 1 Swivel, 4 Ladles & Worms, 2 Rammers, 15 Carriages, 4 Anchors, (2 Large & 2 Small) 2 Cambouses [naval stoves], (1 large & 1 small) 164 Barrels of Tar, 19 Hogshead of Tobacco, a small Hauser, 17 Grindstones, a few Sheets Lead, and a Beam & Weights.

Gentlemen,

You are hereby ordered and required to send the above Stores to Portsmouth within forty eight Hours from the date hereof, under pain of Military Execution.

Signed T. Stirling
[Brevet] Colonel

To the Inhabitants of
Kempe's Landing.

N.B. Seven vessels burnt – One to be sent down by the Owner tomorrow, one protected by the Commodore.

Five Swivels & some Rope brought in Boats.

Source: TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1779* at CO 5/98, p. 35. This account was also published in *Edinburgh Advertiser*, July 23, 1779, p. 234.

Instructions from Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to Maj. Gen. Edward Mathew, to Return With Troops in Virginia as Soon as Possible, New York, May 20, 1779

New York 20 May 1779

Sir

Sir, I received your letter of the 16th instant and congratulate you on the success which has attended your very judicious arrangements. Your letter does not intimate your further views but one which I have received from the Commodore [Sir George Collier], added to his instructions to Officers of the Navy here, speaks of a desire of prosecuting the blow, which would certainly extend your stay in Chesepeak beyond the time proposed; upon this head I must refer you to your instructions. The absence of the troops already under your command may possibly restrain me from prosecuting operations here upon the scale I had meditated; and should I be obliged to reinforce you (which, if [Rebel Gen. George] Washington detaches towards you, I probably should with a number equal to your present force) I must give up all hopes of making any Movements in this quarter, at least till the reinforcements arrive. Thus circumstanced it must be naturally my wish that you should rejoin me, especially as I think all the purposes of the expedition answered. [Commodore] Sir George Collier appears very sanguine in his hopes that the country may very generally declare in your favour; upon this, however, you are silent which makes me more at a loss how to determine, and at this distance I cannot decide upon the foundation for such expectation. Therefore, as motives may very momentarily arise which may outweigh the consideration of any difficulties that your absence may lay me under, I must leave to the discretion of

you, Sir, who are on the spot and who I trust will form a cool judgment what measures may be expedient to pursue.

With respect to the disposition of the Three Counties, it has ever been friendly, and if they have declared openly for you it is an urgent reason for remaining to protect them. But I wish that until we had determined to establish ourselves amongst them the inhabitants had not been invited to join, lest our circumstances should oblige us to abandon them to the insult and oppression of the rebel faction. In a political light I fear the attachment of those three counties would not be very important either as to example, influence, or internal strength.

Sir George Collier likewise gives strong opinion as to the importance of the post, which as I always . . . [one line blank in MS] and that great advantages might accrue from the immediate establishment there; if you are of the same opinion and can maintain your ground for some time with the troops you have at present, I consent to your stay. I confess, however, I do it with reluctance as I did expect you at this time to have assisted in the operations which might have taken place in this country. I cannot reinforce you till such time as I myself am reinforced without Washington should detach troops against you. Were I obliged to take that step, it would disable me utterly from attempting anything serious in this quarter. Should you find it necessary either to keep your ground or delay your return, I request you to give me as soon as possible an idea of your prospects or of any necessity you think there may be of sending immediate reinforcement. Should you not find the prospect bright I wish your return as early as possible, leaving however a garrison in the fort if Sir George Collier thinks that necessary for the covering any ships of war he may think necessary to leave on that station.

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution*, Vol. XVII, *Transcripts 1779*, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1977, pp. 125-126 from TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1779* at CO 5/98, f. 6. A copy of the letter was enclosed in Gen. Clinton's letter of June 18, 1779 to Lord Germain.

**Excerpt of Letter No. 56 from Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Commander-in-Chief,
North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American
Department, Reporting on the Chesapeake Operation, New York, May 21, 1779**

New York 21 May 1779

My Lord, a contrary wind having detained the packet I have an opportunity of sending to your lordship the copies of letters which I have this morning received from Maj.-General [Edward] Matthew and [Commodore] Sir George Collier, together with the returns of ships, stores and magazines already destroyed in the Chesapeak Bay. The operations have been well conducted and the success has been very complete. I believe all the ends proposed by this expedition are answered and I own I should have been glad that General Matthew had determined to return.

Signed.

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution*, Vol. XVII, *Transcripts 1779*, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1977, p. 126 from TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretaries of State: America, Military dispatches, 1778-1779* at CO 5/97, f. 315.



Detail showing *HMS Rainbow* from “*USS Boston and Hancock vs. HMS Flora and Rainbow, 7 July 1777*,” 1779, by Francis Holman

Picture Source: *U.S. Naval History and Heritage Command*

Excerpt of a Letter from Adm. Sir George Collier to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Reporting on the Chesapeake Operation, 44-gun *HMS Rainbow*, May 21, 1779

Rainbow, off Portsmouth 22 May 1779

My Lord,

It is with great satisfaction I am able to inform your Lordship of His Majesty's sea and land forces having possession of the town, harbour and fort of Portsmouth in Virginia and the remains of the town of Norfolk, together with a total privation of the rebels' trade in the Chesapeake.

Having in different consultations with Sir Henry Clinton debated on the most probable means for promoting His Majesty's service with the small force left in America, we determined that a descent in Virginia would best answer that purpose, not only by impeding and distressing the trade of the Enemy but with a view to destroy considerable magazines of provisions for Washington's Army and also to prevent the Movement of troops from this province towards Georgia or Canada, imagining the Virginians would embrace the pretence to avoid sending their quota of Men to the rebel Army under Washington; all which ends this invasion will probably answer.

I left New York on the 5th instant with His Majesty's ships [64-gun *HMS*] *Raisonable*, [44-gun *HMS*] *Rainbow*, [14-gun sloop *HMS*] *Otter*, [10-gun sloop *HMS*] *Diligent*, [14-gun sloop *HMS*] *Haerlem* and [5-gun *HMS*] *Cornwallis* galley under my command, together with several private ships of war and twenty-two sail of transports carrying the Grenadiers and Light Company of the Guards, the 42^d Regiment, the [Loyalist] Royal Volunteers of Ireland, and the Hessian Regiment of Prince Charles. The winds were so uncommonly favourable that we anchored amongst the sands within the Capes of Virginia the 4th day from our leaving New York. At sunrise some rebel galleys made their escape up James River from Hampton Road, where soon afterwards the *Raisonable* anchored, being from her great draught of water unable to proceed further up Elizabeth River with safety; I therefore shifted my broad pendant from the *Raisonable* into the *Rainbow* and led the fleet up Elizabeth River till a calm and the ebb tide obliged us to anchor.

Anxious to give the Enemy no time for preparation and reinforcement, and being only five miles from the intended place of descent, the first division of troops embarked in the flatboats, and covered by the galley and two gunboats (each with two six-pounders) the landing was made good without opposition at the Glebe, which is about two miles and half from the fort and three from the town of Portsmouth. A favourable breeze springing up soon after the flatboats advanced, the ships moved on immediately and the remainder of the troops joined the first division with great dispatch. Nothing hostile appeared from the rebels except firing a few shot at the Rainbow from the fort which did not reach her; they fled soon afterwards, leaving the rebel colours flying, and the fort was taken possession of by the King's troops the same evening together with the town of Portsmouth.

The Enemy by this surrender lost also several ships and vessels which were in the harbour. They burnt a fine ship (belonging to Congress) of 24 guns, and two French ships with a thousand hogsheads of tobacco shared the same fate. We found on the stocks a frigate of 36 guns and one of 18. We have destroyed in other places one of 16 guns, 3 of fourteen, and taken the Black Snake armed and fitted out by the Congress and mounting 14 guns. The whole number burnt, taken, and destroyed since my being in Virginia amount to upwards of 130 sail of ships and vessels.

A Detachment from the Army marched to Suffolk and destroyed a great quantity of salted provisions for [Rebel Commander Gen. George] M^r Washington's Army.

Great quantities of all kinds of naval stores were found in the marine yard, which is capitally situated, detached from the town, and having a considerable depth of water close to the shore.

Amongst other advantages resulting from our possessing this important post is putting an entire stop to the trade of the French and rebels in the Cheseapeake from its vicinity (as your lordship will see upon the map) to the sea; our cruisers may clean and refit immediately upon the spot; it is so good an asylum for ships from its natural strength that a very small naval force will defend the harbour against almost any superiority; the adjoining counties produce all kinds of naval stores, and plenty of masts from 28 inches downwards can be procured without difficulty.

This post cuts off the communication between the Carolinas and the Head of the Elk, by which trade has long been advantageously carried on with perfect security and the provisions for the rebel Army under Washington was principally conveyed.

Signed

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution, Vol. XVII, Transcripts 1779*, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1977, pp. 130-132 from TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretaries of State: America, Military dispatches, 1778-1779* at CO 5/80, f. 119.

**Secret Letter from Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Commander-in-Chief, North America,
to Maj. Gen. Edward Mathew, Regarding Virginia Operations; New York, May 23, 1779**

Secret

May 23^d. 1779.

Dear Sir,

At all events it probably would have been my intention to send an Expedition into Chesepeak Bay on the arrival of [Vice] Admiral [Mariot] Arbuthnot, and if You determine to stay I shall certainly reinforce You at that time or soon after, if not before.

Respecting an Establishment at Norfolk for the purpose of carrying on Expeditions into Chesapeake Bay &c, by the enclosed Extract of my letter to [Gen.] Sir William Howe in 1776 You will find I thought it the best, and it may possibly be the best also to receive and protect those who might fly to us; But for trying the temper of the Colonies bordering on that Bay, and Arming the Inhabitants in support of legal Government, I think a better may be found on the Eastern Neck from Elk Head to Cape Charles; and if You stay, I am to request You will make all the necessary inquiries respecting the disposition of the People and their numbers. Of One thing I am persuaded: if you establish Yourselves at Norfolk &c, You must Arm the Inhabitants if ever you leave it without a sufficient force to protect them. I should think 600 Men in fortified Posts at Portsmouth, Great Bridge & Brickell's Mills, with some Ships

of War, might secure the Port &c; but the Inhabitants may be pillaged if they don't Arm to the number of 2,000. in a supposition that you mean to stay, You must raise as many troops as you can upon the same footing the other provincials are. – You must likewise build Galleys for Expeditions in the Albemarle Sound, Chesepeak Bay, and here. Respecting Blacks I think You will not invite any; such as come in you had better form into Companies as Pioneers, or Woodsmen, for it will not answer to Arm them; and if they could be persuaded to leave their Wives behind till such time as affairs are settled, so much the better, but it would be cruel to force them to do it.

I have the honor to be
&c. Signed H: Clinton

Major General Mathew

Source: *Records of the British Colonial Office Class 5, Part 5: The American Revolution, 1772-1784*, Ed. Randolph Boehm, University Publications Inc., Frederick, MD, 1972, pp. 119-149 from TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1779* at CO 5/98, p. 23. A copy Clinton's Letter to Mathew was enclosed in Gen. Clinton's letter to Viscount Germain dated June 18, 1779.

Letter from Commodore Sir George Collier, 64-gun *HMS Raisonable*, to Philip Stephens, Secretary to the Admiralty, Regarding Departure from Portsmouth, Virginia, May 25, 1779

Rasionable, off New-York, June 13, 1779

SIR

Major General [Edward] Mathew being the commanding officer of the King's land forces employed on the expedition to Virginia, I directed, in consequence of his requisition, those troops to be re-embarked in the transports; previous to which however they demolished the parapets and barracks of the fort, and set fire to all the remaining stores, storehouses, and other buildings in the dock-yard at Gosport, as also to the vessels on the stocks, &c. to an immense amount. The town and harbour of Portsmouth was then abandoned by us, and I put to sea with the men of war and transports mentioned in my former letter, together with seventeen prizes, making in the whole fifty-three sail, and proceeded back to New-York where we safely arrived on the 29th of May, after a most favourable passage of little more than three days.

I am, &c.
GEO. COLLIER

Philip Stephens, Esq.

Sources and Note: *Edinburgh Advertiser*, July 20, 1779. The letter was also published in *The Remembrancer*, Printed for J. Almon, London, 1779, p. 299. The 42nd Regt. was part of the land forces under Maj. Gen. Mathew.

Rebel Accounts of Commodore Sir George Collier's Departure from Portsmouth, Virginia, May 25, 1779

WILLIAMSBURGH, MAY 29.

THE enemy after destroying all the publick stores at Portsmouth, (except the heavy cannon) which they could not carry off, and plundering the inhabitants in the most merciless manner, evacuated that place on Tuesday last [May 25]. They lay some time before Hampton in a menacing posture, but observing our troops prepared to give them a suitable reception, they did not choose to hazard a descent, and on Wednesday hoisted sail and stood out to sea. They have carried off a great number of slaves with them.

*Extract of a letter from Col. Marshall to Brigadier General Nelson dated
Hampton, May 26, 1779.*

“The enemy's fleet are now under sail and stand out, but whether they mean to leave us altogether, or only move to some more defenseless quarter, where they may ravage and destroy with impunity, is a question out of my power to determine. I shall however watch their motions, and give you

the earliest intelligence, and if I find they turn up in the bay or into the York River, I shall with the greatest part of the troops under me join you immediately...

*Extract of a letter from Major Matthews to Brigadier General Scott, dated
Portsmouth, May 25, 1779*

"I was last night informed by my scouts, that the enemy had evacuated their post at batchelors mill, I immediately began my march from the North West river bridge about 2 o'clock this morning, and by a forced march arrived at this place about 3 P.M. they evacuated this post at 5 P.M. yesterday after destroying the works at Tucker's point, the heavy cannon they suffered to remain in the same state I left them, the carriages only are destroyed. the light cannon have lost their trunnions and nutts, but may yet be of service.

"One of the enemies transports got a ground near the fort, which afforded us half an hours amusement, pretty smart, without any damage on our side, we hulled the ship once, and damaged her sails and rigging, but the tide rising and they taking goods from her in a number of boats under cover of a galley which kept up a smart fire on us, enabled them to get her off in a short time. Our strength on the march amounted to 130 men, it was by few more than I have been able to muster since my retreat."

Source: *Virginia Gazette*, May 29, 1779, p. 3.

**Extract of a Letter from a Gentleman on the Results of the Portsmouth Raid, Undated,
Approximately May 29, 1779**

Extract of a letter from a gentleman, who was in the late expedition from New York to Virginia

"This little squib, which burnt only twenty days, did more mischief, and occasioned more distress to our enemies, than any thing of the kind yet performed. We found the inhabitants of four counties, in general, worn out with the oppression of their demagogues, and [illegible] rejoiced to see us. If it had been [Gen.] Sir Henry Clinton's intention to proceed farther, and accordingly sent 1500 more troops, we might have gone to Charlestown. The tobacco and other stores taken, are now selling off at New York, and the money arising from the sale is to be given to the troops [including the 42nd Regt]."

Source: *Edinburgh Advertiser*, July 23, 1779, p. 52.

News Account of Return of Commodore Collier's Fleet, New York, May 29, 1779

NEW YORK, JUNE 2.

LAST Saturday afternoon [May 29, 1779] the detachment of the British forces under the command of Major General [Edward] Mathews and Sir George Collier [including the 42nd Regt.] arrived here from Chesapeake bay, in four days, in good health, having lost only one man since leaving this place. Thirty seven sail of prizes have been brought in with the fleet, loaded with near 2000 hogsheads of tobacco, and several sorts of goods, besides 70 more sail of vessels were sunk, burned, and destroyed. Near 1000 of the inhabitants of Virginia have come off, among them many very useful tradesmen, such as ship carpenters, &c.

Source: *Virginia Gazette*, July 10, 1779, p. 2.

**Excerpts of Letter No. 41 from Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American
Department to Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Commander-in-Chief, North America,
Reporting King George III's Approval of Virginia Operations; London, June 25, 1779**

Whitehall, 25 June 1779

Sir,

Since my letters to you of the 2^d instant I have received and laid before the King your dispatches ... Before I take notice of the contents of the several preceding dispatches, give me leave to express to you His Majesty's great satisfaction in the important effects with which the spirited and able execution of the judicious plan you formed for the attack of the coast of Virginia has already been attended, as stated in the letters to you from Major General [Edward] Mathew and [Commodore] Sir George Collier transmitted in your dispatch N^o. 56; and I am sanguine enough to expect to hear that still greater advantages have accrued to His Majesty's affairs from the success of that measure. In the meantime I am happy in acquainting you that it is His Majesty's pleasure you should convey to Major General Mathew His Majesty's approbation of his conduct and of the alertness with which the troops [including the 42nd Regt.] executed his orders...

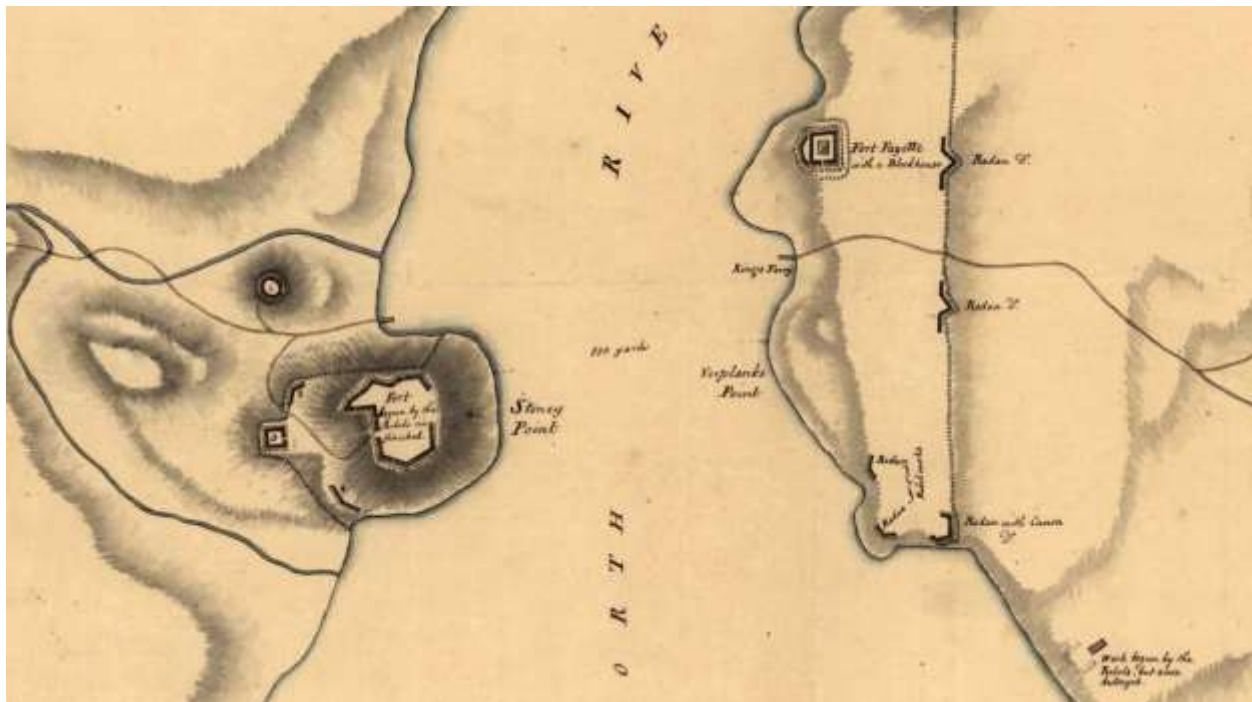
Source: *Documents of the American Revolution, Vol. XVII, Transcripts 1779*, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1977, pp. 150-152 from TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1778-1779* at CO 5/97, f. 333.

