

BATTLE OF PRINCETON MAPPING PROJECT

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REPORT OF MILITARY TERRAIN ANALYSIS AND BATTLE NARRATIVE PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

PREPARED FOR THE
PRINCETON BATTLEFIELD SOCIETY

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BY
JOHN MILNER ASSOCIATES, INC.
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REPORT OF MILITARY TERRAIN ANALYSIS
AND
BATTLE NARRATIVE
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY**

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Princeton Battlefield Society

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the methods, terrain analyses, historical narrative and recommendations resulting from the Battle of Princeton Mapping Project. Funded by a grant (GA 2255-08-015) from the American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) and administered by the Princeton Battlefield Society (PBS), the purpose of the project was to create a comprehensive study of the significant cultural features, troop movements, and topographical features through the use of historical written and graphic sources and to correlate the historical record with the existing terrain.

The mapping is a principal product of this study and their development relied on a rigorous and careful read of the historical records of the battle. The analysis of the documentary record is also critical to interpreting, and in at least one important element, reinterpreting, the ebb and flow of the battle. Several excellent recent historical treatments of the battle were consulted, and the present study also compiled over 160 first-person sources, including both American and Crown Forces, ranging from memoirs of participants to pension records. Following the guidance established by the ABPP the project team applied KOCOA military terrain analysis of battlefield. KOCOA is an acronym of Key Terrain, Observation, Cover and Concealment, Obstacles, and Avenues of Approach and Retreat. No archeological investigations were conducted as part of this project. However, artifact information available from previous archeological surveys constituted an additional data source and was integrated into the military terrain analysis and interpretation of the battle.

This report contains several important changes to the standard interpretation of the chronology and geographical distribution of opposing forces before the Battle of Princeton and their subsequent movements as the battle unfolded on 3 January 1777. Specifically these changes are: 1) a reinterpretation of the route of General Mercer's forces to and beyond the Thomas Clarke House; 2) the position of General Mercer's forces on the battlefield at the initial of the exchange; 3) the composition and distribution of Crown Forces and the location and orientation of the British battle line from the bridge across the Stony Brook to Nassau Hall; 4) the location of the main battlefield on the State Park and Institute for Advanced Study properties; 5) the route of the American forces under Washington toward Princeton; and 6) the composition of and the flanking maneuvers by American forces sent to take and destroy the bridge across the Stony Brook.

These changes are based on: 1) the discovery of a portion of the trace of Sawmill Road; 2) the discovery of important new accounts, both American and British, including correspondence surrounding the death of Capt. William Leslie of the 17th Regiment of Foot and the Court Martial proceedings of Cornet Henry Evatt of 16th Regiment of Light Dragoons; 3) a critical reading of previously known accounts; 4) the extensive use of pension applications; 5) the interpretation of archeological evidence; and 6) the extensive use of computer technology. The chronology of events and the geographical distribution of forces presented in this report emerged when the available information was analyzed using modern computer technology such as georeferencing of historic maps, computer-based distance analyses, and the use of three-dimensional topographical feature maps showing lines of vision at different times across the battlefield.

The report is arranged in the following order. The methods used by the project team to compile records, examine the field, and develop the GIS overlays are presented first, followed by the KOCOA analysis of the battlefield. The battle narrative, based on the terrain analysis and first-person accounts comprises the bulk of the document. Conclusions, recommendations,

acknowledgments, a secondary sources reference section, and appendices containing an annotated list and transcript of the first-person accounts compiled and used in the analysis are included. Based on the results of the project, revisions to the ABPP's current Study Area for the Battlefield are presented.

The results of the study provide the PBS, the ABPP, local and state agencies, and others with a planning tool for the protection and interpretation of the battlefield, and could be used to indicate those locations where preservation and/or land acquisitions are warranted.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

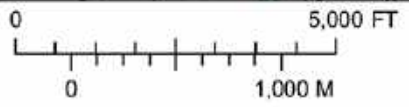
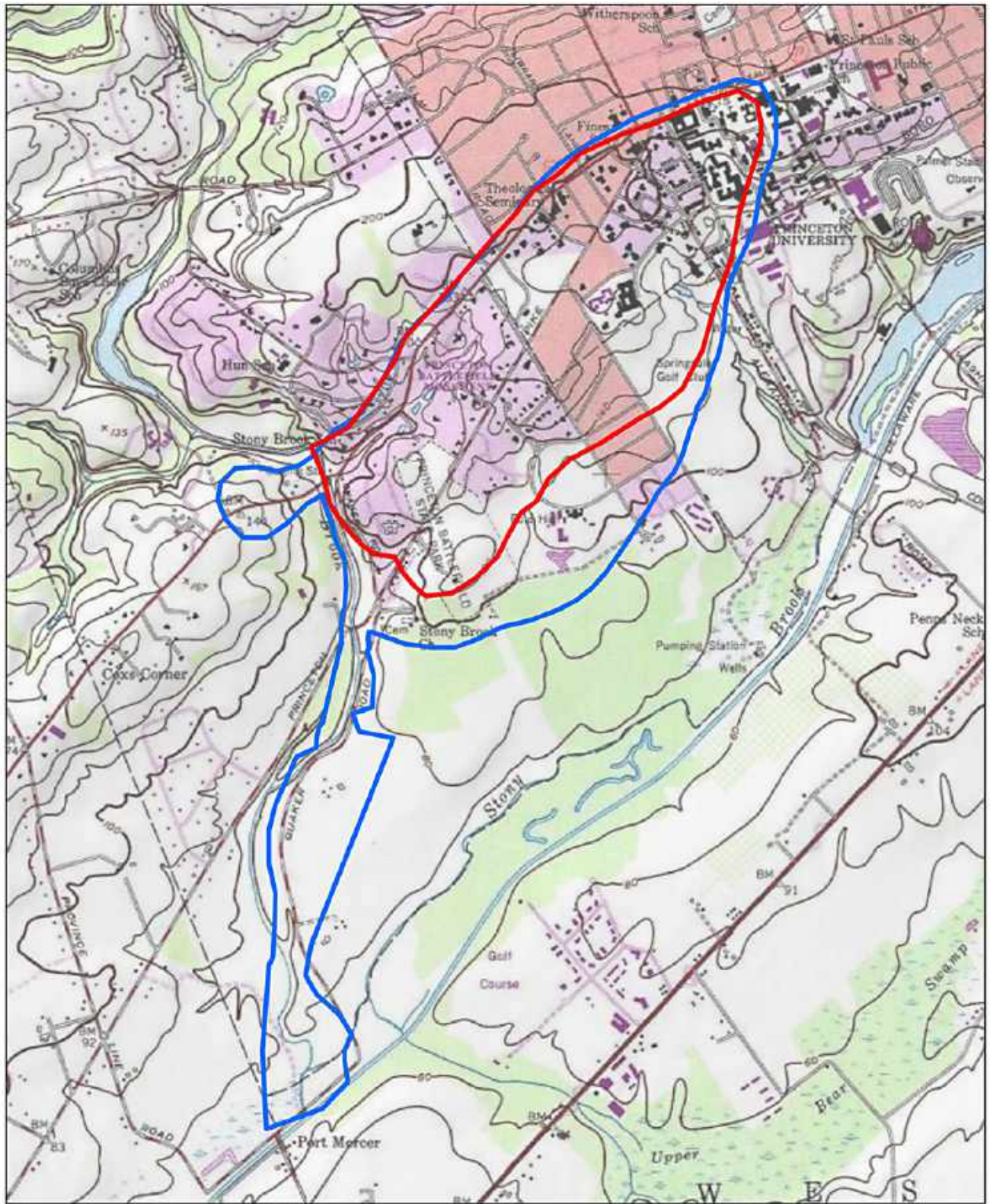
This report presents the methods, terrain analysis, and narrative of the battle for the Princeton Battlefield Project (Figure 1). Funded by a grant from the American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) and administered by the Princeton Battlefield Society (PBS), the purpose of the Princeton Battlefield project is to create a comprehensive digital map of the significant cultural features, troop movements, and topographical features through the use of historical written and graphic sources and to correlate the historical record with the existing terrain. As envisioned the map would depict not only the Core Area of the battlefield but would include the larger Study Area. The completed digital map will provide the PBS, the ABPP, and other local, state, and federal agencies with a planning tool for the protection and interpretation of the battlefield, and could be used to indicate those locations where acquisitions might be warranted.