General Order Recognizing Performance of the 42nd Regt. and Other Units on Adm. George Collier's Portsmouth, Virginia Raid; New York, Sept. 6, 1779

Head Quarters New York 6th Sep^r 1779...

The Comm^r in Chief having reported to the secretary of State the spirited exertions of the Troops under Gen^l [Edward] Mathew on the Coast of Virginia in May last, His Excellency has in consequence has receiv'd orders from His Majesty to signify his Royal thanks to Maj^r General Mathew and to the Corps who Performed so material a Service...

Source: "Orders, 1778-1782," *Sir Henry Clinton Papers*, Vol. 266, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan.



Detail from "Sketch of Stoney & Verplank's Points upon the North River, as taken possession of, and fortified by His Excellency Sir H: Clinton in June 1779"

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

Gen. Sir Henry Clinton's Campaign to Take and Hold Stony Point and Verplanck's Point, New York, May 21-Oct. 23, 1779

Excerpt of Letter No. 56 from Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Reporting Plans for Operation up Hudson River, New York, May 21, 1779

New York 21 May 1779

My Lord...

As I am unwilling to detain the packet it is impossible for me by this opportunity to inform your Lordship how I shall act in consequence of [Maj.] General [Edward] Matthew's and [Commodore] Sir G. [George] Collier's letters to me with the small force I can at present assemble. I shall immediately take the field, though there is as yet no forage upon the ground, not, however, with a view of attacking [Rebel Gen. George] M^r Washington in his present position but by threatening both sides of the North River to forward if possible his drawing off troops from either district. Should Washington, notwithstanding, detach to the southward, I probably even before the reinforcements arrive shall augment General Matthew's force [including the 42nd Regt.] to the amount Mentioned in your Lordship's dispatch; but as that measure would cripple my operations here, I shall not decide upon it without I have good reason to suppose it will ensure important consequences. I was so far from intending to reinforce General Matthew at this time that I depended upon his return to enable me to complete the move which I meditate.

Signed.

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution, Vol. XVII, Transcripts 1779*, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1977, p. 126 from TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretaries of State: America, Military dispatches, 1778-1779* at CO 5/97, f. 315.

General Order Issued to Prepare for Expedition up the Hudson River with the Light Infantry and British Grenadiers, New York, May 21, 1779

Head Quarters New York 21st May 1779...

The 17th Dragoons, the Light Infantry the British and Hessian Grenadiers, the 17th Foot, the Jagers, the Queen's Rangers, the Loyal American Regiment, Emmerich's Chasseurs, the Legion, Captain Ferguson's Detachment are to hold themselves in readiness to march on short warning.

Source and Note: "Orders, 1778-1782," *Sir Henry Clinton Papers*, Vol. 266, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan. This order prepares for the 1779 campaign up the Hudson River to draw Washington into an engagement. Because Clinton considered Washington's position too strong for his reduced army, he hoped to draw Washington out by attacking the posts at King's Ferry (Stony Point and Verplanck's Point).

Excerpts of Notebook of Capt. John Peebles, 42nd Grenadier Company, Record Preparations for Gen. Sir Henry Clinton's Expedition to Take Stony Point and Verplanck's Point, New York, May 22 – June 27, 1779

Saturday 22^d. hazy & wet fog the wind still about the S:E: q^r...An Expedition going forw^d. pf some force but which way is yet a secret...

Wednesday 26th. wet fog from S:E: orders for the Troops in Long Island &c^a. to move on the 27. 28. & 29 same by Hell Gate & some by Whitestone to form a Camp without the lines some where...

Friday 28th. the Grenad^{rs}. [including the 42nd Gren. Co.] march'd from Jamaica to Whitestone, where I joined them about nine, found them divided into three divisions Commanded by the three senior Cap^{ts}. Broomfield Lum, & Harris under [Lt.] Col: [John] York

Saturday 29th. The Yagers march'd from flushing & cross'd the east River from Lawrences point to Wilkin's point near Westchester the Grenad^{rs}. follow'd them & march'd to east Chester near which

they Encamp'd & found Reg^{ts}. in the ground to their left, the [Loyalist] Queens Rangers & [Loyalist British] Legion in front, [Maj.] Gen^l. [John] Vaughan Commands his Quarters in our rear –

Sunday 30th. The Troops from Virginia [Comm. Sir George Collier's Portsmouth raid including the 42nd Regt.] return'd & came up the North [or Hudson] River to Phillips's – in the Evening the troops that were Encamp'd marched to the left and Embark'd at Phillips on board of those Ships that came from Virginia & some small craft leaving their baggage behind in waggons got under way about midnight & sail'd up the River –

Monday 31st. landed in the forenoon at the point above Croton River Taller's point & march'd up the Albany road to invest a fort on Verplancks point – the 17th. & 63^d. & 64th. landed on the West side & took post on Rocky [Stony] point – we creep'd on & halted & turn'd back till dark & lay down on the high grounds Cortland Manor

Thursday 1st. June march'd at 3 AM up the Albany road past Verplancks point & halted for some time whilst from the other side of the River Rocky [Stony] point & from the gallies they threw shot & shells into the little fort which surrender's about noon...

The Troops on this Expedition are the 4 flank Companies of the Guards, the Light Infantry [including the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co.], British & Hessian Gren^{rs}. the 17th. 33^d. 42^d. 63^d. 64th. Reg^{ts}. some Yagers, [Hessian] Reg^t. Prince Charles, [Loyalist] Volunteers of Ireland, [Loyalist British] Legion [Col. Beverly Robinson] Robertsons Corps [Loyal American Regt.] & [Capt. Patrick] Fergusons –

Wednesday 2. June halted, making some works on Stoney point for a Post

Thursday 3^d. June most of the Troops on this side march'd in the morn^g. to Peekskill where they halted for some time & saw a few Rebels on horseback – The Light Infantry & Fergusons people detach'd from thence to make a sweep into the country...

Sunday the 27th. June 1779 the troops Embark'd at Kings ferry leaving the 17th, 33^d. Fergusons men, & the two 71st Gren^{rs}. Com^{ys}. & Robertson Corps, making in all about 1200, under the Command of L^t. Col: [James] Webster, for the defense of both sides of the River...

Monday the 28th. The wind came fair about noon, N:W: got under way & stood down the River most of the fleet a good way ahead, joined them at Phillips's about 4 when we all came to, landed in the Even^g. & march'd to our former ground the G^{rs}. near East Chester... Roy^l. Brigade encamp'd 'twixt Phillips & Valentine hill – viz^t. the 7th. 23^d. & 42^d. under Brigadier [Thomas] Stirling

Source and Note: NRS, *Peebles Journal* Entries for May 22-June 28, 1779, and as published in *John Peebles' American War*, Ed. Ira Gruber, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg (Pa), 1998, pp. 261-273. Capt. Peebles nicknamed Brig. Gen. Stirling's command as the "*Royal Brigade*" because it was made up of three Royal Regiments i.e. the Royal Fusiliers, the Royal Welch Fusiliers and the Royal Highlanders.



Detail of “*Destruction of the American Fleet at Penobscot Bay, 14 August 1779*”
by Dominic Serres, showing *HMS Raisonable* in the middle of the picture

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

**Letter from Commodore Sir George Collier to Philip Stephens, Secretary to the
Admiralty, Regarding His Return from Virginia and Movement up Hudson River
to King’s Ferry, 64-gun *HMS Raisonable* off New York, May 29 – June 14, 1779**

Rasionable, off New-York, June 14, 1779

Sir,

In my letter to you of yesterday, I mentioned the men-of-war and transports under my command arriving here on the 29th of last month from Virginia; you will be pleased to acquaint their lordships that immediately on my anchoring, the commander in chief of the army [Gen. Sir Henry Clinton] informed me of his intention to proceed on an expedition up the North river to reduce the works the rebels had thrown up at Verplanks, and Stoney points, for the security of the important pass of King’s ferry; the general expressing a wish for my being present, and to have the assistance of the troops returned from Virginia [including the 42nd Regt.], I directed the transports to move up Hudson’s river immediately, and accompanied them in the *Raisonable*, having also with me the [20-gun *HMS*] *Camilla*, [14-gun *HMS*] *Vulture* sloop, [5-gun *HM Galley*] *Cornwallis*, [*HM Galley*] *Crane*, and [*HM Galley*] *Philadelphia* galleys, and two gun-boats. We passed the chevaux de fries without any accident and came to with the *Raisonable*, about eight miles above Dobb’s ferry; I then went into the *Camilla*, and, proceeding on with the transports, anchored just out of random shot of fort laFayette, which the rebels had erected on Verplank’s point; Major General [John] Vaughan, with a part of the army [including the 42nd Regt., Light Infantry and Grenadiers], landing on the east side, and Sir Henry Clinton, with Major General [James] Pattison, and the remainder of the troops, on the opposite shore, about a mile and a half from Stoney Point, an excellent strong position where the rebels were erecting a block house, and fortifying the heights. On our approach they quitted their works, and set them on fire, escaping to the mountains. The troops soon took possession and with infinite fatigue and labour, heavy cannon were dragged up a steep precipice from a very bad landing place; the three galleys being advanced fired upon fort Lafayette, which was returned by the rebels. Major-General Pattison, of the artillery, had, with undefatigable perseverance erected two batteries (one of which was mortars) during the night, and at dawn of day began to play upon the rebel fort; the distance across the river being about one thousand yards, and was commanded by the high ground of Stoney Point: The cannonade continued all day, during which General Vaughan and his division marched round and completely invested the enemy’s post.

So soon as it was dark, I ordered the *Vulture* and *Cornwallis* galley, to pass the fort, and anchor above it, to prevent the escape of the rebels by water; this was done without damage and had the intended effect; the fire from the batteries and galleys being much more superior to that of the enemy, they beat the *Chamade*; the cannonading ceased; a flag of truce was sent to summon them; and they consented to surrender the fort, and their arms, and become prisoners of war. We found the fort a small compleate little work, with a block house, double ditch, chevaux de fries, and abbatis. His Majesty’s troops have taken possession of it and are fortifying the strong post of Stoney point, by which we are masters of King’s ferry, and oblige the rebels to make a detour of ninety miles across the mountains to communicate with the country east of Hudson’s river.

I am, Sir, &c.

GEO: COLLIER

Philip Stephens, Esq.

Source and Notes: *Edinburgh Advertiser*, July 16-20, 1779. The Hudson River, especially the lower portion, was often called the North River until the early 1900’s. A “*Chamade*” was a drum signal inviting the enemy to a parley.

Letter No. 57 from Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Reporting Hudson River Operations, May 30 – June 18, 1779

Head Quarters Philipsborough
June 18th 1779

My Lord,

I had the honor to transmit to Your Lordship in my Dispatches of the 16th. and 19th. Ultimo [May], forwarded by the Carteret Packet, Copies of Letters which I had just then received from Major General [Edward] Mathew and Commodore Sir George Collier, giving an Account of their Success in Chesapeak Bay, and I likewise enclosed a copy of my Instructions to Major General Mathew. I now send Copies of the Letters which I received afterwards from them, as well as of my Answers which, however, did not reach them before they had sailed from the Capes of Virginia. The whole fleet returned here on the 29th. of May.

Having ever been sensible of the importance of the Posts of Stony Point and Verplanks, the most direct & convenient communication between the Provinces on either side of Hudson's River, I have conceived no hour could be better chosen to possess myself of them than when the Enemy's Works should be nearly completed. In these opinions it has been made the first operation of the campaign. With the advantages derived from the Enemy's labour I have been able with little work and few materials to establish at this pass a post of tolerable security.

I shall not trouble your lordship with a detail of the Movements for this purpose but content myself with informing you that the troops destined for this service under Major General [John] Vaughan were joined after their embarkation by the Corps from Virginia [including the 42nd Regt.] which arrived in just time to proceed with him up the North River on the 30th of May. In the morning of the 31st Major General Vaughan landed with the gross of his command on the east side of the river eight miles below Verplanks whilst the 17th, 63^d and 64th Regiments with 100 Yagers, which I accompanied, proceeded to within three miles of Stony Point where they landed under Lieut.- Colonel [Henry] Johnston [17th Regt.]. On the ships coming in view the rebels evacuated their works which were in some forwardness and set fire to a large blockhouse. As the troops approached to take possession, they made some show of resistance by drawing up upon the hills but did not wait a conflict.

Sir George Collier favoured the expedition with the assistance of the galleys and gunboats of the fleet under his own direction. These exchanged some shot with Fort la Fayette, a small but complete work on the east side of the river, whilst the troops were possessing themselves of the heights of Stony Point which commanded it.

In the night the artillery which I found necessary was landed and Major General [James] Pattison assumed the command. His exertions and good arrangements, seconded by the cheerful labour of the troops, gave me the satisfaction of seeing a battery of cannon and mortars opened at 5 the next morning on the summit of this difficult rock. Their effect was soon perceived as well as that of the galleys. General Vaughan appearing at this time in the rear of the fort prevented the retreat which the Enemy were concerning. Under these circumstances they delivered themselves into our hands upon the terms of humane treatment which I promised them.

The fort mounted four pieces of artillery and the garrison consisted of one captain, three lieutenants, a surgeon's mate and seventy privates.

I have much satisfaction in acquainting your lordship that this little success was effected without the loss of a single man and that only one Yager was wounded on the occasion. Your Lordship will receive by this opportunity a state and distribution of the troops under my command of the 15th instant

Signed.

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution, Vol. XVII, Transcripts 1779*, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1977, pp. 144-146 from TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1779* at CO 5/98, p.1.

Letter No. 58 from Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Reporting Operations up the Hudson River, June 18, 1779

Philipsborough 18 June 1779

My Lord,

In my letter of the [21st] ultimo [May] I had the honour to acquaint your lordship that I should by indirect Movements endeavour to stir [Rebel Gen. George] M^r Washington. To effect it there appeared to me only one method, the seizing the forts of Verplanks and Stony Point which form the entrance of the Highlands. I have long been sensible of the importance of that post and ever designed to possess myself of it at the hour when the rebels should have nearly completed their works. It would have required materials we could not readily have provided, besides much time, much labour, and a considerable Detachment to have erected them ourselves during the winter.

Your lordship will observe by letter N^o. 57 that we have succeeded in establishing ourselves at this pass. Any longer delay would have rendered the undertaking very difficult.

I have not been without hope that M^r Washington would have risked something to recover it and that the consequences might be a general action on ground disadvantageous to him. In this view a considerable Corps has been left there, and I have taken with the remainder of my little Army a central position within twenty-four hours of that post, of Staten Island, New York, and Long Island.

Washington has assembled his Army which consists of eight thousand Men and has placed himself behind the mountains. He seems to suspect that my intentions are to attack the forts at West Point and has garrisoned them with three thousand Men. The same number occupied the east side of the river but on our approach retired higher up. Had the expected succours arrived in time, I could possibly have availed myself with some success of the present situation of the Enemy. I will persuade myself no unnecessary delays have happened on the other side of the Atlantic; those of the passage are unavoidable. I need not assure your Lordship that when they arrive every exertion which I shall then think myself capable of shall be made. In the meantime, unless M^r Washington should determine to attack my post on the North River or otherwise give occasion to any event, I shall probably do little more than annoy the coast of Connecticut and observe how far it may engage his attention to that province or if it will induce him to pass the North River.

But I hope, my Lord, you will excuse my repeating that with an Army not half of that acting in June 1777 under [Gen.] Sir William Howe, whilst that commanded by M^r Washington is full as strong if not more so than at that period, nothing ought to be expected from me.

Signed.

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution, Vol. XVII, Transcripts 1779*, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1977, p. 146 from TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1779* at CO 5/98, f. 25.

Journal of Capt. Archibald Robertson, Deputy Quarter Master Gen., Describes Light Infantry and Grenadier Role in British Capture of Stony Point and Verplanck's Point, New York, May 28-June 4, 1779

28th The following Troops were assembled near King's Bridge - (Viz^l.) Light Infantry, British and Hessian Grenadiers, 7th, 17th, 23^d, 33^d, 63^d, and 64th Regiments, Fergusson's Corps, 17th Dragoons, Legion, Queen's Rangers, Regiment of Bosse, and Robinson's provincials, and Jager's mounted and Dismounted. Went with [Quarter Master Gen.] Sir William [Erskine] to Cortlandts house.

29th The Above Corps were Encamped from Pell's Bridge, East Chester, to the North River.

[Maj.] General [Edward] Matthew's Corps [Including the 42nd Regt.] return'd to New York from Virginia and proceeded up the North River to Phillip's House. Other Transports and Boats were ready to

Receive the Following corps, Light Infantry, British and Hessian Grenadiers, 17th, 63^d, 33^d, 64th, 300 Yagers, Dismounted Legion, Ferguson's Corps, and Robinson's provincials.

30th In the Evening they embarkd at Phillips's and we proceeded up the River to taken possession of King's Ferry. The 17th, 63^d, and 64th, and 100 Yagers, in Small Craft proceeded to Stoney Point. The Rest of the Corps under [Maj.] General [John] Vaughan landed about 11 Forenoon.

31st at Tellers Point and proceeded to the high grounds about ½ way to Verplank's Point, where they halted for the night. About 2 o'clock Stoney Point was taken possession of with out any Opposition, The Rebels having burnt A Block house that was not quite finished before we Landed. We then Began to get up some Artillery to fire upon a small Fort the Rebels had on Verplank's Point, about 1400 Yds. Distant.

June 1st General Vaughan's Corps came upon Verplank's Point about 1. The small post left by the Rebels of a Captain and about 70 men were made Prisoners of War. The Rebels conceive [Gen.] Sir Henry [Clinton] intends to Attack West Point, which appears an important object to them.

3^d Sir Henry with a strong Corps reconnoitred Peak's Kill and made a Show with Transports and Boats as if his intention was to go up to West Point. Return'd to Camp in the Evening.

4th General Matthew's Corps embark'd and return'd to Phillips's house and were encampd.

Rebels said to have about 2,000 men in West Point and 2000 with McDougal between Fish Kill and Peak's Kill.

5th [Rebel] General [George] Washington pass'd thro' Pompton from his Camp at Morris Town with 5,000 men, to succour West Point.

Sir Henry return'd to Phillips's House. General Vaughan left to Command at King's Ferry...

28th General Vaughan Arrived at Philipss with the Light Infantry, British and Hessian Grenadiers, 63^d, 64th, Yagers, and Dismounted Legion, leaving Lieutenant Colonel [James] Webster [33rd Regt.] to Command at King's Ferry with the 17th and 33^d, 2 Companys of 71st Grenadiers, Ferguson's Corps.

Source: *Archibald Robertson, Lieutenant-General Royal Engineers, His Diaries and Sketches in America*, Ed. Harry Miller Lydenberg, New York Public Library, New York, pp. 193-194 and 196.

Rebel Account of British Capture of Stony Point and Verplanck's Point, New York, May 30 – June 1, 1779

FISHKILL, JUNE 3.

THE latter end of last week, a number of British vessels made their appearance in the North river; they consist of 13 ships, 3 brigs, 4 topsail schooners, 3 gallies, 6 topsail sloops, about 20 smaller vessels, and a great number of flat bottomed boats.

Last Lords day (31st ult.) [May 31, 1779] 1500 men landed eight miles below Peck's Kill, on Taller's point, consisting of British and Hessian grenadiers, light infantry [including the 42nd Light Infantry and Grenadier Companies], [Loyalist] volunteers of Ireland, and Yagers. On Monday the 1st instant, the enemy landed a party of the west side of the river, where they burnt some houses, and opened two small batteries, from which they through some shells, and cannonaded for de la Fayette [Verplanck's Point] across the river, all that day; two gallies kept up a severe fire on the fort at the same time. They continued their firing till eleven o'clock on Tuesday forenoon; meanwhile their army marched from Taller's to Ver Plank's point, on which the fort stands; by a flag they demanded a surrender; the parley continued two hours: Capt. Armstrong thought fir to surrender. [Rebel Maj.] Gen [Alexander] M'Dougall has not yet received a justifiable reason why the fort was given up. This little fort was built on purpose to secure King's ferry, from the insults of the enemy's vessels, which frequently had interrupted our boats from crossing: It was small, and would contain with conveniency, about a company of men; the redoubts were strong, and covered a barbette battery, mounting 3 pieces of cannon: We had in the barbette a company of artillery; they were all drawn off but a serjeant, a corporal and 12 privates: In the redoubt were a Captain, two subalterns, three serjeants, and 44 rank and file, they had provision and water to serve them 30 days. – Wednesday evening, the wind now preventing the shipping from advancing from

Fort Clinton on West Point; which we suppose, is the enemy's main object: The fort is now in tolerable order, well provided, and the men in fine spirits; the militia are coming in fast, and every appearance is promising; the enemy have come out in force, and it is said, are from 7 to 10,000 men. – Their troops from their late excursion to Virginia [including the 42nd Regt.], returned last Thursday, and without landing at New York pushed up the river.

Thursday morning, four o'clock, we learn that the enemy are in motion, as if they meant to come up the east side of the river."

Source: *Virginia Gazette*, (Dixon and Nicolson), June 19, 1779, p. 2.

**Rebel Account of Troops from Virginia Raid Returning to New York after
Capture of Stony Point and Verplanck's Point, New York, May 30 – June 1, 1779.**

FISH-KILL, JUNE 10

Last Tuesday night, six ships came up to King's Ferry; the enemy have advanced about two miles from the ferry, and are fortifying at Stony-Point, on the west side of the river, and have occupied the pass from Haverstraw to the Forest of Dean; they have advanced on the east side within about two miles of Peek's-Kill, and are cutting timber for block houses...The following is an exact account of the enemy's force at King's ferry, &c. 19 Companies of grenadiers, 19 ditto light infantry...Returned to New York, being the fatigued troops from Virginia. 42d Regiment, [Loyalist] Irish Volunteers; Part of the King's guards...

Source: *Connecticut Courant*, June 15, 1779.

**General Order for the Units Returning from the Portsmouth, Virginia Raid, Including
the 42nd Regt., to be Ready to Disembark, Verplank's Point, New York, June 3 – 4, 1779**

Head Quarters Verplanks Point, 3^d June 1779...

The flank Companies of the Guards, the 42^d Regim^t, the [Hessian] reg^t of Prince Charles, and the [Loyalist] Volunteers of Ireland are to hold themselves in readiness to Embark.

The other Corps will send to new york for such necessities as they may be in want of & vessels shall be allotted for that purpose on application to Captain Laird.

Head Quarters Verplanks Point, 4th June 1779...

The flank Companies of the Guards, the 42^d Reg^t, the Regiment Prince Charles and Volunteers of Ireland will Embark at 4 o'Clock this afternoon, they will Receive their Provisions on Board their Transports...

Source: "Orders, 1778-1782," *Sir Henry Clinton Papers*, Vol. 266, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan.



Reproduction "Royal Brigade" (7th, 23rd and 42nd Regts.) Uniform Buttons

**General Orders Appointing Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling, 42nd Regt., to be Brigadier General in
America and Formation and Disbanding of "The Royal Brigade," Phillipsburg, New York,
June 16 and 30, 1777**

Head Quarters New York 16th June 1779...

The Commander in Chief is pleased to appoint Colo^s [Capt. and Lt. Col. Arthur George] Martin [2nd Guards Regt.], [Thomas] Stirling [42nd Regt.] and [Capt. and Lt. Col. George] Garth [1st Guards Regt.], to act as Brigadier Gen^s 'till further orders. Brig^r Gen^l Stirling will take command of the 3 British Regiments of Infantry at Phillipsburg 'till further orders...

Head Quarters New York 30th June 1779...

The 7th & 23^d Regiments are to receive there future orders thro Brig^r Gen^l [George] Garth, and the 63^d & 64th Regiments are to put themselves under the command of Brig^r General [Thomas] Stirling 'till further Orders.

Source and Note: "Orders, 1778-1782," *Sir Henry Clinton Papers*, Vol. 266, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan. Guards Regiment company commanders were listed as Capt. and Lt. Col. indicating their regimental and army rank. According to Capt. Peebles, Brig. Gen. Stirling's brigade was nicknamed "*The Royal Brigade*" because it was made up of three royal regiments, the 7th (Royal Fusiliers), 23rd (Royal Welsh Fusiliers) and 42nd (Royal Highland).



Stony Point, Nov. 2014

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons by Pi3.124

Excerpt of Letter No. 60 from Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Reporting the Rebel Capture and British Retaking of Stony Point, with the 42nd Regt., New York, July 16 – 25, 1779

Dobbs Ferry 25 July, 1779

My Lord,

In my dispatch N^o. 57 I had the honour to inform your lordship of my having taken possession of Verplanks and Stoney Point upon the North River. Having fortified and garrisoned those posts, I found myself prevented from prosecuting the advantages which those acquisitions offered to me by the want of that reinforcement which I had flattered myself would early have given me the power of acting seriously. Some measures, however, tending towards my general plan lay still within the compass of my force and those I pursued, though not without inconvenience.

The expedition of Major General [William] Tryon in the [Long Island] Sound was a measure subservient to my main design. To secure him in his operations and at the same time to be at hand to take

advantage of his success, I withdrew from Verplanks all the troops which were not destined for the garrison and took post with them at Byram and Mamaroneck on the 9th.

On the night of the 15th instant the Enemy suddenly assaulted and carried the lines at Stoney Point. The greater part of the garrison, consisting of the 17th Regiment of foot, the Grenadier Company of the 71st [Highland] Regiment, a company of the Loyal Americans, and a small Detachment of the Royal Artillery, under the command of Lieu^t Colonel [Henry] Johnson of the 17th Regiment, were either killed or taken. I have not yet been able to procure accounts sufficiently satisfactory to form a decisive judgment upon this accident. I have the honour to enclose Lieu^t.-Colonel Johnson's account as likewise that published by the rebels.

The Enemy immediately began a heavy cannonade with our guns from Stoney Point upon Lieu^t. Colonel [James] Webster [33rd Regt.] who commanded at Verplanks, with the 33^d Regiment, Loyal Americans, and Detachments from the Royal Artillery and from the 71st Regiment. At the same time Lieu^t. Colonel Webster was informed that a considerable force was in his rear who, if they did not mean to attack him from that quarter, at least would make his retreat, should he be driven to that extremity, very difficult.

Upon the first intelligence I received of this matter I ordered the Army to advance to Dobbs Ferry, pushing forward the cavalry and some light troops to the banks of the Croton River to awe the Enemy in any attempt by land against Verplanks.

Brigadier General [Thomas] Stirling [Lt. Col., 42nd Regt.] was in the meantime embarked with the 42^d, 63^d, and 64th Regiments for the relief of Verplanks or the recovery of Stoney Point. The northerly winds, rather uncommon at this season, opposed Brigadier General Stirling's progress till the 19th, when upon his arriving within sight of Stoney Point the Enemy abandoned it with precipitation and some circumstances of disgrace.

Lieu^t Colonel Webster, who had with great firmness supported the heavy fire of the Enemy, had not during the whole time deigned to return a single shot, being sensible that it would have been of no material effect. The Enemy, possibly supposing from this circumstance that he might have no heavy cannon, brought down a galley to carry off from Stoney Point part of the artillery which would have found difficulty in retiring through the roads of that country. As soon as the cannon were aboard the galley Lieu^t.-Colonel Webster turned upon her an 18-pounder, the only piece of heavy ordnance he had, which raked her with such effect that to prevent her sinking the crew ran her ashore and there set fire to her. Such of the cannon as remained upon Stoney Point were buried or thrown into the river by the Enemy who immediately made a most precipitate retreat.

Having been apprehensive that the delay occasioned by the contrary wind might have given the Enemy time to collect a force at the Points too powerful for Brigadier General Stirling, and being anxious that no step should be omitted for the security of Verplanks and recovery of Stoney Point, I had embarked with the Light Infantry and joined General Stirling in Haverstraw Bay. My whole Army being within my reach, I had some hopes of being able to betray [Rebel Gen. George] M^r Washington into an engagement for the possession of Stoney Point. Possibly he suspected my view and declined adventuring any measure which might bring on an action in a country unfavourable to him.

Brigadier General Stirling is now at Stoney Point with five Battalions repairing the works which are a good deal damaged...

Signed.

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution, Vol. XVII, Transcripts 1779*, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1977, pp. 168-170 from TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1779* at CO 5/98, f. 103. This report was also published in *Edinburgh Advertiser*, Oct. 8- 12, 1779

**Excerpts of Notebook of Capt. John Peebles, 42nd Grenadier Company,
Record Expedition to Retake and Hold Stony Point, New York,
July 16 - 20, Aug. 3 and Sept. 24, 1779**

Friday 16th. July moderate, wind NW hear'd a good deal of Cannon this morn^g. before & after day light, towards Verplanks point; And in the Even^g. we had the disagreeable News that Stony Point was taken by Assault on Thursday Night; and that Verplanks point was surrounded by the Rebels

Saturday 17th. [Maj.] Gen^l. [John] Vaughans orders the over night for moving in the morn^g. which was accordingly done without any hurry, or the least appearance of the Enemy; marching in that ord^r which the line always makes in retiring – at east Chester the Troops halted & form'd, for the Execution of two Gr^{rs}. of the 38th. for desertion, but as one was to be pardon'd, they drew lots, & he who drew the fatal billet was executed in sight if y^e. Army at Noon – The troops then moved on & took possession of their former ground with orders not to stir out of Camp... [Brig. Gen. Thomas] Stirlings Brigade [42nd, 63rd and 64th Regts.] Embark'd to go up the River with the Com^r. in Chief [Gen. Sir Henry Clinton] to see what can be done for the Relief of Verplanks point the wind contrary all day... [Lt.] Col: [James] Webster [33rd Regt.] still holds out tho' surrounded by great numbers, & his retreat cut off, a heavy fire from Stony point, but only one man wound^d...

Sunday 18 July...

The Com^r. in Chief gone up the River in the afternoon with the tide, to direct those Troops that are on the water, Vi^z Stirlings Brigade & the Light Infantry [including the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co.], the wind Contrary – a fire from Stony point on Verplanks in the afternoon...

Monday 19th. July... we hear the Rebels have evacuated Stonny Point...

Tuesday 20th. July a good deal of rain in the Night morn^g. foggy...

The Light Infantry came down in the Evening from Stony Point which place they left early this Morn^g.

Stirlings Brigade left up the River but had not disembark'd –

Tuesday 3^d [Aug.]... Gen^l. Stirlings Brigade still at work on Stony Point & the Rebels looking at y^m. [them] The Com^r. in Chief & [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis has been up there t'other day...

Thursday 23^d. [Sept.]...the 42^d. continues at Stony P^t...

Source: NRS, *Peebles Journal* Entries for July 16 – 20, Aug. 3 1779 and Sept. 24 and as published in *John Peebles' American War*, Ed. Ira Gruber, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg (Pa), 1998, pp. 267-280, 284-285 and 294.

Hessian Jäger Capt. Johann Ewald's Account of the 42nd Highlanders Reacting to Rebel Brig. Gen. Anthony Wayne's Capture of Stony Point, New York, July 16 and 21, 1779

The 16th. Last night a violent cannonade was heard in the direction of Verplanck's Point and Stony Point. Around midday a boat arrived at Philipse's wharf with the news that [Lt.] Colonel [Henry] Johnson [17th Regt.] had been surprised on Stony Point by the Americans, and that from this work the enemy had bombarded the one on Verplanck's Point. Hereupon, the Commander in Chief [Gen. Sir Henry Clinton] embarked at once at Philipse's wharf with the 42^d, 63^d, and 64th regiments and sailed up the Hudson to save Verplanck's Point...

The 21st. After they had transported all the captured guns and destroyed the work, the Americans abandoned Stony Point. The Commander in Chief had landed Colonel [Brig. Gen. Thomas] Stirling with the 42^d, 63^d, and 64th regiments on Stony Point and taken possession of the work. [Rebel] General [George] Washington and his army have approached with an hour of Stony Point on order to support any undertaking.

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. 172.

Letter from Maj. of Brigade George Benson to Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Providing Lt. Col. James Webster's Proposed Method of Evacuation of Verplanck's Point, New York, July 18, 1779

Verplanks Point July 18th. 1779

Eleven oClock in the forenoon

It is Col: Webster's Opinion that he can effect his retreat in a handsome Manner provided he is assisted with a sufficient Number of Boats, with Gallies Gun Boats &c to cover the Garrison in their Reembarkation; It is also his opinion that the Boats should not appear to approach his point till Dark but that Galleys towards the End of the Flood Tide should approach within a Mile of Stoney point so as to be fully as far South as the landing Place Southward of the Stone House at Verplank's point. The Boats must at all Events be at the Above Landing under the Stone house at ten o'Clock to Night at farthest so as to have at least an Hours Ebb in order to give him Time to get under the Protection of the Gallies — As the Enemy have their advanc'd Posts now opposite to his advanced Blockhouse it is Col: Webster's Opinion that he can Effect his Retreat with more Ease this way than by [Brig.] Gen^l. [Thomas] Stirling's landing to Attack.

G.Benson
Maj^r. of Brigade

Source: *Sir Henry Clinton Papers* 63:17, W. L. Clements Library, Univ. of Mich.

**Embarkation Return Listing 42nd Lt. Infantry and Grenadiers, Verplanck's Point,
New York, June 27, 1779**

Corps Embarked agreeable to His Excellency Sir Henry Clinton's Orders
Verplancks Point 27th June 1779

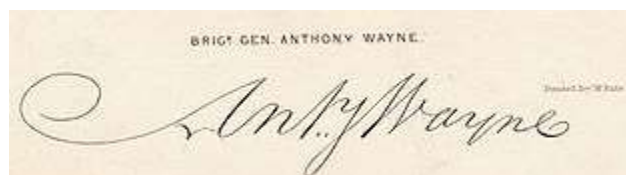
Light Infantry
British Grenadiers
63rd
64th
Hessian Grenadiers
Yagers
Legion

Corps left at Verplancks & Stony Points, under the Command of L^t. Co^l. Webster 33rd Reg^t.

Detachm ^t . of Artillery under the Command of Capt ⁿ . Traill	
17 th Reg ^t .	}
33 rd Reg ^t .	}
Ferguson's Corps	} 1075 exclusive of Artillery
2 Companies 71 st Grena ^{ds} .	}
Loy ^l . Amer ⁿ . Regim ^t .	}...

[signed] J [John]: Vaughan
Major Gen^l.

Source and Note: *Sir Henry Clinton Papers* 62: 5, W. L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan. Transcribed by Todd Braisted. This return is confusing in that it mentions corps left at Stoney Point, but does not mention the 42nd Regt. which remained at Stony Point until Sept. 1779.



Signature of Rebel Brig. Gen. Anthony Wayne

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from *Lib. of Congress National Digital Library Program*

**Journal of Capt. Archibald Robertson, Dep. Quarter Master Gen., Describes
42nd Regt. Role in the Recapture of Rebel Post, Stoney Point, New York, July 16 – 20, 1779**

16th This morning Major [of Brigade George] Benson Arrived at York with an Account of the Rebels having taken Stoney Point at 12 o'clock last night. They were commanded by [Rebel Brig.] General [Anthony] Wayne. [Lt.] Colonel [Henry] Johnson [17th Regt.] and most of the Garrison taken Prisoners. 4 Flank Company Guards, 54th, Landgrave's, and Fannings landed at Frog's Neck from [Maj.] General [William] Tryon's Expedition.

This Evening I left York with The Commander in chief [Gen. Sir Henry Clinton] and got to Philips's about 1 morning 17th.

17th Early the 42^d, 63^d, and 64th were embark'd in Transports at Philips's under [Brig.] General [Thomas] Stirling [Lt. Col., 42nd Regt.]. [Sir Henry Clinton] tried to push them up the River, But the Wind was so Violent and Contrary that the ships could make no way. Sir Henry return'd to Philips's.

18th At Day Break The Army march'd in Two Columns from the Camp at Valentines hill to Daubb's Ferry. The Right Column, Light Infantry, British and Hessian Grenadiers. march'd the saw mill Road.

The Left Column, 4 Companys of Guards, 7th, 23^d, and 54th Regiments, [Hessian] Regiments of Landgrave, Prince Charles, and Bose, [Loyalist] Fannings Corps, [Loyalist] Volunteers of Ireland, Baggage, Park of Artillery, Provision Train, and Emerich's Corps. The Light Infantry embark'd in Ships whenever they got to Daubb's Ferry and got under way. General Stirlings Division got to Haverstraw Bay. I went after the Army were placed on Board the [20-gun *HMS*] Daphne Frigate with Sir Henry. The Appearance of the Shipping getting so near aided by a Demonstration made by All the Cavalry and Infantry of the 17th Dragoons, Queens Rangers, and Legion, who had march'd the 17th to the Vicinity of Tarry Town and from thence to the Bank of Croton, making Large Fires, Determin'd the Rebels to Abandon any Attack on Verplank's Point and to set fire to whatever would burn on Stoney Point about 11 at night. They had Endeavoured this Evening to put some Guns on Board a large Galley, but Our Guns from Verplank's hit so often that She was sunk close in shore.

[July] 19th by Day Break Sir Henry got up to Haverstraw Bay. Found Stoney Point Abandoned. About 3 Afternoon The Light Infantry were landed to Cover the taking off of the Guns from the Rebel Galley and those left by the Rebels. Light Infantry Embark'd at night.

20th went on Shore at Verplancks with Sir Henry who came to a determination to reformatify Stoney Point for 300 men. The Troops left to Execute it were 42^d, 63^d, and 64th. I proposed a month to have every thing Complete, [Alexander] Mercer 5 or 6 weeks, then Capt. [Patrick] Ferguson [70th Regt.] undertook to finish it in 14 days then got 8 days more added, then the General sent him up from Camp Fanning's corps, so that on the whole 3 weeks with that Addition of men is more time than I proposed.

Source: Archibald Robertson, Lieutenant-General Royal Engineers, His Diaries and Sketches in America, Ed. Harry Miller Lydenberg, New York Public Library, New York, pp. 199-200.

**General Orders for Foraging Expedition with the Light Infantry and British Grenadiers,
Phillipsburg, New York, July 17, 1779**

Head Quarters Phillipsburgh 17th July 1779

The Army will make a General Forage tomorrow & will march at day break tomorrow in two Columns

The right Column to consist of the Light Infantry [with the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co.], British Grenadiers [with the 42nd Gren. Co.], two Batt^{ns} Hessian Grenadiers, Baggage and 3^d Battⁿ Hessian Grenadiers.

The Left Column to consist of the Jagers, flank Companies of the Guards, Park of Artillery, 7th, 23^d, 54th British, The Hessian Regiments Landgrave, Prince Charles & Bose, The King's American

Regim^t, Volunteers of Ireland, Bagg^e and Provision Train. The column to be closed by Emerichs Chasseurs...