The Study Area of the Battle of Princeton is an evolved cultural landscape that includes some features dating to the battle. In particular, recent archeological testing has shown that the area of the State Park and the surrounding fields retain substantial integrity from the period of the battle. The National Historic Landmark Program and the ABPP have both identified the Princeton National Historic Landmark (NHL) as threatened due to proposed residential development in the fields immediately adjacent to (east of) the State Park lands.

One of the products of the project is a series of map overlays, including digitized and georectified historical maps (published and manuscript), property plats, road maps, aerial photographs, USGS quadrangle maps, and insurance maps. These layers are enhanced by the addition of a series of battle maps that include troop movements and positions. Using elevation data from USGS maps and on-the-ground observation, the project team also developed a series of viewshed overlays, critical to understanding the opening sequence of the battle and for determining who could see what from various points on the battlefield.

The GIS map overlays are a principal product of this study and the development of the overlays relies on a rigorous and careful read of the historical records of the battle. The analysis of the documentary record is critical to interpreting, and in at least one important element, reinterpreting, the ebb and flow of the battle. The historical sources utilized for the study of Princeton Battlefield represent over 150 first-person sources, including both American and Crown Forces, ranging from memoirs of participants to pension records. We relied on primary sources for preparation of the maps, although we reviewed all of the significant secondary sources (see references cited for a list of the secondary sources).

Accurate identification of troop formations present at the Princeton – the Order of Battle – was a primary goal of this project. The project team used a number of sources to complete as accurate a list of military units as possible. Secondary sources such as Smith (1967), Ketchum (1973), Bill (1975), Dwyer (1983), Hackett Fischer (2004), and Bonk (2009) were used as starting points, and we supplemented these with examinations of official records, pension records, and other primary sources. Determining, if possible, the strengths of the various formations and numbers of cannon present were also important parts of this research. The Order of Battle included in this report thus incorporates primary and secondary sources, and in some cases has identified formations that heretofore were not known to have participated in the battle (for example, a company of militia from New Castle County, Delaware), or has provided additional information about the composition and strength of the various units (the ad hoc formation of the British grenadiers, light infantry, and convalescents, for example).



Quadrangle Location

- Battlefield Core Area
- Battlefield Study Area

Figure 1. Location of Princeton Battlefield Core and Study Areas, as previously defined by the American Battlefield Protection Program (USGS *Princeton, New Jersey* quadrangle, 1954, photorevised 1981).

Following the guidance established by the ABPP the project team applied KOCOAs military terrain analysis of battlefield (Lowe 2000, Walker and Thomason 2004). KOCOAs is an acronym of Key Terrain, Observation, Cover and Concealment, Obstacles, and Avenues of Approach and Retreat. Used by the American military in the training of its officers, the application of KOCOAs allows the research to view the battlefield as a participant in the engagement would have, not as a cultural landscape, or as a bucolic field or quiet woods. On-the-ground knowledge of the battlefield is critical to understanding the action (Andrus 2004), and the project team walked or toured the battlefield on several occasions, conducting timed movements on the battlefield and examined the topography. We also dissected the first-person accounts for any topographic information, troop movement and sequencing, and visualization data. The identification and, if possible, relocation of Saw Mill Road was an important terrain feature for interpreting the battlefield, since it was the principal avenue of approach for the Continental army. Long vacated and unused, the exact location of the road has been an issue for battle interpretation. While the documentary metes-and-bounds record of the creation of the road has not been found in the archives, through the project team’s research into the land plats of the battlefield, the first-person accounts, and through the terrain analysis, we believe we have located a portion of that road.

The archeological study of battlefields is proving that the physical evidence of such fields of conflict is often remarkably resilient and still present beneath the ground. While subsurface testing was not within the scope of this project, the project team treated the artifact information that is available from previous archeological surveys as a data source and integrated the material evidence provided by the archeological remains in the military terrain analysis and interpretation of the battle.

We applied the principle of Inherent Military Probability to the study of the Princeton battlefield (Keegan 1977:33-34). As initially developed by the German military historian Hans Delbrück and further refined by British historian A.H. Burne, this principle holds that often well-worn and accepted accounts of a particular battle will be found to be impossible given the constraints of terrain, timing, and other factors, and by placing yourself in the position of what a knowledgeable individual or officer could have accomplished in a similar situation. As will be seen, this process of critical reexamination of primary sources led the project team to the conclusion that the opening movements and actions on the morning of 3 January 1777 – namely the movement of the German Regiment prior to the battle, the deployment of the 4th Brigade by Mawhood, and the actions of Mercer’s Brigade – are in need of reinterpretation.

It is also important for the researcher to understand relevant historical military practices which were in force at the time of the engagement, so that, as Glenn Foard’s suggests, the principle should be termed Inherent *Historical* Military Probability (Foard 2009:141). The manuals available at the time of the American War for Independence provide specifics regarding the spacing between and among formations, rates of march, and the specific methods necessary to deploy companies, battalions, and other maneuvering or firing formations. These manuals provide something of the “limits of the possible” which would have governed the actions of commanders in the field, keeping in mind that variations to the manuals were always possible given opportunities arising from such factors as terrain, visibility, and other battlefield conditions. The most comprehensive study to date for the British forces during the American War for Independence is the recent volume by Matthew Spring (Spring 2008). Through our study of eighteenth century military practices as dictated by drill manuals and contemporary military writings we have applied this approach and it is reflected in our mapping and KOCOAs analyses.

While the GIS mapping was the primary product of this undertaking, a written report of the methods, KOCO analysis, and battle narrative is equally important, as a complementary product but also as a stand-alone document. The GIS mapping contains layers and metadata explaining how data points were derived, but understanding the process through which the resources were analyzed and the subsequent interpretation of the battle developed by the project team requires a written narrative. This report is the result of the research and analysis that went into the creation of the GIS mapping.

Another aspect of the KOCO analysis and the GIS mapping was the development of the viewshed analysis. We applied the methods for viewshed analysis previously used on battlefields (cf., Carlson-Drexler 2009; Heckman 2009). For our study of Princeton Battlefield, the viewshed analyses were critical to determining the viewpoints of several participants at significant moments of the battle, in particular the initial mutual sightings of the opposing forces near daybreak on 3 January, and in determining the movements and location of Continental forces during the final assault on the town.

To fully understand the actions and reactions of opposing forces in battle and to interpret the battle accurately and in a balanced fashion, it is important to have access to participants' accounts from both of the forces involved (Williams and Langum 2004). For the study of the Battle of Princeton many American first-person accounts exist and are well-known. This should come as no surprise since the significance of the battle, as part of the Ten Crucial Days surrounding the Trenton and Princeton campaign, was recognized immediately by the rebellious colonials. American participants such as James Wilkinson, Charles Wilson Peale, Thomas Rodney, "Sergeant R", John Cadwalader, Appollos Morris, and many others left written records of the action. To this group the project team has added considerably, most notably through the examination of soldiers pensions.

In contrast to written record detailing actions from an American perspective was a near absence of first-person Crown Forces accounts. This lack of accounts could be explained by a number of factors, beginning with the embarrassing acknowledgment that the Crown Forces were defeated, an outcome not likely to inspire recordation although one that should have demanded culpability. Other contributing factors could be that the commanding officer of the British 4th Brigade, Charles Mawhood, did not survive the war, nor did the senior captain commanding the 17th Regiment of Foot that day, Captain Francis Tew, who was killed at Stony Point in 1779 (Odnitz 1988). The project team, through consultation with other American Revolution scholars and through its own research, has been able to significantly add to the written record of the Crown Forces at Princeton. The discovery of a court martial record for an officer in the 16th Light Dragoons, letters from an officer in the 17th Regiment of Foot, correspondence by the theater commander in New Jersey, and other official Crown Forces documents have allowed the project team to gain a better impression of the moves, actions, and reactions of the Crown Forces on 3 January 1777 than previously obtained by historians.

The document that follows is arranged in the following order. The methods used by the project team to compile records, examine the field, and develop the GIS overlays are presented first. This section is followed by the KOCO analysis of the battlefield. The battle narrative, based on the terrain analysis and the critical review and read of the first-person accounts comprises the bulk of the document. Included with the report are acknowledgments of individuals who assisted the team, a secondary sources reference section, and appendices containing an annotated list and transcript of all of the first person accounts compiled and used in the analysis.