Source: "Orders, 1778-1782," *Sir Henry Clinton Papers*, Vol. 266, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan.

**News Account of the Occupation of Stony Point, New York by
Brig. Gen. Stirling's Brigade, New York, July 24, 1779**

New-York, July 24...

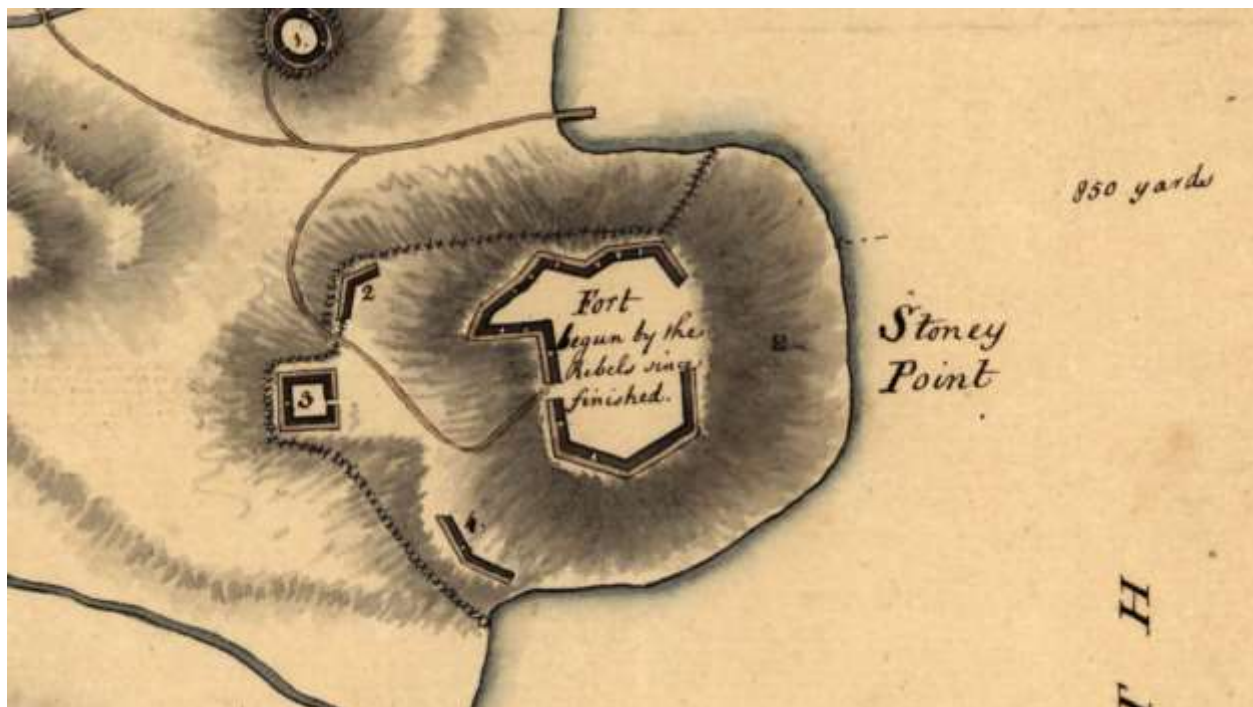
The Fort at Stoney Point is garrisoned by the Brigade of General [Thomas] Stirling. The gentlemen in the Engineers department are employed in repairing the works partly destroyed by the Rebels.

Source: *Royal Gazette* (New York), July 24, 1779.

**Excerpts of Letter from Lt. Col. Hon. Charles Stuart, 26th Regt., to his Father the Earl of Bute,
Describing the Post at Stony Point, New York, July 1779**

...One Brigade was left under [Brig.] Gen. [Thomas] Sterling to fortify Stoney Point, and as Mercer the Engineer had fallen into disgrace, one Capt. [Patrick] Ferguson, a strange adventurer, tho' a man of some genius, had undertaken to make that post formidable in short time...

Source: *New Records of the American Revolution*, Sir Charles Stuart, L. K. Ashnor, London, 1927, p. 87. Ferguson is the same officer who commanded the Loyalist troops in the Battle of King's Mountain, S.C., Oct. 1780.



Detail of "Sketch of Stoney & Verplank's Points upon the North River, as taken possession of, and fortified by His Excellency Sir H: Clinton in June 1779."

Map Source: Lib. of Congress, Geography and Map. Div.

**Testimony of Maj. Charles Graham, Commanding, 42nd or Royal
Highland Regt., at Court-Martial of Lt. Col. Henry Johnson, 17th Regt.,
Regarding Fortifications of Stony Point, New York, July 21- Oct. 23, 1779,**

...Major Charles Graham of the 42nd Reg^t of Foot, being duly sworn, was Examined [Jan. 2, 1781].

Q. By L^t. Col. [Henry] Johnson [17th Regt.] As You Commanded at Stoney Point after that Post was repossessed by the British Troops, can you from your knowledge of the Ground & Works say, Whether the Plan now produced before the Court is a just One?

A. I can't possibly say that it is a just Plan, but it appears as exact a representation of the Works thrown up as I can recollect; there were some trous de Loups under the Block House at the barrier on the left of the Works, which I do not Observe to be inserted in the Plan.

Q. Can you describe the State of the Works, as laid down in the Plan from the Retaking Possession of Stoney point to the time of your quitting it?

A. Brig^r. Gen^l. [Thomas] Sterling's Brigade Retook Possession of Stoney Point about the 21st or 22^d of July & found the Works dismantled & the Abbatis torn up, & the Platforms destroyed; that we immediately began upon the defence of the Post, first by carrying as Abbatis round the Table of the Hill, & then erecting the enclosed Work, with Six Block Houses, as delineated in the Plan; that the Work upon the Table of the Hill being enclosed, a Block house was built in front upon a Know where there had latterly been a fleche.

Q. What time did it take to enclose the Work before the Block House in front was began?

A. I cannot exactly recollect; but I know that it was enclosed before Brig^r Gen^l. Sterling left the Post [Sept 8-9], which was in about Six or Seven Weeks afterwards, when I was left to Command there.

Q. What Number of Men were left at Stoney Point under your Command, upon Gen^l. Sterling & his Brigade leaving it?

A. Including Pioneers & Batteaux Men (to whom we gave Arms from the Sick of the Garrison, as also Assigned Alarm Posts) about 1200 Men, between the Posts of Stoney & Verplank's Point; the Number at the former was sometimes varied, but generally consisted of 5 or 600 Men.

Source and Notes: TNA, Court of Inquiry of Lt. Col. Henry Johnston, 17th Regt., *Judge Advocate General's Office: Court Martial Proceedings* at WO 71/93, pp. 1-137 as transcribed in *The Enterprise in Contemplation: the Midnight Assault of Stony Point*, Don Loprieno, Heritage Books, Berwyn Heights, MD, 2004, pp. 301-302. Lt. Col. Henry Johnston, 17th Regt. was in command of the Post at Stony Point when it was taken in a night attack by forces under the command of Brig. Gen. Anthony Wayne on the night of July 15-16, 1779. Brig. Gen. Thomas Stirling was also the Lt. Col. of the 42nd Highlanders. The 42nd Highlanders were part of the garrison of Stony Point from July 19-Oct. 23, 1779. (Note per Merriam-Webster Dictionary: *Trou de loup*: a pit in the form of an inverted cone or pyramid having a pointed stake in the middle and forming one of a group constructed as an obstacle to the movements of an enemy. Plural: *Trous de loup*. Literally: "wolf hole.")

Account of Occupation of Stony Point, New York, by Sgt. Henry Nase, Loyalist King's American Regt., July 24 – Oct. 21, 1779

[July] 24th part of the Reg^t was ordered to Stony Point, and the Rebels were as plenty in front of the Lines as beasts – [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis comes to Stony Point & the [King's American] Reg^t was Ordered to Verplanks Point...

16th Sept^r the Outworks of Verplanks Point were leveled...

20th the troops went all to Stony Point & the Guards were Relev'd every Four days, by Detachments from Different Corps...

22^d Sept^r A Large Body of rebels Appeared Before the Lines, but a Shot from the fort wounded M^r.

[Rebel Brig. Gen. Anthony] Wayne in the foot...

20th Oct^r the Reg^t came on Board the Same Ship, the Same day, the Troops Evacuate both Posts, on Hudsons River –

21st Oct^r we Anchor'd of Spiten Divil...

Source: "Diary of Henry Nase, King's American Regiment," *Nase Family Papers*, New Brunswick Museum, 1991, pp. 6-7. Transcribed by Todd Braisted.

**Excerpt of Letter No. 64 from Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Commander-in-Chief,
North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department,
Reporting American Intentions on the Hudson River, New York, July 28, 1779**

No. 64

Head Quarters New York
July 28th 1779

My Lord...

If I can believe Reports [Rebel Gen. George] Washington seems inclined to trye for the Posts at Stony Point and Verplanks. But as he did not make any vigorous Attempt on the latter whilst his Success against the former gave him every Advantage, I cannot conceive that he will now undertake it. He is certainly assembling all the Force he can in the Mountains, and if he means to make an Effort it will be against those Posts on the sailing of the Commodore. His Departure will leave us with only one 20 Gun Ship and 2 Sloops, enough to cover us from anything the Rebels can bring down but not sufficient to give us Assistance should rapid Movements by Water and Disembarkation be required; neither indeed will it Secure us from danger from without – but the Commodore [Sir George Collier] thinks any attempt of that Nature highly improbable...

I have the Honor to be with the greatest Respect

Your Lordship's Most Obedient & Most humble Servant
H Clinton...

Right Honorable Lord George Germain

Source: Source: *Records of the British Colonial Office Class 5, Part 5: The American Revolution, 1772-1784*, Ed. Randolph Boehm, University Publications Inc., Frederick, MD, 1972, pp. 338-341 from TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1779* at CO 5/98, pp. 379-381.

News Account of Rebel Attack on Pickets, Stony Point, New York, Aug. 7, 1779

Last Saturday night a detachment from [Rebel Gen. George] Mr. Washington's army attempted a Coup de main upon [Brig.] General [Thomas] Stirling's picquet at Stoney Point, but their intentions were instantly counteracted by the General's dispositions, and they retired...

Source and Note: *Royal Gazette* (New York), Aug. 14, 1779. Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling, 42nd Regt., was appointed a Brig. General in America on June 15, 1779.

**Excerpts of Letter No. 68 from Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to
Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Discussing His Reasons
for Evacuating Stony Point and Verplanck's Point, New York, Aug. 21, 1779**

21 August New York

My Lord...

Having seized on the stations of Verplanks and Stoney Point on the Hudson's River with a view to offensive operations in this country, their principal importance must cease when that design is discarded, and as, without great reinforcements which we cannot expect, nothing of consequence can be carried on again in this quarter, I shall probably abandon those posts, not having troops sufficient without hazard and difficulty to maintain them through the winter...

Signed

Source: *DOAR, Volume XVII, Transcripts 1779*, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1977, pp. 189-191 from TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1779* at CO 5/98, f. 206.



Detail from “Denyse’s Ferry, the first place at which the Hessians and British landed on Long Island Aug. 22nd 1776 Now Fort Hamilton”

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from *Emmet Collection of Manuscripts Etc. Relating to American History. / The generals of the American Revolution. / Volume 3: William Alexander, Earl of Stirling.*

Excerpt of Notebook of Capt. John Peebles Records the Relocation of the 42nd Lt. Infantry Company and 42nd Grenadier Company, Denyse’s Ferry, Bedford and Brooklyn, Long Island, New York, Aug. 24 – 26 and Sept. 8, 1779

Tuesday 24th. Aug^t. cloudy & cool wind from the northward – The Light Infantry Battalion cross’d over to Long Island this morn^g. they are going to take up ground near Denys’s ferry probably on account of the mens health who were growing very sickly on that wet swampy ground above Horns hook...

Thursday 26th. cool No: westward...the Troops to land on Long Island & encamp at Bedford Bushwick &c^a...

Wednesday 8th. Sept^r. warm S:W... The Light Infantry come to Brooklyn works making there...

Source and Note: NRS, *Peebles Journal* Entry for Aug. 24-26 and Sept. 8, 1779, and as published in *John Peebles’ American War*, Ed. Ira Gruber, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg (Pa), 1998, pp. 288-289 and 291. The 42nd Regt. was still at Stony Point, New York.

General Order Announces Arrival of Recruits for the 42nd Highlanders who Were Rejected by Brig. Gen. Thomas Stirling and Exchanged, New York, Aug. 25 and 30 and Sept. 1, 5 and 19, 1779

Head Quarters New York 25 August 1779...

The British regiments in this District will send for their recruits as soon as possible applying for Boats thro’ the Adjutant Gen^s Office where they will likewise receive Information, about what Transport their Men are Embarked.

The Recruits belonging to the British Reg^{ts} not immediately upon the spot /viz 17th, 22^d, 33^d, 38th, 42^d, 43^d, 63^d, and 64th / will be landed as soon as boats can be attached for the purpose. They are to be stationed ‘till further orders at Bushwick, Long Island under the care of Maj^r [William] Cowley of the 22^d Regiment.

Such Officers of the above Regiments as come out in this Fleet will remain for the present with their Recruits...

Memorandum

The British regiments for which Recruits are arrived are the 7th.. 17th.. 22^d.. 23^d.. 26th..33^d.. 37th, 38th.. 42^d..43^d.. 44th.. 54th.. 63^d. & 64th....

Head Quarters New York 31st Aug 1779...

The 26th Regiment to be Drafted on Staten Island on Fryday next [Sept. 3] in the Forenoon, 150 men to be Transferr'd to the 44th Regiment, and the remaining to be equally divided between the 23^d..37th..63^d.. & 64 Regiments...

The Drafts are to take with them their Arms and Ammunition, for which the regiments that Receive them will give Receipts, it is expected these men are furnished with proper necessaries exact Returns of which will be sent with them when Drafted...

Head Quarters New York 1st Sep^r 79...

After Orders

A considerable number of English & Irish recruits having been sent out by mistake for the 42^d Regim: the Commander in chief is pleased to order that as many of them as Possible shall be exchanged for an equal Number of Scotch in the 26th Reg^{nt} to be Drafted on Fryday.

Head Quarters New York 5 September 1779...

The Recruits of the 42nd Regim^t that were Drafted on Staten Island on the 4th Ins^t are to be delivered over to their respective Regiments who are to apply to Maj^r [William] Cowly for them immediately...

Head Quarters New York 19 Sep^r 1779...

Memorandum

The several Corps who received the Drafts of the 26 and Recruits of 42^d Regiments are requested to send the usual certificates as soon as possible...

Source and Note: "Orders, 1778-1782," *Sir Henry Clinton Papers*, Vol. 266, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan. The 42nd Regt. was "*not immediately upon the spot*" because they were posted at Stoney Point, about 45 miles north of New York City, on the Hudson River. One full additional company of recruits was dispatched to Newfoundland in 1778 and the remaining additional company in Scotland was turned over to the new 2nd Battalion, 42nd Regt. on July 29, 1779. Accordingly, recruits originally recruited by the 10th, 17th, 21st, 23rd, 49th, 52nd, 53rd, 54th, 55th, 57th, 60th, 62nd, and 71st were drafted into the 42nd Regt. As shown in this order, many of them were transferred again to the soon to be drafted 26th Regt. in return for "*Scotch*" soldiers. The names and original regiments of these individual are provided in the muster reports of the companies of the 42nd Regt. taken in New York on Nov. 22, 1779 shown in App. E of this volume in Enclosure E-1: *Company Muster Reports*.

Excerpts of Notebook of Capt. John Peebles, 42nd Grenadier Company, Record Problems with English and Irish Recruits Sent Out for the 42nd Regt., Long Island, New York, Aug. 26 and Sept. 6, 1779

Thursday 26th. cool No: westward... Strange mismanagement of the recruits at home, drafting them with great impropriety, & prejudice to the service, & the Reg^{ts}. they belong to; Highland Recruits sent to other Reg^{ts}. & those from English Reg^{ts}. sent to the Highlanders, hurtfull to the Recruiting business, & productive of mutiny & desertion...

Monday 6th. Sept^r warm with Southerly wind... N:B: most of English & Irish recruits sent out for 42^d. exchanged for Scotsmen from the 26th. –

Source and Notes: NRS, *Peebles Journal Entries* for Aug. 24-26, 1779, and as published in *John Peebles' American War*, Ed. Ira Gruber, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg (Pa), 1998, pp. 288-289. Capt. Peebles is incorrect regarding the 42nd Regt. Recruits being drafted into other regiment. Instead they were transferred to the new 2nd Bn., 42nd Regt. as shown in the War Office letter to Gen. Lord John Murray, Col., 42nd Regt., dated July 29, 1779 which set out the establishment of the new 2nd Bn., 42nd Regt. and directed "*The two additional Companies of this Regiment, consisting of*

two Captains, Four Lieuts two Ensigns, 8 Serjeants, 10 Corporals, 2 Drummers, and two Hundred Private Men, are intended to be taken from the first Battalion, to be transferred to, and to make a part of, this Second Battalion.



Detail of Portrait of Maj. Gen. Anthony Wayne, c. 1795 by James Peale

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from Smithsonian American Art Museum

**Excerpt of Letter from Rebel Brig. Gen. Anthony Wayne, Lt. Infantry Corps,
to Gen. George Washington Regarding the State of Defenses at Stony Point
held by the 42nd Highlanders; Fort Montgomery, New York, Sept. 7, 1779**

Fort Mont^y 7th Sep^r 1779

Dear Gen^l

I returned late last evening from Reconnoitring the Enemy at Stoney point, & find that they have nearly Completed their works — which Consist of One Advanced Redoubt on the Hill Commanding the ferry, way enclosed & finished, with a good Abbatis & Block House to fire over the parapet in barbet.

The large work is also Enclosed the parapet raised much higher than usual & fraised in the most Capital manner & Surrounded with a Wide & formidable Abbatis—within this is a Citidal Independant of the Other work with a Strong high parapet (with fraised) and a Block House which (fires) in Barbett the top of all the parapets neatly & almost Completely (sodded).

They have about Eight Guns mounted & Six more laying on the out side the main work on Garrison or Ships Carriages.

In short—they have appearantly done more work since they repose^d that post than all our Army have Effected the whole Campaign.

A forage or Rather Marauding party of about 300 men were out the night before last & after sweeping the Country in the V[i]cinity of Cattle & Sheep got back early yesterday Morni^g to an Island or point of Land on the River Opposite the White House from where they carried off their plunder & men by water to the Fort. I wished to have struck them, but the Intelligence came too late—however we put them to some trouble & probably caused them to lay on their arms all night...

I shall wait Your Answer & am with true Esteem Your Most Obe^t Hume Sev^t
Ant^y Wayne

Source and Note: “To George Washington from Brigadier General Anthony Wayne, 7 September 1779,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified June 29, 2017, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-22-02-0303>. [Original source: *The Papers of George Washington*, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 22, *1 August–21 October 1779*, ed. Benjamin L. Huggins. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013, pp. 381–382.] The “White House” is likely the house of Loyalist William Smith. The point of land probably was Grassy Point, N.Y., a piece of land jutting into Haverstraw Bay one and a half miles below Stony Point.

Excerpt of Notebook of Capt. John Peebles, 42nd Grenadier Company, Records the

Split of the British Grenadier Battalion Into Two Separate Battalions Under Lt. Col. Henry Hope and Lt. Col. John Yorke, Long Island, New York, Sept. 11, 1779

Saturday 11th. Sept^r. a cool breeze from the S:W: went in the morn^g. to Newtown... came home to dinner found the Battalion divided as follows 1st. [Battalion] Hopes consisting of 7th. 17th. 23^d. 33^d. 37th. 38th. 42^d. & 43^d. – 2nd [Battalion] York's, the 22^d. 54th. 57th. 63^d. 64th. 70th. & 74th. they changed ground & pitch'd accordingly – Brig^r. [Thomas] Stirling in N: York come down from Stony point two or 3 days ago...

Source and Note: NRS, *Peebles Journal* Entry for Sept. 11, 1779, and as published in *John Peebles' American War*, Ed. Ira Gruber, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg (Pa), 1998, p. 292. Although Brig. Gen. Stirling came to NY from Stony Point, the 42nd Regt. remained at that post.



Detail from "Kingston, & Port Royal. From Windsor Farm," 1820-1824

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from *A Picturesque Tour of the Island of Jamaica*, Hakewill, (1875)

General Order Issued for Light Infantry and British Grenadiers to be Ready to Embark for Lt. Gen. Charles, Earl Cornwallis' Jamaica Relief Expedition, New York, Sept. 16 and 29, 1779

Head Quarters New York 16th Sep^r 1779...

The following Corps will hold themselves in readiness to Embark on the shortest notice viz – British Grenadiers [including the 42nd Gren. Co. in the 1st Bn.] and Light Infantry [including the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co.]: 7..23..33..37..[illegible] and 57 Regiments British, The [Hessian] Grenadiers of Linsing, Lingerke, Mingerode & Graff, with 200 Jagers, Cavalry and Infantry of the [Loyalist] Queen's Rangers and Legion, Fanning Corps and Volunteers of Ireland...

When the British Regiments receive their orders to go on Board their Flank Companies will Embark with them...

Head Quarters New York 29th Septem^r 1779...

The Corps that were Embarked under Lieu^t General [Charles] Earl Cornwallis is to be landed as soon as convenient...

Source and Note: "Orders, 1778-1782," *Sir Henry Clinton Papers*, Vol. 266, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan. This order represents Lord Cornwallis' expedition that sailed on Sept. 25, 1779 and was intended to reinforce the island of Jamaica from an imminent attack by the French fleet. Before Cornwallis had sailed far, new intelligence was obtained that Jamaica was not the target of the French fleet and Cornwallis returned to New York.



Capt. Patrick Ferguson. 70th Regt.

Picture Source: Wikipedia

Letter from Governor of Stony Point and Verplank's Point, Capt. Patrick Ferguson, 70th Regt., to Commander-in-Chief, Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Regarding Readiness for Evacuation of Verplank's Point, New York, Sept. 18, 1779

Stoney Point Sept^r. 18. 79

Sir

Your Orders relating to Verplank's arrived in the afternoon of the 16th. & this Evening the Destruction of the superfluous Works was completed.

The Stone house is thrown down, the Rebel redoubt there level'd, the large redoubt & redane on the right thoroughly demolished, as well as the advanced redoubt, the block house within which, has been removed from thence by the concurring opinion of [Lt.] Colonel [William] Webster [33rd Regt.] & the Engineer, as it appeared it that it could not be long supported without a Strong force on Verplank's side, & the loss of it would mortify the remaining Garrisons, & strengthen the rebels; whereas the two Storys of the blockhouse will with very little trouble or addition, form two important outworks at Stony Point to strengthen the Fort against assault, enable us to sleep without Alarm, & afford shelter to our advanced Posts who will be thereby enabled to keep abroad, without endangering themselves or the body of the Place is closely followed by an Enemy in their retreat.

The block house redoubt at Fayette & that erected near it by your Excellencys direction, with the Redan [V-shaped work] in front form a triangular work, of which they are the bastions & the Curtains form'd by a thick abatti. The redoubts are already surrounded with a very strong Fraise [pointed stakes] & two Circles of abatti, to which a third will be soon added further to strengthen the Garrison Against Assault & secure it from Surprize.

With regard to a serious attack I have before had the honor to mention to your Excellency that it appears to me that Verplank's cannot from the Grounds round it, be by any means so fortified as to withstand for many days an Army with Artillery; but as the redoubts & Cannon are already there & mostly furnished by the rebels, & as a retreat is always safe, two hundred Man may not be ill employ'd in that Post to hold the command of both Sides of the North River, give jealousy to the rebels, protract the Defence of Stony Point, communicate with the Country & afford a Safe Stage from Whence to enter the Country & withdraw whenever you may have occasion to Employ the Army or a Detachment upon this river. —

Whilst the Army is at New York there will be danger to the rebels in investing Fayette, & should your Excellency cut elsewhere, I apprehend it would be a happy Circumstance if the rebel army could be detain'd to amuse themselves in forcing us to burn their own Block house at Verplanks.

At Stony Point it has been our Endeavour to Secure the Post against surprize or a Coup de main by Multiplying the Obstacles on the Grounds by which the works are to be approached as well as by Strengthening the Defenses within, & I flatter myself you need not apprehend any Danger from either: & if your Excellency will allow the thirty pioneers now here to remain another fortnight we shall be so bury'd in abatti, that the Garrison will not be obliged to be harass'd upon every Alarm

The Artillery order'd to be sent here by General [James] Pattison & some other trifles (a list of which I will forward the next opportunity to Captain [John] Andre') will compleat our wants here .–

I have the honor to be

Sir

Your most obed^t. & Most H Servant

Pat Ferguson

Source and Note: *Sir Henry Clinton Papers* 68: 32, W. L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan. Although Ferguson was appointed “governor” of Stony Pont, this seems to be associated with his role as engineer. Maj. Charles Graham’s testimony above clearly states he was the commander of the post.

Journal of Capt. Archibald Robertson, Dep. Quarter Master Gen., Reports that Most of the Regiments have Departed Leaving the 42nd Regt. to Hold the New Fortifications, Stony Point, New York, Sept. 18-20, 1779

18th 19th and 20th The 63^d, 64th, and 33^d Regiments left King’s Ferry, having been At Work – as well as the 42^d and Fannings Corps ever since the 20th of July completing the Works at Stony Point, which were to have been executed according to Captain [Patrick] Ferguson’s Proposal in 3 Weeks and it is now 9.

Source: *Archibald Robertson, Lieutenant-General Royal Engineers, His Diaries and Sketches in America*, Ed. Harry Miller Lydenberg, New York Public Library, New York, 1930, pp. 202-203

Excerpts of Rations Report for British Forces, New York, Sept. 19-26, 1779

Return of the Number of Men Women & Children of the British and Foreign Regiments, New levies and Civil Departments victualled at New York & the different Out Posts between the 19th & 26th September 1779

		Men	Women	Children...
3	Battalion of Grenadiers	}924	44	15
		}	166	136
4	Ditto of Light Infantry	}808	107	27...
12	42 ^d ditto [Regiment]	762	106	91...
18	71 st ditto	234	64	34...
Total		27,956	3489	3363

Daniel Weir

To____

His Excellency

Sir Henry Clinton K. B. &c^a. &c^a. &c^a.

Source and Note: *Sir Henry Clinton Papers* 69: 17, W. L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan. During this period the 42nd Highlanders were stationed at Stony Point, New York.

Response from Brevet-Lt. Col. Charles Graham, 42nd Regt., to Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Regarding Rebel Activity at Stony Point, New York, Sept. 22, 1779

Stoney point Sep^r. 22^d 1779 2 in the Morning.

Sir

I have this moment been favoured with yours of yesterday & take this early opportunity of returning your Excellency my sincere thanks for the honor you have been pleased to confer on me, being thereby relieved from a disagreeable situation.

L^t. Col: [James] Webster [33rd Regt.] has no doubt informed your Excellency of the situation of both posts, when he left this, since which time no material alterations in the dispositions of the troops.

About 10 yesterday morning a very large body of Rebels appeared drawn up on the Rising grounds about three Quarters of a Mile in our front, small parties reconnoitered the post, but continued perfectly quiet, untill between 9 & 10 at Night since which time they have kept up a popping from the Woods in our front, apparently toward the ground on which are picquet are posted during the day. We cannot form a conjecture of their intentions, not having been able to procure the least intelligence.

[Sub-Eng. and] L^t. [Henry Haldane] Halden of the Engineers will be able to inform your Excellency of the strength of the Works, both against an assault, & an attack with heavy cannon & Mortars.

Being anxious to give your Excellency the earliest notice of our Situation, I have dispatched the Express by whom I received your & should the Rebels attempt anything serious shall immediately report to your Excellency

I have the Honor to be your Excellency's
Most obedient & very Humble Servant.

Charles Graham

L^t Col^l –

His Excellency Sir Henry Clinton

Source and Note: Maj. Charles Graham, 42nd Regt., to Sir Henry Clinton, Stony Point, Sept. 22, 1779 in *Sir Henry Clinton Papers* 68: 45, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan. Although no other documentation has surfaced to record it, Maj. Graham may have been given a Brevet- Lt. Colonelcy when he assumed command of the Stony Point. Graham's reference above to an honor conferred on him likely references this situation. After returning from Stony Point, Graham is referred to again as "Major," indicating this may have been only a temporary position.

Rebel Account of British Consolidation at Stony Point, New York, Sept. 22, 1779

Extract of a letter from a Gentleman at the North-River, dated Sept. 22.

"The enemy have destroyed their block-houses and other works on the east side of the river [Verplanck's Point]. [Brig.] Gen. [Anthony] Wayne who has been reconnoitering with a party of men, returned this Morning, and informs that they are about abandoning Verplanck's and Stoney-points. While I am writing, a confirmation of the above is received and it is thought they will entirely quit the River in a day or two."

Source: *Independent Ledger* (Boston), Oct. 4, 1779, p. 3.

General Orders Issued Promoting Lt. Hay Macdowal, 71st Highland Regt. Additional Company, to a Company in the 42nd Regt., New York, Sept. 22, 1779

Head Quarters New York 22nd Sep^r 1779

The Commander in Chief is pleas'd to make the following promotions...

42nd Regiment

Lieu^t Hay M^cDowal from 71st Regiment to be Captain by purchase vice } 20th Sep 1779.

[Capt. John] M^cIntosh who retires }

Source and Note: "Orders, 1778-1782," *Sir Henry Clinton Papers*, Vol. 266, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan. Capt. Macdowal, who was serving in one of the 71st Regiment's additional companies in Scotland, never actually joined the regiment in America. He claimed that he wanted to go to America, but was ordered to stay in Scotland in order to raise the 2nd Battalion, 42nd Regt. He eventually transferred to the 2nd Battalion, in Scotland effective March 1780.

**Letter from Governor Capt. Patrick Ferguson, 70th Regt., to
Commander-in-Chief, Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Regarding
Readiness for Evacuation of Verplanck's Point, New York, Sept. 27, 1779**

Stoney Point Sept^r. 27th. 1779

Sir

Your Letter was put into my hand by Major [Brevet-Lt. Col. Charles] Graham [42nd Regt.] an hour ago.

After so long exerted myself to the utmost, & been a witness of the zeal & perserverance with which the troops have labor'd to put this Post out of reach of Insult, it is with the Greatest Pain I read in your Excellencys letter that Circumstances may oblige us to abandon our Works to the rebels.

If we have unfortunately wrought so long to fortify a Post for them to occupy, we may at least withdraw at any time with Deliberation, & bring off our Cannon & Stores in the face of Day – No Officer can be at a loss on a Ground Narrow & Commanding like this & covered by block houses – Should occasion, with a rear Guard of a hundred men I will answer for the Consequence. The most valuable of the Block houses may also be taken away, (should great expedition not on other Account be required,) which independant of their importance in putting a Post in immediate Safety, will render the retreat less uncreditable

I wish to avoid a Conjecture upon any Circumstance which your Excellency may think for to conceal, but I hold it to be my Duty to say, that if it is the want of Men, or any apprehension that this Post may be soon carryed by the rebels, which has in any Degree concurr'd with other Circumstances to occasion a Design of putting this measure into Execution, I will at hazard of every thing that is dear to me maintain Stoney Point with 400 men, providing the Garrison is partly composed of tryed Soldiers & relieved every Month; but both Posts cannot be well held, if the Garrison are to be permanent & composed chiefly of provincials without 700 Men.

All Fortifications, much more field works necessarily give way to time & Numbers, wherefore at present when we have not a Post in America Capable with a Garrison of 400 Men of resisting [Rebel Gen. George] M^r. Washingtons Army for a week, it can be no Disgrace to Stoney Point to say that when left to itself it will run no hazard in thrice that time: and the time necessary to prepare for and to carry on an Attack of that time, would engross the best part of a Campaign & leave your Excellency full leisure & liberty to march from hence to Carolina uninterrupted by the rebel Army, whither with a view to occupy any of the provinces, or to disable them as you proceed, from Succeeding in their design of ruining the present State in conjunction with France & Spain.

As to investing this Place by Detach^l. during the Absence of our Army, a Part of the Troops that must necessarily remain at New York, could in 24 hours whilst the river is open render that abortive, & winter once set in it is impracticable.

Knowing your Excellencys Opinion of the importance of this Post; in interrupting the rebel Communication by Water, & threatning within four hours March, the Pass of Smiths Clove [rebel camp] on into the heart of this Province towards Canada the indians & the State of Vermont; in being probed & Succor'd by water. & at the Same time in acceptable by that Element to the Americans french or Spaniards; in countenancing the encreasing numbers of the Kings friends & in opening Channels for intelligence; it may be unnecessary in me further to observe that its importance to me equaley great to the Rebels, who from the Moment our Troops have taken possession have kept their whole force in its neighbourhood, & are now counting off their whole Army Against the 42^d Reg^t & two weak provincial Corps.

We have hitherto been laboring to secure ourselves – that done, we are now enabled to look a little abroad, when ever the rebel Army shall be diverted from our Neighbourhood & when ever your Excellency can in the intervalles between expeditions Share a few hundred men for two or three idle Days up this River: And any Rate the officer who commands here will now have more leisure with his own garrison to open Communications for intelligence, awe the Rebel inhabitants, barrack & refresh the

Troops at their expense, & by a just application of Severity & humanity, prove to the People how little it is in the power of the Rebel Army to protect them. & how much their Safety interest & Duty agree.

How much The Giving up of this Post (after having at much Labor & expense employ'd half a Campaign in putting it in Condition that will put it out of our Power ever to reseize it) must hurt the Kings Cause, but discouraging his friends, giving confidence to his Enemys & rendering the Troops totally averse for future works, it is un necessary for me to observe: & having already so far presumed on the Confidence with which you have been pleased to honor me, I have only further to say, that this Post is not to be endanger'd by assault, & as it is only approachable on one side by a narrow & inferior Ground & is sheltered on that Side by a ridge of Rocks that cannot be hurt by Cannon, & which Covers the Block houses within from Artillery, by which along they can be injured, I feel myself after thorough consideration justifiable in Saying that as both Sides will be comfortable & easy with 700 Effective men, so can this Side with vigilance & Exertion be maintain'd by half that Number; when the Army returns from the field an Augmentation or relief will render the Duty less Severe.

My First wish I believe you do me the justice to believe is your honor & the Success of his Majestys Arms,___ indeed I must be very deficient after the honor you have been pleased to do me in points which I value infinitely beyond either rank or emolument, I hope therefore Sir you will pardon the warmth with which I have express'd myself.

Sir Henry Clinton K. B.

I am with the Most Respect
Sir Your most Obliged & Obed^t Ser^t
Pat: Ferguson Cap^t
70 Reg^t.

May I beg to know your Determination soon, to prevent unnecessary Labor.

Source: *Sir Henry Clinton Papers* 69:22, W. L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan.

Response from Brevet-Lt. Col. Charles Graham, 42nd Regt., to Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Regarding Readiness for Evacuation of Stony Point and Verplanck's Point, New York, Sept. 28, 1779

Stoney Point 28th. Sep^r 1779

Sir

I was honor'd with yours of yesterday enclos'd was a letter to Cap^t. [Patrick] Ferguson, which we both read_____. And I am of oppinion Stoney and Verplanks Point's, may be evacuated with great safety un a short time, and bring off most of the Cannon and Stores_____

One or two Scow's with eight or ten Batteaw's or Flatt Boats, will be wanted_____

As your Excellency thinks of visiting this post soon, shall not mention the situation the troops have, and still are in, untill I have the honor of seeing you

I have the Honor to be
your Excellency's Most Ob^t. Hum^{le}. Ser^t.

Charles Graham

Source and Note: Maj. Charles Graham, 42nd Regt., to Sir Henry Clinton, Stony Point, Sept. 28, 1779 in *Sir Henry Clinton Papers* 69: 31, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan. Scows were flat bottomed boats with blunt bows useful for navigating in shallow waters and could be beached for loading. Some were rigged like schooners with fore and aft sails on two masts. Batteaus were also flat bottomed, shallow draft boats, normally pointed on both ends.

Excerpt of a Letter from Rebel Brig. Gen. Anthony Wayne, Lt. Infantry Corps, to Gen. George Washington Regarding Preparations for Siege of Stony Point; Fort Montgomery Sept. 28, 1779

Fort Mont^y 28th Sep^r 1779

Dear General

I have in Company with Sev^l field officers reconnoitred the Ground in the vicinity of Haverstraw Forge and the roads & avenues leading to it... one of the Piquets will be posted in a position that gives a

Comm^s & perfect View of stoney Point & every part of the River from the lower end of Haverstraw bay to far up at Peek's Kill...

shou'd the Siege of Stony Point take place this will also be a proper position for part of the Covering army—and the sooner we take post there, the more shall help to facilitate its reduction—by preventing them from Obtaining a Supply of Wood & Forage.

I will do myself the honor of waiting on you this afternoon or to-morrow mornng. Interim believe me with sincere Esteem your Excellency's most Ob^t & very Hum^e Ser^t

Ant^y Wayne

Source and Note: "To George Washington from Brigadier General Anthony Wayne, 28 September 1779," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified June 29, 2017, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-22-02-0451>. [Original source: *The Papers of George Washington*, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 22, *1 August–21 October 1779*, ed. Benjamin L. Huggins. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013, pp. 541–542.] Washington was considering a siege of the British fort at Stony Point, N.Y., as part of his prospective joint operations with the French fleet.



Detail of Portrait of Maj. Gen. Henry Knox, 1784, by Charles Wilson Peale

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from *Philadelphia Museum of Art*

**Excerpt of Report from Rebel Maj. Gen. Henry Knox to Gen. George Washington,
on Reconnaissance of British - Held Stony Point, New York, Oct. 2, 1779.**

Reconnoitre of Stony & Verplancks points 1779

In obedience to your Excellency's directions to us the subscribers we in Company with Brig Gen^l [Anthony] Wayne reconnoitred the Enemy's posts ^{at} Stony and Verplancks points. We first took a general view ^{of the two places} from the Donderbergh. after which we took a more close view of Stony point on the north side from a piece of Ground which we estimated at about 800 yards distance. it ~~might~~ may be more or less as we have not instruments to measure it. We then viewed the Works on the West side from the base Hill at the distance perhaps from 14 to 1600 yards, and from the low grounds on the south side.

The Grounds on the North and West Side appear to be the most advantageous places for batteris, tho' possibly other spots may be found which might serve these same purpose in an inferiour degree – ~~That distance appears~~ But the distance from the nearest place which is to the North appears to be such that the making a breach with cannons would be a very uncertain ~~and~~ event but the palasades and Jersies could be destroy'd by cannon and the block houses ruin'd ~~by~~ with the United effects of shots and shells. For this purpose we think it would be necessary to have 15 or 16 heavy Cannon and eight or ten mortars and howitzers – An Estimate of the quantity of Ammunition requisits for a ten days Siege and an account of

the quantity in this post and the neighborhood are subjoined – from which view your Excellency will be able to judge of the quantity that will remain for this post after such a consumption.

It may perhaps be unnecessary to mention That the Investiture must be made with a force superior to what the Enemy can bring to the relief of the place; That Works must be constructed for the security of the troops and battaries; and that the north leading from West & Stony point by Clements must be made passable for the Artillery and Stores –

The Enemy have demolished a number of ^{their} Works on Verplanks point and at present appear to retain only the redoubt on La Fayette and another to the North of it with some lines between It would not be very difficult to erect batteries which ^{probably} would disposes them of Verplanks point –

H Knox

Westpoint 29th–30th. September 1779

[to] His Excellency Gen^l Washington

[4] on all sides the Works appear to be so strong as to defy a Coup de main. The parapets are high and appear to be strong, are well framed in some instances with a double row. The Abbatis are thin ^{and well made} in the main work which is inclos'd there is a Citidel ~~out~~ in which there is a block house – besides which there are two other block houses in the main Work and three outside of it in detach'd Works immediately under the Command of the main Work ^{there is only one entrance into the main works which is on the south} – a sketch of the Works as they appeared to me is herewith ammen'd –

[Cover sheet] A paper respecting West point 2 Octob^r 1779 – not presented –
Knox to Washington
No 4 –

Source: “Letter from Henry Knox, October 2, 1779” in the *Washington Collection, Gilder Lehrman Collection Documents*. (Transcript GLC 2437.05.014), NYHS. British Gen. Sir Henry Clinton ordered the evacuation of Stony Point on Oct. 7.



Detail of Portrait of Brig. Gen. Louis Le Bègue Du Portail, by Charles Wilson Peale, c. 1781-84

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from the U. S. National Park Service.

Excerpt of Letter from Rebel Commander Gen. George Washington to Brig. Gen. Anthony Wayne to Support Engineer Brig. General Louis Le Bègue Du Portail's Reconnaissance of Stony Point; West Point, Oct. 3 1779

To Brigadier General Anthony Wayne

Head Qu^{rs} Octo^r 3^d 1779

Dear Sir,

[Rebel Brig.] General [Louis Le Bègue] Du Portail proposes tomorrow to reconnoitre a second time the post of Stony point and to ascertain the distances from the Enemys works to the places proper for establishing batteries — He will arrive there precisely by eleven oClock—You will therefore please to have a reconnoitring party consisting of a Regiment ready *at the second place to which you went the other day, not the high hill on which you first took your stand* —This is the spot General Du Portail points out; and he will be on the place punctually at the time appointed — The Officer commanding the party will take his orders from him; You will also send an escort to meet him at the house where you stopped the last time to take refreshment on your return to Camp, as he might otherwise mistake his route.

I am D. Sir Your most ob^t Serv^t

Go: Washington

P.S. Two companies of light infantry from Glovers Brigade are ordered to join you to replace those of the Carolina troops³—You will send a proper person here to conduct them to you—I am to request you will take pains to ascertain whether the enemy have bomb proofs in Stony point, what number, extent and thickness—This is an essential point to know towards any operations against that post.

Go: Washington

Source and Note: “From George Washington to Brigadier General Anthony Wayne, 3 October 1779,” *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified June 29, 2017, Original source: *Papers of George Washington*, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 22, 1 August–21 October 1779, ed. Benjamin L. Huggins. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013, pp. 625–626. Duportail failed to rendezvous with Wayne to make this survey, but Wayne completed it himself in conjunction with Col. Rufus Putnam.

**Letter from Rebel Gen. George Washington to Maj. Gen. William Alexander (Lord Stirling), to
Position His Command to Block the British Land Withdrawal from Stony Point,
West Point, Oct. 4, 1779**

VIII

To Major General Stirling

West-point Oct^r 4th 1779

My Lord,

By advices which I have just received from Congress, I have no doubt of the French fleet (under Count D’Estaing) coming this way—and that it will appear in these Seas immediately —The prospect of preventing the retreat of the garrisons at Stony—and Verplanks point so far as it [is] to be effected by a Land operation) again revives upon probable ground, and I am to request, that your Lordship will concert with [Brig.] General [Anthony] Wayne the proper means; having regard to a relative position to this Post; and the certainty of forming a junction with the Troops at it, in case the enemy (contrary to expectation) should move in force from below. With great regard & esteem I am—

Y^r Lordships Most obed^t & affece Serv^t

Go: Washington

P.S. Your Lordship will readily see the propriety of keeping this design as much as possible from public view.

Source: “George Washington to Major General Stirling, 4 October 1779,” *Founders Online*, National Archives. Original source: *The Papers of George Washington*, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 22, 1 August–21 October 1779, ed. Benjamin L. Huggins, Univ. of Virginia Press, 2013, p. 620.

**Gen. Sir Henry Clinton’s Commendation to the 42nd Regt. for
Continued Occupation of Stony Point, New York, Oct. 5, 1779**

Head Quarters, New York 5th October 1779

Sir,

The commander-in-chief requests you will signify to the 42^d Regiment his acknowledgments for the cheerfulness with which they have persevered in their labours at your posts; he would wish to relieve them, but the arrangements, by which the whole army have their proportion of employment, will not permit it for the present. He therefore trusts that their wonted zeal will inspire them with patience for a little time, relying on his assurance that he will give them a respite as soon as possible.

(Signed) John Andre, A.A.G.

To Major [Charles] Graham

Source and Note: *Historical Record of the Forty-Second, or, The Royal Highland Regiment of Foot* (Historical Records of the British Army) Richard Cannon, Parker, Furnivall, and Parker, London, 1845, footnote p. 78. Maj. Graham was the acting commander of the 42nd Regt. in the absence of Brig. Gen. Thomas Stirling, who was serving as a brigade commander.

**Journal of Capt. Archibald Robertson, Dep. Quarter Master Gen., Reports
Rebel Army Investing Post, Stony Point; New York, Oct. 8-9, 1779**

October 8th or 9th Reported from Stony Point that the Rebel army were investing it with Cannon. Some Regiments and the Grenadiers ordered to Embark in Transports.

Source: *Archibald Robertson, Lieutenant-General Royal Engineers, His Diaries and Sketches in America*, Ed. Harry Miller Lydenberg, New York Public Library, New York, 1930, p. 203.

Letter from Governor Capt. Patrick Ferguson, 70th Regt., Commander-in-Chief, Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Regarding Readiness for Evacuation of Verplanck's Point, New York, Oct. 9, 1779

Stoney Point Oct^r. 9th. 79.

Sir

Since the Letter which I did myself the honor of writing to you on the 6th we have pass'd some Anxious moments.

The rebel movement on both Sides of the river corresponding with the intelligence previously receiv'd, & indicating a Design of attacking these Posts, it became necessary to get provisions on shore, more particularly as the Ground laid out by their Engineers north of this post showd, if they were Serious, an intention of erecting a Battery to dislodge the Shipping, & the ease with which two light rebel Guns one Same Day forced one of the Guard Ships below to quit a very Distant Station, showd us more passingly the necessity of this precaution: but Major [Charles] Graham [Commander, 42nd Regt.] upon application to the Commissary was surprized with his report that he had only two Days provisions in store, with which & what could be collected from the Different Transports we are now, after sending away all useless Mouths reduced to eleven Days provisions: This together with the continued desertion of the provincial Corps, (the increase of which of late is the more alarming, as being owing to a Politic measure from the Americans to pardon, re-instate & exempt them from Service,) renders it very necessary to take measure against the Post being endangered by Famine or Deffection.

The Ground linned out by the rebels both on the north of this Post, on the heights in front & to the left plainly indicate from their Distance & Situations, a design of distressing us by Shells, & notwithstanding that I have done my utmost to secure us from their effect, the Proximity of the rebel Army & Labor of [prouving?] & transporting heavy trees, has prevented our being as yet in any great degree defended against this which in part is our weakside, & how long the Troops satisfyd with their unexpected Continuance here ill cloathd & obliged to quit their Huts may have the patience to Submit to aspeices of Danger so unusual to them may be uncertain.

On the whole Sir, I think it is my Duty to offer you my Opinion that it is necessary immediately to releive this Garrison & to throw in a Sufficiency of Provisions, & large Squared timbers to Casmate with on Stoney Point, & to furnish the Troops that releive with warm Clothing & other Douceurs [gratuities] to reconcile them to the Peculiar inconveniencys of their Situation, providing it is determined to keep Possession: But if the Probability is that the posts are to be abandon'd, this unnecessary loss of time Labor & Stores may better be avoided at once by withdrawing the Troops; particularly as the Landing of any Quantity of heavy Materials may require the Support of a Corps of Troops, to prevent the rebels (who have the whole Strength of their Army & Artillery at hand on both Sides of the river) from erecting Batteries to disturb their transportation.

If the Posts are to be kept this Point may certainly stand a Seige when properly provided & repulse Assault: & if they are quitted I Shall at least have the Satisfaction to believe that it a not redounded [contributed greatly] to the Discredit of the Service, that your Excellency should in the face of the rebel Army take & maintain possession of a Post again, which altho they had seized once they neither durst defend nor again attack, & that you had tyed down the rebel Army to this Ground for a whole Summer by the Employment of a thousand Men here.

My Opinion remains with your Excellency alone as in either case it appears to me of the utmost Consequence that Secrecy is kept.

If the Posts are to be supported no time is to be lost – If quitted a Detachment of Troops sent up under Colour of a relief would arue [To invent and offer reasons to support or overthrow a proposition] or if occasion were dislodge the rebel Batterys, afford a Specious pretence for Embarking the Stores field Peices & baggage of the present Garrison & the Night after the heavy Artillery & Troops might Embark after burning all the Block houses &^c: But considering the uncertainty of the weather at this Season & the neighbourhood of the whole force of the rebels it will be extremely in convenient that our Intention is not Suspected & no time lost.

If it was suitable to your Excellencys other views the arrival of a Strong Corps suddenly here & unexpectedly within these two three Days would probably find that the rebels on one side or tother had Committed themselves by an attempt upon one of the Posts, as their continuing here & persevering in bringing Cannon repairing of Bridges &^c: indicates some thing more than a feint.

I have the honor to be with the truest Gratitude & respect.

Sir

Your most obed^t: Humble Servant

Pat: Ferguson Cap^t. 70 Reg^t.

Sir Henry Clinton K B

Source: *Sir Henry Clinton Papers* 71: 15, W. L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan.

**Excerpt of Letter from Rebel Brig. Gen. Anthony Wayne to Gen. George Washington
Describing Stony Point Defenses, Heights of Haverstraw, New York, Oct. 9, 1779**

From Brigadier General Anthony Wayne

Light Infantry Camp hights of Haverstraw
9th Oct^r 1779.

Dear General

Enclosed is a plan of the Enemies works at Stoney point—taken by Colo. Putnam with the points of attack in case of an Investure.

They have neither Bomb proofs—nor a Magazine, their Amunition is kept on Board a Sloop in the rear of the point except a few Rounds for their Artillery which are Covered by two tents—they have one 32 pounder mounted on their Right or North part of the works, one 18 on their left or South side—a few fives Sixes & four 52 & 42 Inch Howitz at Intermediate distances between their two extremes where the 32 & 18 pounders are & in the Block Houses.

I am of Opinion that two 18 & two or three 12 pounders on travelling Carriages with two 8 Inch Howitz would be a Sufficiency of Artillery to reduce this post, as the facins have given way & fell down in many parts of the Works especially the Advanced Redoubt A, which from the points A. B. & E. would soon be Reduced & a lodgment Effected in its rear—a Combined attack on verplanks point ought to take place at the same time—which would drive down the Shipping & boats—was two Practicable breach's to be Effected & the block Houses demolished—I think we should—carry the Works by storm with great care, & I am fully of Opinion that the breaches may be Effected in 24 after possessing the Advanced work A, which will be Effectually Covered by the points A: C. E.—what time it will take to demolish the block Houses I can't say—as that depends on few shells as to the probability of the Enemy Raising the siege—your Excellency will best determine—Indeed it will in a great measure depend upon the Arrival of Count De Estaing. I am Your Excellencys Most Ob^t Hume Ser^t

Ant^y Wayne

Source: "To George Washington from Brigadier General Anthony Wayne, 9 October 1779," *Founders Online*, National Archives. Original source: *The Papers of George Washington*, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 22, 1 August–21 October 1779, Ed. Benjamin L. Huggins, Univ. of Virginia Press, Charlottesville, 2013, pp. 690–691.

Excerpts of Notebook of Capt. John Peebles, 42nd Grenadier Company, Record the 1st Grenadier Battalion's Reaction to Rebel Activity at Stony Point; Near McGowan's Pass and Embarked off Fort Knyphausen, Hudson River, New York, Oct. 10 – 22, 1779

Sunday 10th. Oct^r. warm wind about west Accounts from Stony point that the Rebels are making their approaches, & we have orders of being in readiness...

Monday 11th. Oct^r. warm, wind everyway mostly So: small craft passing up & down y^e. River, & three ships come up to take on board the Gr^{ts}. the Batt^{ns}. under arms at 1 o'clock & march'd by the left to the beach below Jone's & embark'd on board the [Transports] Joseph, Laurie, Eleanor on board the Joseph 17th. 37th. 38th. & 42^d. [companies] [Lt.] Co^l [Henry] Hope embarked a feeble [42nd Gren.] Co^y. of 3 Serj^{ts}. & 23 R: & file...

Tuesday 12th Oct^r. strong So^{ly}. wind. The Com^r. in chief [Gen. Sir Henry Clinton] gone up to Stoney Pt. with the [armed ship] Fanny & some small craft...

Thursday 14th. Oct^r. cold & blowy from the North, no word of moving 8 of us in a mess on board...

Friday 15th. pleasant w^r. wind No.. I understand it is left to [Lt.] Co^l. Hope to land the Gr^{ts}. when he thinks proper, but we are to remain on board a few days as there is less duty, & supposed to be more healthy...

Sunday 16th. Oct^r. wind warm So: we are to get another large ship for a convalescent Hospital, & to remain on board on account of health – all quiet at Stoney Point & the 42^d. expected down soon –

Wednesday 20th. Oct^r. warm, wind South...I hear Stoney Point is to be evacuated immediately – another ship come up for the Gren^{rs}...

Friday 22^d. Oct^r. foggy morn^g. warm weather & southerly wind – a ride to Spitten Devil [Spuyten Duyvil] see a number of ships & small craft coming down the River which we take to be the Troops [including the 42nd Regt.] & c^a. from Stoney Point & Verplanks; I believe they have got off in good time, for the rebels were certainly meditating something against that post. the taking & making of which, & the losing & taking & making again, has cost 7 or 800 men & seems to have been the whole business or object of the Campaign

Source and Notes: NRS, *Peebles Journal Entries* for Oct. 10-22, 1779 and as published in *John Peebles' American War*, Ed. Ira Gruber, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg (Pa), 1998, pp. 298-301. The British Army was suffering from severe bout of sickness that greatly reduced its fit for duty strength. The 42nd Grenadier Co. was authorized 5 sergeants, 5 corporals, 2 drummers, 2 pipers and 100 private men. Spuyten Duyvil, on the west side of the island, is located about 14 miles north of Battery Park, Manhattan.

Letter Regarding Rebel Investment of Stony Point, New York, Oct. 19, 1779

Extract of a Letter from New York, Oct. 19.

“Stoney Point, which was taken about two months since by the rebels, and the 17th regiment &c. made prisoners, and which they most scandalously gave up on our approach, is invested again, and will probably be obliged to surrender, if they are not speedily reinforced. The troops in it are from the 42d regiment, and Ferguson’s riflemen, from whom a gallant defence is expected, and indeed there is little doubt of its being relieved if they hold out a week.”

Source and Note: *Stamford Mercury* (Lincolnshire), Dec. 9, 1779, p. 3. As shown in the following letter from Sir Henry Clinton dated Oct. 26, Stony Point was evacuated on Oct. 23. The letter is partially incorrect in that although Capt. Patrick Ferguson was present in the role of engineer, British Gen. Orders at Brandywine, Pa. disbanded Ferguson’s Rifle Corps on Sept. 13, 1777.

Letter from Rebel Gen. George Washington to Brig. Gen. Anthony Wayne, Regarding the Pending British Evacuation of Stony Point; West Point, Oct. 21, 1779

To Brigadier General Anthony Wayne

Head Quarters Octo^r 21st 1779

D^r Sir,

Since writing to you this morning I have received accounts from deserters which seem strongly to indicate a speedy evacuation of Verplanks & Stoney Points—There is some reason to think that Verplanks was left last night. The deserters add that the Grenadiers were embarked and laying off against Fort Washington and that two other regiments were under orders to Embark at a moments warning. If this be true, we should suppose that they have some meaning by the manœuvre—perhaps an attempt to strike you and the Troops in your neighbourhood, or [Rebel] Gen^l [Robert] Howe with those under him upon the East side, after having joined the force of the Garrisons to those before mentioned. This is mere matter of opinion, founded upon what may turn out false information, but I have thought it proper to put you upon your guard—And you will be pleased to communicate this to Lord Stirling, if he has joined his division or the Commanding Officer, if he has not. I am D^r Sir Y^r Mo., Obe^t, serv^t

Go: Washington

P.S. Should the Enemy evacuate Stoney Point you will take possession of it, with the necessary caution.

Source: “From George Washington to Brigadier General Anthony Wayne, 21 October 1779,” *Founders Online*, National Archives. Original source: *The Papers of George Washington*, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 22, 1 August–21 October 1779, Ed. Benjamin L. Huggins, Univ. of Virginia Press, Charlottesville, 2013, pp. 778–779.

Excerpt of Letter from Rebel Brig. Gen. Anthony Wayne to Gen. George Washington Describing British Preparations for Evacuation of Stony Point, Heights of Haverstraw, New York, Oct. 21, 1779

From Brigadier General Anthony Wayne

Light Infantry Camp 21st Oct^r 1779
½ after One OClock P.M.

Dear General

about 10 OClock last evening I rec^d Intelligence that a number of flat Bottomed boats & Several vessels were moving up Haverstraw bay—the troops were Ordered to lay on their arms & Several patrols detached towards the Enemies Lines to Observe their Motions, the whole Concurring that some Capital move was in agitation—but could not discover whether it was an Embarkation or a Debarkation.

at 12 at Night I put the troops in motion in Order to Strike the Enemy in flank the Moment they shou'd pass the Morass—& Endeavour to enter with them—but all continued very quiet until day light—when I could Observe them busily employed in Imbarking their Baggage & Cannon—About 10 OClock they began to Demolish their parapets & fraise on Verplanks point but—had not attempted anything of that sort at Stoney Point—but seemed to wait for the tide of ebb—I have sent for [Brig.] Gen^l [William] Woodfords Artillery and am Determined to prevent them from Demolishing the face of their works at Stoney point—they will probably burn or blow up their Block Houses.

I shall only keep a Captains guard at Stoney Point until I hear further from your Excellency—for be assured the Works will be in our possession this Night—the moment we enter them I shall Announce it by the firing of five Cannon—Observing the time of half a Minute between each gun.

Interim I am your Excellency's Most Ob^t & very Hum^e Ser^t
Ant^y Wayne

Source: "To George Washington from Brigadier General Anthony Wayne, 21 October 1779," *Founders Online*, National Archives. Original source: *The Papers of George Washington*, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 22, 1 August–21 October 1779, Ed. Benjamin L. Huggins, Univ. of Virginia Press, Charlottesville, 2013, pp. 779–780.

General Orders for Embarked Troops Evacuating Stony Point and Verplanck's Point, Including the 42nd Highlanders, to Land and Take up Winter Quarter, New York, Oct. 25, 1779

Head Quarters Denys's House, 25th Octo^r 1779...

The Corps on Board Ships on the North River will Land as soon as Convenient and be stationed as follows 'till further Orders. Viz –

42 Regiment at Greenwich Encamped

Fanning's Corps...Loyal Americas...Fergusons Corps with the Light Company of 82^d...

The Commander in chief is pleased to make the following distribution of Quarters for the Troops for the ensuing Winter...

Royal Artillery	}	
4 th Batt ⁿ Hess ⁿ Gren ^{drs}	}	
42 ^d Regiment	}	In New York & Bowery Lane
54 th d ^o	}	
2 Batt ⁿ Skinners	}	...

Long Island

Light Infantry	}	Jamaica Hutted
Brit Grenadiers	}	...

Regiments will have notice given of the time they are to take possession of their respective quarters and every assistance will be given them in Fitting up their Hutts.

Source and Note: "Orders, 1778-1782," *Sir Henry Clinton Papers*, Vol. 266, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan. After destroying the fortifications they had built, the 42nd Regt. left Stony Point on Oct. 22, 1779 to return to New York. The huts mentioned were usually cut into a hillside facing south and the walls formed with the sod from the cut earth.



"The south side of the Fraunces Tavern in New York City," 2011, by Tm Pierce

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons

Excerpts of Notebook of Capt. John Peebles, 42nd Grenadier Company, Record the 42nd Grenadier Company and 42nd Lt. Infantry Company Moving to Their Winter Quarters, Jamaica, Long Island, New York, Oct. 25 – 28 and Nov. 8, 1779

Monday 25th. cool N.W. wind... The 42^d. landed & encamp'd north of the Town [New York City], they are to take Town duty din'd with the Major [Charles Graham] & some more at Queens head ["*Sign of Queen Charlotte*," now Fraunces Tavern]...

I hear the Gren^{rs}. are to go to their old Hutts at Jamaica in a few days...

Tuesday 26th. Oct^r. cool N.W^d. & clear [1st Gren.] Battⁿ. orders for all the Baggage to be put on board tomorrow morn^g. & the ships to fall down with the tide & make the best of their way to Hallets Cove in the East River where the Gren^{rs}. will disembark & proceed to Jamaica.

Wednesday 27th. clear & cold wind NW. The Transports got under way about 11 & drop'd down to New York, where we rec^d. orders to proceed to Brooklyn ferry & land in the morn^g...

Thursday 28th. Oct^r. fair & clear. The Gr^{rs}. landed at Brooklyn & march'd to Jamaica, & when the baggage came up in the Even^g Encamp'd on our old Ground near the English Church...

Monday 8th Nov^r. mild w^r. NW The Light Infantry [including the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co.] arrived to take possession of their former Q^{rs}. [quarters]...

Source and Note: NRS, *Peebles Journal* Entries for Oct. 25-28 and Nov. 8, 1779 and as published in *John Peebles' American War*, Ed. Ira Gruber, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg (Pa), 1998, pp. 302-304. In 1762, Samuel Fraunces opened the Sign of Queen Charlotte (Queen's Head Tavern), named for England's Queen Charlotte, at 54 Pearl Street, Manhattan. The tavern is located about half a mile east of Battery Park.

Excerpts of Letter No.76 from Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Reporting the Evacuation of Rhode Island and Stony Point, New York, Oct. 26, 1779

New York 26 October 1779

My Lord,

In consequence of a joint opinion with the Admiral [Mariot Arbuthnot] that whilst we remained inferior at sea Rhode Island was incapable of making a defence of eight and forty hours against such a force as [French Adm. Charles Hector] Count d'Estaing could in conjunction with the rebels bring before

it, and thinking that the troops in garrison there might be more usefully employed defensively at this instant and offensively in future, on the 7th of October I ordered the evacuation of that place...

I had the honour to acquaint your Lordship in my dispatch that I should probably quit Stony Point the moment I lost all prospect of acting against the rebels in Jersey or New York governments. I have now to inform you that I abandoned that post on the 23^d. [Rebel Gen. George] M^r Washington a few weeks ago affected in some degree to invest it, but I never believed his demonstrations serious or that he would hazard a general action on the terms upon which I could there have met him...

Admiral Arbuthnot is now with his fleet at Sandy Hook in the intention of sailing to succour Halifax. He has with him a command of troops under Brig. General [Thomas] Stirling [Lt. Col., 42nd Regt.] which, with General [Francis] MacLane's resources, will be sufficient to give the land defences of that place their fullest efficacy.

The grounds on which Halifax was supposed to be in danger were the information derived from dispatches intercepted with great address by the captain of a privateer. Your Lordship will in course receive them from the Admiral and know what matter they have revealed. How far bad weather or other causes may have influenced the Enemy's original designs we are yet to learn.

I am sorry to have to acquaint your Lordship that sickness still prevails in the Army and that we do not yet feel the expected good effects of the colder season. We have had the mortification from this disorder to lose [Hessian] Colonel [Friedrich von] Minnigerode. He has long commanded a Battalion of Hessian Grenadiers and from his distinguished character and eminent military services will claim that regret in Europe which has universally followed him here.

Signed.

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution, Vol. XVII, Transcripts 1779*, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1977, pp. 236-237 from TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1779* at CO 5/98, f. 320.

Rebel Account of 42nd Regt. Evacuation of Stony Point, New York, Oct. 23, 1779

Extract of a letter from a General officer at Camp (Highlands) dated Oct. 31, 1779

"Yesterday about noon the enemy set fire to their works on Verplank's and Stony Points, and embarked on board transports, having previously put their cannon, baggage, &c. on board, and fell down the river a little below Croton, where they came to anchor our troops immediately took possession of the works – several loaded shells which were left in the blockhouse, burst after our people went on to the point – thus have the enemy, in one day, attempted to destroy (for it is not half effected) and evacuated those points and works which cost them several months hard labor and much expense, the dissipation of the best part of the campaign, and the loss of at least 7 or 800 men in killed, prisoners, deserters and such as are rendered unfit for service, so does infatuated Britain pursue a war which, if much longer persisted in, will finish her win!

"I have this day been in to take a view of their works, they are generally strong, but have many defects, and the works is very badly executed: – On my first arrival at the point their shipping near Tappan Bay, had just got under sail, taking advantage of the ebb, the wind being southerly, and were beating down – before I left the point they were all out sight..."

Source and Note: *Independent Ledger* (Boston), Nov. 8, 1779, p. 3. Gen. Sir Henry Clinton reported Stony Point was evacuated Oct. 23.

General Order to Issue Winter Clothing to the Troops, New York, Nov. 2, 1779

Head Quarters Long Island, 2 Novem^r 79...

The Commander in Chief is pleas'd to order the Quarter Mas^r Gen^l to deliver to the several Corps of British & German Troops a proportion of Blankets, Mittens, Leggings Cloth, and Trimmings, Shirting Linen and Trimming for Shirts, Russian Drilling for Breeches, Shoes, Shoe Soals & Yarn Hose sent out

from England for the use of the Army which are to be paid for by the Corps that receive them when the Price & Terms in which they are Sent out are ascertained from England for which purpose a return of the Strength of each Corps is to be sent to the Qua^r Mas^r Gen^{ls} Office, signed by the Commanding Officers of each Corps on or before...

Source: "Orders, 1778-1782," *Sir Henry Clinton Papers*, Vol. 266, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan.



Detail of "A plan of the town, bar, harbour, and environs of Charlestown in South Carolina: with all the channels, soundings, sailing-marks &c. from the surveys made in the colony," by William Faden, circa 1780

Map Source: *Lib. of Congress, Geography and Map. Div.*

Gen. Sir Henry Clinton's Preparations for the Siege of Charleston, South Carolina, Aug. 20 – Dec. 31, 1779

**Excerpt of Letter No. 67 from Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Commander-in-Chief, North America,
to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Requesting
Permission to Resign His Command and the King's Refusal, New York and Whitehall,
Aug. 20, 1779 and Nov. 4, 1779**

New York 20 August 1779

My Lord,

I must beg leave to express how happy I am made by the return of [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis to this country. His Lordship's indefatigable zeal, his knowledge of the country, his professional ability, and the high estimation in which he is held by this Army must naturally give me the warmest confidence of efficacious support from him in every under taking which opportunity may prompt and our circumstances allow.

But his presence, my Lord, affords to me another source of satisfaction. When there is upon the spot an Officer every way so well qualified to have the interests of his country entrusted to him, I should

hope I might without difficulty be relieved from a station which nobody acquainted with its conditions will suppose to have sat light upon me.

To say truth, my Lord, my spirits are worn out by struggling against the consequences of many adverse incidents which without appearing publicly to account for my situation have effectually oppressed me. To enumerate them would be a painful and unnecessary, perhaps an improper, task. At the same time let me add, my Lord, that my zeal is unimpaired; and were I conscious that my particular efforts were necessary for His Majesty's service no circumstance of private feeling would raise within me a single wish of retiring from the command...

Thus circumstanced, and convinced that the force under my command at present or that will be during this campaign is not equal to the services expected from it, I must earnestly request your lordship to lay before His Majesty my humble supplication that he will permit me to resign the command of this Army to Lord Cornwallis. His Majesty's assent to this petition will crown the many favours of which my heart will ever retain the most grateful remembrance.

Signed.

[Secretary of War's Response]

Whitehall, 4 November 1779

Sir,

I did not omit the earliest opportunity of laying before His Majesty your letter of 20th August in which you express your desire of being permitted to return to England and resign the command of the troops to Lord Cornwallis. Though the King has great confidence in his Lordship's abilities, yet His Majesty is too well satisfied with your conduct to wish to see the command of his forces in any other hands...

Source: Documents of the American Revolution, Vol. XVII, Transcripts 1779, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1977, pp. 199-189 and 250-251 from TNA, Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Despatches, 1779 at CO 5/98, ff. 201 and 249.

Excerpts of Letter No. 68 from Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Reporting Preparations for the Charleston, South Carolina Campaign, Aug. 21, 1779

New York 21 August 1779

My Lord...

Your Lordship will no doubt have been aware that the delay of our expected reinforcements, the waste of the season, and the operations of the Enemy in that important interval, must naturally have so influenced circumstances as to render utterly unsuitable to the present hour that plan to which the past Movements of this campaign have been merely preparatory.

I now find myself obliged by many cogent reasons to abandon every view of making an effort in this quarter. The precautions which [Rebel Gen. George] M^r Washington has had leisure to take make me hopeless of bringing him to a general action, and the season dissuades me strongly from losing, time in the attempt. The weather will admit of our acting in Carolina in the beginning of October, and many motives call our attention to that point. I am convinced... that if we do not conquer South Carolina everything is to be apprehended for Georgia. We have flattering hopes of assistance from the inhabitants held forth to us by M^r Simpson who ought to be acquainted with the temper of the people, and though I cannot say that in my opinion the conquest would have the same serious influence which would have been the case at an earlier period of the war, it could not fail to have important consequences. In order to give the effort a fair trial it is necessary that the Corps destined for that service should get there before M^r Washington can throw any considerable reinforcement to the southward, before also any part of the French fleet... shall have come upon the coast. I am therefore employing the Army to perfect the defences of this post which at all events must be left out of reach of any probable insult. I shall then give the Enemy every jealousy to the eastward and without losing a moment the expedition will proceed to South

Carolina. What force I shall be able to allot to that service and what steps should be taken in pursuit of the object cannot yet be determined. The taking Charleston must probably be the first enterprise which, though I do not conceive it so easy to be effected as [Brig.] General [Augustine] Prevost esteems it, I should hope with the support which I am persuaded we shall have from the navy would be pretty certain and would tend most efficaciously towards the reduction of the province ...

Signed

Source: *Documents of the American Revolution, Vol. XVII, Transcripts 1779*, Ed. K. G. Davies, Irish University Press, Dublin, 1977, pp. 189-191 from TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1779* at CO 5/98, f. 206.



Detail of "Chart of the Harbour of Halifax, in Nova Scotia," 1768, by Thomas Jefferys

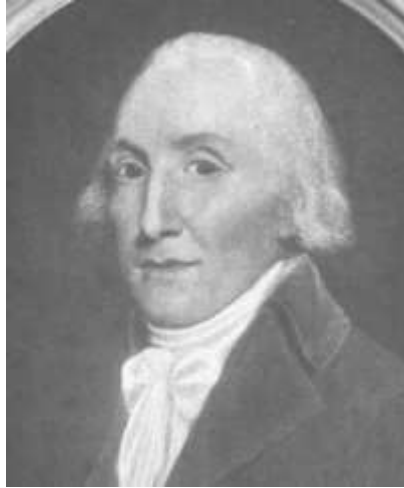
Map Source: *A general topography of North America and the West Indies. Being a collection of all the maps, charts, plans, and particular surveys, that have been published of that part of the world, either in Europe or America*, Library of Congress Geography and Map Div.

**Orders from Gen. Sir Henry Clinton Commander in Chief, North America,
to Brig. Gen. Thomas Stirling to Reinforce Halifax, Nova Scotia;
New York, Oct. 22, 1779**

October 22, 1779, Headquarters Denizis

"To proceed with the troops under his command – 57th Reg^t., the Volunteers of Ireland, 4 companies of the 80th and one of the Royal Highland Emigrants – to Halifax and put himself under the orders of Brig. Gen^l McLean. To return to New York when the Admiral and General think that post no longer threatened. Four companies of the 80th Regt. are to be left at Halifax; the whole of the Emigrants brought to New York.

Source: *Report on American Manuscripts in the Royal Institutions of Great Britain, Great Britain*, Vol. II, Historical Manuscripts Commission, Dublin, 1906, Google Books, p. 53. At this time the 42nd Regt. was being commanded by Maj. Charles Graham. Brig. Gen. Stirling's promotion was a temporary one in America only. Accordingly he still held his position as Lt. Colonel of the 42nd Regt.



Capt. John M'Intosh of Corrybrough More

Portrait Source: *The Balfours of Pilrig*, by Barbara Balfour-Melville of Pilrig, William Brown, Edinburgh, 1907, Google Books, after p. 178.

Excerpt of Letter from Former Capt. John M'Intosh to Gen. Lord John Murray, Col., 42nd Regt. Providing a Status of the Regiment, New York, Oct. 25, 1779

25th October 1779

My Lord

the 42^d are just arrived from Stoney Point, which is totally Evacuated and destroyed, & will be in Garrison in this Town I am told for the Winter, Gen^l [Thomas] Stirling is gone to Halifax I imagine for the Winter, theres nothing new nor nothing done here.

I shall always Remain My Lord &c
John M'Intosh

R^t Hon^{ble} Lord John Murray

Source and Note: *Lord John Murray Papers*. Capt. M'Intosh retired Sept. 20, 1779 after Brig. Gen. Stirling refused him leave to go home to be married.

Letter from Brig. Gen. Thomas Stirling to Gen. Lord John Murray, Col., 42nd Regt., Providing a Status of the Regiment, Off Sandy Hook, Oct. 27, 1779

Dated on board the [74-gun *HMS*] Russel Off Sandy Hook Oct^r 27 1779

My Lord

I am honored with your Lordships letters of 29th June & 6th July, the one you mention to have sent inclosing copy of Secretary at Wars of 5th May, do not recollect receiving, I wrote your Lop: lately with a return of the Reg^t as it then Stood we have Since that received 152 draughts from Different Corps Sent from England of all Nations, as the 26th Reg^t in which there were many Scotchmen was ordered to be draughted, I applied to the Commander in Chief, to be allowed to Exchange them, which was granted, and we got 95 from that Corps all N. Briton's [Scots] the remainder which are about 40 I shall endeavor to get Exchanged for our Country men from other Corps – The Reg^t Still wants 70 or 80 men, Several of our draughts having died Since they came here, a General & Severe Sickness having prevailed throughout the whole Army...

The Reg^t is come from Stoney Point, & now does duty in New York, The French Fleet under [Adm. Charles Hector] D. Estaigne, having caused an Alarm all along this coast, I am now embarked with the 57th Reg^t 4 Comp^{ys} of 82^d and Provincial Corps called Volunteers of Ireland to reinforce Halifax with 4 Ships of the Line, I expect to return before the End of this Year.

We have been able to do nothing this Campaign, nor do I see much prospect of doing anything this Winter, Ministry must contract their Scale of Operations, we are too much extended, we have no certain Accounts whither our Troops to the Southward have fallen or not, it would have been Lucky had we reinforced them last Winter and Taken Charlestown, we Should then have avoided the risk of Losing what we have gained, Stoney Point is abandoned, and orders have been given for the Evacuation of Rhode Island on the Report of [French Adm. Charles Henri Hector] D. Estaignes coming this way, but our fears having Subsided, orders are Sent to keep it, if they come are not too late...

I beg to offer my respectfull Comp^{lts} to Miss [Mary] Murray

I have the honor to be &c

Tho^s Stirling

Source and Note: *Lord John Murray Papers*. Mary Murray was Gen. Lord John Murray's daughter.



Reproduction Stirling's Brigade (17th, 42nd, 44th and 64th Regts.) Uniform Buttons

General Order Issued Assigning the Royal Highlander's to Brig. Gen. Thomas Stirling's Brigade, New York, Nov. 18, 1779

Head Quarters New York 18th Novem^r 1779...

Memorandum

17th, 42^d, 44th & 64th Regim^s will send in their Returns to Brigade Major [Frederick] MacKenzie at Gen Stirlings Quarters...

Source: "Orders, 1778-1782," *Sir Henry Clinton Papers*, Vol. 266, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan.



Detail of "A view of Fort George with the city of New York, from the SW," 1736, by John Carwitham

Picture Source: Fortwiki

Excerpt of Distribution of Forces Shows the 42nd Highlanders in the Garrison of New York, Dec. 1, 1779

Distribution of the following Corps under the Command of General Sir Henry Clinton

New York 1st Decem^r. 1779

Nation	Corps	Stations
British	{ Royal Artillery { 42 nd	} } Garrison of New York } }
German	{ ...	}... } New York Island...
British	{ Grenadier 2 Batt ^{ns} { Light Infantry	} Jamaica } Long Island... } }...
<i>H. Clinton</i>		

Source: TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1779 – 1780* at CO 5/99, Pt. 1, f. 12. The same report signed by “*John Andre D^y Adj: Gen*” is archived at “Distribution Report, Dec. 1, 1779, New York” in the Mackenzie Papers, Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan.

Maj. Frederick Mackenzie Provides Description of Barracks, New York (Written June 27, 1781)

The barracks at New York were wooden buildings two Stories high; those of the Officers so near those of the men, that the free passage of the air was obstructed. The upper part of the mens windows were glazed, the lower part had Shutters only. As the Regiment [23rd] was complete we were obliged to put the full compliment of men (14) in each room. The bedding consisted of a Palliase [mattress] filled with straw, a bolster [pillow], 2 blankets and a coverlid. No sheets. During the hot nights it was impossible for the men to bear a blanket on them, and as the windows were left open to admit the air, the damp which it brings with it about day break, checked the perspiration the men were in, and threw them onto Dysenteries, fevers & other disorders.

As the men were obliged to dress the victuals in the barracks rooms, they were heated like an Oven by 1 or 2 oClock.

Source: *Dairy of Frederick Mackenzie*, Vol. II, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1930 and reprinted by The New York Times & Arno Press, 1969, p. 555.

General Order Issued Regarding the Assignment of Companies to the Light Infantry Battalions, New York, Dec. 14-15, 1779

Head Quarters New York 14th Decem^r 1779...

The Mounted Light Infantry who are absent from their Corps, are to Join immediately.

Head Quarters New York 15th Decem^r 1779...

The Battalions of Light Infantry are to consist of the following companies.

1st Battⁿ

7th 22^d 33^d 37th 42^d 54th 63^d 70th 74th.

2nd Battⁿ

17th 23^d 38th 43^d 57th 64th 76th 80th 84th.

Source: “Orders, 1778-1782,” *Sir Henry Clinton Papers*, Vol. 266, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan.



Detail of Portrait of Charles Henri Jean-Baptiste, Comte d'Estaing, 1774, by Jean-Pierre Franque

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from *Palace of Versailles*

Letter No. 83 from Gen. Sir Henry Clinton, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the American Department, Reporting Charleston Expedition Delayed by Lack of Intelligence of Location of Adm. Count d'Estaing's French Fleet, New York, Dec. 15, 1779

New York Dec^r 15th 1779

My Lord,

We have remained in ignorance of the measures taken by [French Adm. Charles Hector] Count d'Estaing subsequent to his late attempt upon Savannah: Some Ships of his Squadron are said to be in Chesapeak Bay, and Some Frigates at Charlestown, but neither of these facts are pointedly related to any information received as yet.

Every disposition is made for the Embarkation of the Force destined to Act in Carolina, and I wait in anxious suspense for further Accounts of the French Fleet: Until we have these, it is thought too hazardous to proceed.

The Rebel Army are taking up their Winter Cantonments, but are not yet so settled as to enable me to pronounce where they will finally be fixed: [Rebel Gen. George] Washington with a great part of the Army is at Morris-Town, and detachments have quitted him to the amount of 1,500 Men to march to the Southward, amongst these is their Corps of Light Infantry.

I have the honor to be

With the greatest Respect

Your Lordship's Most Obedient and Most humble Serv^t

H. Clinton

R^t. Hon^{ble}

Lord George Germain

Source: Source: *Records of the British Colonial Office Class 5, Part 5: The American Revolution, 1772-1784*, Ed. Randolph Boehm, University Publications Inc., Frederick, MD, 1972, p. 627 from TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1779 – 1780* at CO 5/99, p. 81.



St. Andrew carving, c.1500 in the National Museum of Scotland

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons by Kim Traynor

**Excerpts of Notebook of Capt. John Peebles, 42nd Grenadier Company, Records
the Highlanders' Celebration of St. Andrews Day, Jamaica and New York City,
Nov. 29 – 30, 1779**

Monday 29th. Nov^r. soft w^r... gave out to the [42nd Gren.] Comp^y. a [Spanish milled] dollar a man & two to the Serj^{ts}. to keep S^t. A^w. [St. Andrew's Day]

Tuesday 30th fine w^r. & gentle frost...

Went to Town to celebrate the day with his Ex[cellency]: [Gen. Sir Henry Clinton] where the field off^{rs}. [Brig. Gen. Thomas Stirling, Maj. Charles Graham and Brevet-Lt. Col. Duncan M^cPherson] & Cap^{ts}. of the 42^d. [John Smith, Charles Grant, John Peebles, George Dalrymple, David Anstruther and Capt. Lt. John Rutherford] were invited, the Adm^l. [Mariot Arbuthnot] there the off^{rs}. of the Roy^l. Highland Emigrants [84th Regt.] & some others, about 24 in all. Major [John] Small [84th Regt.] personated the S^t. [Andrew] who gave very good toasts & appropos for the occasion, the adm^l. very chatty & entertaining. Major [Capt. Adam] Hay [31st Regt.] sang some good songs & spouted a prologue a good dinner & drink till 10 o'clock a numerous party of the Sons of S^t. And^w. din'd at Hicks's above 60, among whom were the Sub^s. [subalterns] of the 42^d. exchang'd a compli^t. & some of our Comp^y. join'd them after we broke up, & made a night of it –

Source: NRS, *Peebles Journal Entries* for Nov. 29-30, 1779 and as published in *John Peebles' American War*, Ed. Ira Gruber, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg (Pa), 1998, pp. 312-313. Hicks Tavern (previously the "Province Arms") was located on the corner of Thames and Broadway.

**News Account of St. Andrew's Day Celebration by Sergeants of the 42nd Highlanders, New York,
Nov. 30, 1779**

Among the parties that assembled to celebrate the anniversary of St. Andrew, the Serjeants of the 42d regiment dined and spent the day together, with the greatest cheerfulness and harmony; they separated with the utmost decency and good order, thereby expressing a high respect, as well for their tutelar Saint, as the Royal Regiment in which they have the honour of serving their Sovereign.

Source: *Royal Gazette* (New York), Dec. 4, 1779.

**Letter from Maj. of Brigade Edward Williams to Maj. Charles Graham,
42nd Regt. and Others, Regarding Fuel for the Garrison, New York, Dec. 1, 1779**

New York, December 1, 1779.

Sir,

The Commandant having found it expedient during the present scarcity to reduce the Issue of Fuel for this Garrison to two thirds of the Established Allowance, I am to signify to you that the Barrack Master has received directions to pay for the said Deficiency, from the time it first took place at the Rate of Four pounds Currency per Cord, – and that in future whilst this reduced Allowance shall continue, the Quarter Masters of the Different Corps will receive *Weekly* for the said deduction at the same rate.

I have, &c

E. [Edward] Williams,

Major of Brigade.

To L^t Col. Martin, R. A. – Major Graham, 42nd Reg^t. – L^t Cols. Linsing, Lingcote, Graff, Schuler; Hessian Grenadiers – Cols. De Voít, De Scobothén, Branden, Bareith: *Anspach*.

Source: "Letters of Maj. Gen. James Pattison," in *Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1875*, Publication Fund Series, Printed for the Society, New York, 1876, p. 305.

**Excerpts of Notebook of Capt. John Peebles, 42nd Grenadier Company, Record Beginnings
of Gen. Sir Henry Clinton's Expedition to Capture Charleston, South Carolina;
Jamaica, New York, Dec. 3 – 21, 1779**

Friday 3^d. Dec^r. a hard gale at N:W: & W.N.W – walk'd up Town & visited the Ladies & the hutts the n^o. of sick decreasing Battⁿ. orders to be in readiness to Embark on the shortest notice with Camp Equipage & field Baggage only, the heavy Baggage to be sent to store on further orders, no horses for the Capt^s. – I hear the follow^g. Corps have got orders of readiness viz^t. Light Infantry [including the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co.] & Gren^{rs}. [including the 42nd Gren. Co. in the 1st Bn.] 7th. 23^d. 33^d. 42^d. 63^d. 64th. [Loyalist] Queens Rangers & [Loyalist British] Legion Hessian Gr^{rs}. & two Hessⁿ. Batt^{ns}. – The Transports named for the different Corps, the [British] Gr^{rs}. have 3 ships P[er] Battⁿ. 1st. Battⁿ. The Margery [to carry the 42nd Gren. Co.], Thames & another

Saturday 4th Dec^r. moderate weather, getting ready for moving The mens brown trowzers are almost finish'd, the Taylors a cursed plague ...

Sunday 5th. Dec^r. a cloudy cold morn^g. wind N.E: & came on to snow in the forenoon which continued all day – with [Lt.] Col^l [Henry] Hope o the morn^g. Settling about sea stock [for officers' mess] for our Ship, in which goes the Col^l. with the 17th. 37th. 38th. & 42^d. [Gren. Companies] & we club Six weeks pay according to our rank to lay in Stock & Stores for the Voyage, for which we are told we will be indemnify'd if the Expedition does not go on...

Tuesday 7th. fine w^r. & good Sleighing up in Town, – sent Camp Equipage on board o'ship with a man P Co^y...

Wednesday 8th. Dec^r. fine w^r. wind in the NW. – our heavy baggage going into Store in [New] York, scarce of carriage – had ½ a dozen to dine – Cap^t. [George Dalrymple] Dalyr^{ls}. come to join the [42nd] Light In^{try}. vice [Capt. John] Smith who returns to the Reg^t. The Light Infantry to be divided into two Batt^s. L^t. Col: [Thomas] Dundas [80th or Royal Edinburgh Volunteers Regt.] to have the 2^d. an order for the Barrack bedding to be taken on board with us...

Thursday 9th. frost in the night & fine clear w^r. – Sent my heavy baggage to Town – the [42nd Gren.] Comp^{ys}. articles very troublesome for want of package sent the mens blankets [to storage], having a new set of plaids, & they can't carry both compleated them in necessaries... went to N: York... The Q^r. M^r. [quartermaster] wo^d. not let the Baggage in because it came to late, spoke to him but he is harden'd...

Thursday 16th. Dec^r. Snow from the S: W... sent the mess stores on board... sent also my big trunk on board, The transports getting underway & going up the east River to Whitestone where the troops from Long Island are to Embark, those at N:York embark there...

Friday 17th. Dec^r. cold & raw little wind from N:E: looks like snow a Battⁿ. parade at 11 & to be every day – expect to embark as soon as the transport come to Whitestone...

Sunday 19th. a cold sharp N:W. wind & hard frost. Orders last night to march this morn^g. to Brooklyn to Embark The Transports having returned to that place... The Troops that were under orders for this Expedition all in motion for Embarkation except the 42^d. [Regt.] who are countermanded; those on Long Island to embark at Brooklyn, but it blew so hard we could not attempt it, the troops took shelter in Brooklyn Church... for the night

Monday 20th. Dec^r. hard frost & strong wind at NW. The Troops began to Embark in the forenoon & continued till night; very cold business, some men frostbit, & 2 or 3 drown'd our [1st Grenadier] Battⁿ. all Embark'd but no baggage, got the men disposed of between decks which is very roomy, The off^{rs}. lay on the cabin floor on a sail

Tuesday 21st. this cold NW wind still continues more troops embarking, but it is tedious on account of the cold & strong wind got some of our baggage on board, some off^{rs}. – & I got six men from the [42nd] Reg^t. with their acco^{ts}. to 24 Dec^r. a Copy of which I sign'd & sent back with their arms, by the Serj^t. who brought them – hear'd today the [42nd Regt.] Q^r. M^r. [Colin] Smith shot himself yesterday in the [Regimental] Store, tis supposed on account of some clandestine management on the Virginia expedition

Source and Note: NRS, *Peebles Journal* Entries for Dec. 3-21, 1779 and as published in *John Peebles' American War*, Ed. Ira Gruber, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg (Pa), 1998, pp. 313-317. Lt. Col. Dundas, son of Thomas Dundas of Finback, and a Member of Parliament, was 29 years old at the time of this appointment.

Adj. General's Report of Location of 42nd Regt., New York, Dec. 14, 1779

Distributions 14th Dec^r. 1779

Fit for Duty	Total Eff.	Corps	Stations...
532	751	{ 42 nd ...	} Garrison of New York... }
753	1050	{ Grenadiers 2 Batt ^{ns}	} Jamaica }
1020	1134	{ L ^t . Infantry	} }

Source and Note: "Distribution Report, Dec. 14, 1779, New York," *Mackenzie Papers*, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan. The other regiments on garrison duty at New York besides the Royal Artillery were all German regiments i.e. Linsing, Lingerke, Minnigerode, Graff, and 1st and 2nd Batt. Ansbach.

General Order Issued for Embarkation of Troops for Gen. Sir Henry Clinton's Charleston, South Carolina Expedition, New York, Dec. 18 and 21, 1779

Head Quarters New York 18th Decem^r 1779...

The Grenadiers [including the 42nd Gren. Co. in the 1st Bn.], Light infantry [including the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co. in the 1st Bn.], Lieu^t Col. [Banastre] Tarleton's Detachment of Cavalry [British Legion], the 23^d 33^d [Hessian] Reg^t of Huyn & the Detachments from the Provincial Corps at Springfield will march tomorrow Morning from their Cantonments and Quarters to the Brewery at Brooklyn to embark as follows –

The 23^d at nine o'Clock
33^d Regiment at Eleven
Grenadiers, Light Infantry and Detachment at one
Regiment of Huyn at three

Colonel Tarletons Detachment will take up for the night the quarters of the Provincial Train in the Neighborhood of Brooklyn and the next day be crossed over to the Ship Yards to Embark at the Wharf in the East River at New York.

The Infantry of the [British] Legion are to March tomorrow morning and Occupy the Hutts of the Grenadiers at Jamaica and on Monday move to Brooklyn to be embarked at one o’Clock.

The Regim^t Donop and Landgrave are to march tomorrow Morning to Brooklyn Ferry where they will cross to New York, the former at ten o’Clock and the latter at two.

The 37th Regiment and [Hessian] Regiment of Du Corps will march on Monday morning to Hell Gate where they will cross to York Island and move the former to the Cantonments of the 64th, the latter to New York.

The different Regim^{ts} will report their Landing on Staten Island to Brig^r Gen^l [James] Patterson and on York Island to Major Gen^l [James] Pattison

The Hessian Grenadiers, 64th Reg^t and Detachment of Yagers are to Embark on Board their Ships at the Wharfs in the East River tomorrow.

64th and detachment of Yagers will march from their Cantonments so as to be able to Embark the former at twelve and the latter at 2 o’Clock.

Colonel [Beverly] Robinsons [Loyal American Regt.] Corps will relieve the Guards of the 64th Regiment at Mardens Wharf and Turtle Bay.

Head Quarters New York 21st Dec^r 1779

Morning Orders.

The Corps Embarking are to take on Board the follow^g Proportion of Waggon and Harness:

British Regiments 3 each

Hessian 4 each

Flank Companies 3 each

The Regiments are to be answerable to the Q^r M^r Gen^l for these.

Source and Note: “Orders, 1778-1782,” *Sir Henry Clinton Papers*, Vol. 266, William L. Clements Library, Univ. of Michigan. During the initial part of the expedition and siege the 42nd Regt. remained in the New York area under the command of Hessian Lt. Gen. Wilhelm von Knyphausen.

Listing of Troops Embarked for Charleston Expedition, Including the 42nd Regt., New York, Dec. 23, 1779

State of the Troops Embarked under Sir H. Clinton’s Command on an Expedition to the Southward
23^d Dec^r 79

	<u>Total Strength</u>
Light Infantry	1, 041
1 Grenadiers	399
2 D ^o	384...
42 ^d [Regiment]	591...
[Total]	<u>7594</u>

Source and Notes: Source: *Records of the British Colonial Office Class 5, Part 5: The American Revolution, 1772-1784*, Ed. Randolph Boehm, University Publications Inc., Frederick, MD, 1972, p. 645 from TNA, *Correspondence, Original, Secretary of State, Military Dispatches, 1779 – 1780* at CO 5/99, p. 59. British regiments included the 7th, 23rd, 33rd, 63rd, and 64th. The 42nd Regt. was removed from the embarkation just prior to departure.

Questionable Account by Pvt. John Robert Shaw, 33rd Regt., of Grounding of 42nd Regt. Transports, New York, Dec. 25, 1779

“We [33rd Regt.] lay that winter at a place called the Narrows on Long Island until Christmas Day, when an expedition was undertaken by [Gen.] Sir Henry Clinton and Admiral [Mariot] Arbuthnot, against Charleston in South Carolina...

Our shipping lay on East River with the troops on board until the breaking of the ice, when several regiments were in the most imminent danger of being lost, particularly the 42nd, who were driven ashore with eight or ten ships, great and small...

Source and Note: *An Autobiography of Thirty Years 1777-1807*, John Robert Shaw, (ed. by Oressa M. Teagarten and Jeanne L. Crabtree), Ohio Univ. Press, Athens, 1992, pp. 27-28. These transport groundings may account for the removal of the 42nd Regt. from the expedition under Gen. Clinton. However, Capt. Peebles notes on Dec. 19th that the “42d are countermanded...” putting Shaw’s recollection under considerable question.

Excerpt of Hessian Jäger Capt. Johann Ewald’s Description of the Charleston Fleet Formation, Off Sandy Hook, New Jersey, Dec. 26, 1779

		[HMS] Perseus frigate 32 guns...		
[HMS] Roebuck, 44 guns ...where Lord Cornwallis was aboard	The transports with the [1 st and 2 nd Bns.] English grenadiers [including the 42 nd Gren. Co. in the 1 st Bn.]	[HMS] Europe 64 guns...	The transports ships of the [1 st and 2 nd Bns.] light infantry [with the 42 nd Lt. Inf. Co. in the 1 st bn.]	[HMS] Romulus, 44 guns... The Commander in Chief, General Clinton was aboard here....

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. 192.

Excerpts of Notebook of Capt. John Peebles, 42nd Grenadier Company, Record the Sailing of Gen. Sir Henry Clinton’s Expedition to Capture Charleston, South Carolina; New York, Dec. 23 - 26, 1779 and Jan. 30, Feb. 8-9, 1780

Thursday 23^d. Dec^r. very hard frost last night & much ice about the ships – the [44 gun HMS] Romulus [carrying Commander in Chief Gen. Sir Henry Clinton] got underway at high water about 10 o’clock & stood down to the [Sandy] Hook the transports follow’d as they got ready being in danger from the ice & I hear six or 7 of them are drove ashore in the East River, we got down to near the hook in the afternoon & came to anchor... we found all the men of war lying at the hook with the adm^l. viz the [64 gun HMS] Europe, [74 gun HMS] Russel, [64 gun HMS] Defiance, [64 gun HMS] Reasonable & [HMS] Roebuck 40 [guns], & two or 3 frigates ...

Friday 24th. clear & cold NW the adm^l. [Mariot Arbuthnot] with 6 large ships sail’d out & came to anchor without the hook some more ships & vessels coming down

Saturday 25th. Dec^r. cold & cloudy with the wind about N:N:E. the large men of war without [outside the Hook] are getting under way as the w^r. does not admit of their riding there a Signal from the [flagship HMS] Europe for all masters when they got a paper of Instructions & signals sign’d by Cap^l. Swiney & a paper with the ord^r. of sailing sign’d by the Adm^l. viz^l.

		Pereus [20 gun HMS Perseus]		
		Europe		
Roebuck	1 st Gr ^{rs} . [transports] 2 ^d . d ^o .	Principal agent	1 st L ^t . Inf ^y . [transports] 2 ^d . d ^o .	Romulus...

Sunday 26th. clear & cold north wind The large men of war without have made a stretch out & come in again near the shore outside the hook, a Signal for sailing the ships getting under way & sail’d out of the Hook about 2 o’clock in the Afternoon taking their stations according to the order of sailing,

about 100 sail of square rigg'd Vessels besides Sloops & schooners steering to the So^d: [southward] on duty for the day,

The Com^r. in Chief in the Romulus [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis in the Roebuck

Sunday 30th. Jan^{ry}. light wind from the No^{wd}... see land which we take to be the island of Tybee [Georgia] bearing NW, about noon the Raisonable desir'd us to make the best way in... Lord Cornwallis went up to Savannah in a Brig...

Margery Transport off Tybee 8th Feb^{ry}. 1780 – a strong cold westerly wind. a ship & two Brig's come down from Savannah The Transports getting water & provision we are compleated to 30 days, & have taken in our flat boat again... orders to sail tomorrow the Rendezvou 20 Leagues alongshore...

Wednesday 9th. Feb^{ry}. a cold morn^g. with the wind in the north, The Agent made a signal for masters & told them to get under way, the Adm^l. got under way in the Roebuck about 10 o'clock & stood out over the Bar & hove too, the rest of the ships follow'd as they got up their Anchors, wind westerly ...

Source: NRS, *Peebles Journal* Entries for Dec. 23-30, 1779 and Jan. 30 and Feb. 8-9, 1780 and as published in *John Peebles' American War*, Ed. Ira Gruber, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg (Pa), 1998, pp. 317-319, 330 and 333.