2.0 PROJECT METHODS, RESEARCH METHODS, AND RESEARCH DESIGN

The purpose of the "Battle of Princeton" project within the American Battlefield Protection Program is to undertake mapping of the engagements of the Battle of Princeton through use of historical written and graphic resources and correlation of the historical record with the existing terrain. The goal of the project is to determine, find and delineate on the ground as closely as possible the actual geographical extend of troops movements of Continental Army forces as well as Crown Forces prior to, during, and after combat activities on 3 January 1777. The ultimate products for this project are a military terrain analysis report and GIS overlays tracing the movements of these forces on the ground.

In order to achieve this goal, the project team's methods included:

- 1) an in-depth survey of all known primary accounts (published and unpublished) of both Continental Army as well as Crown Forces personnel who participated in the Battle of Princeton;
- 2) an in-depth survey of the most important secondary sources relating to the Winter Campaign of 1776-1777 with a focus on the Battle of Princeton;
- 3) a compilation of published maps and aerial images depicting change over time on the battlefield and surrounding area;
- 4) investigations into specific deeds and other land activities (property lines, roadways); and
- 5) a re-construction of a time-line of movement and activities of all participants in the battle based on the lay-out of the battlefield in 1777.

The reconstruction of the movements of opposing forces on the ground is based on a critical reading of primary sources and the application of principles of military terrain analysis developed by the US Army known under the acronym "KOCOFA", i.e., Key Terrain, Observation and Fields of Fire, Cover and Concealment, Obstacles, Avenues of Approach. This reconstruction of troop movements generates an account of the battle of Princeton in the form of a Military Terrain Analysis with a focus on geographical as well as topographical/surface features. In this it follows the format and procedures outlined in *Battlefield Survey Manual: American Battlefield Protection Program* David W. Lowe (Lowe 2000).

Research began with an in-depth survey of existing documentation in secondary literature, including maps, aerial images, historical accounts, and previous studies. Particularly helpful were Samuel Stelle Smith, *The Battle of Princeton* (Smith 1967), and David Hackett Fischer's recent monograph *Washington's Crossing* (Hackett Fischer 2004).

A survey report such as this depends on primary sources, accounts by participants, i.e., the journals, diaries and letters kept by or sent by officers as well as enlisted men, both published and unpublished. A comprehensive listing of these sources can be found in J. Todd White, *Fighters for Independence: A Guide to Sources of Biographical Information on Soldiers and Sailors of the American Revolution* (White 1977). A list limited to accounts by enlisted men is available at <http://www.RevWar75.com>. Though relevant to the study of the American War of Independence,

this report does not include a discussion as to the reasons and motivations of individuals for keeping diaries or writing memoirs. The readership of this report is well aware of the fact that diaries, journals and memoirs often can not be taken at face value but need be compared with other primary sources.

The next step in compiling this report consisted in tracking down all primary sources relative to the Battle of Princeton listed in these bibliographies, secondary sources and in the finding aids of pertinent archival repositories.

On the American side, many of the most important sources were published during the nineteenth century in magazines such as the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* or the *Pennsylvania Archives*. Other important collections of accounts by participants consulted were published by Charles Chauncy Haven, *Thirty Days in New Jersey Ninety Years ago, An Essay revealing new Facts in Connection with Washington and his Army in 1776 and 1777* (Haven 1867) and William S. Stryker, *The Battles of Trenton and Princeton* (Stryker 1898). Since Stryker did not give sources for his accounts efforts were made to identify whenever possible the original source.

An important collection of primary sources readily available are applications for pension for Revolutionary War service following federal legislation in 1832. Among the first historians to recognize the value of these accounts was John C. Dann, ed., *The Revolution Remembered. Eyewitness Accounts of the War for Independence* (Dann 1980); since then, close to 8,000 accounts have been transcribed and published at <http://southerncampaign.org/>; they are available and were used extensively in their entirety at www.footnote.com. Particularly the Gratz Collection in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia and the resources of the David Library of the American Revolution in New Hope, Pennsylvania were used extensively as well.

Many of the unpublished sources, particularly an undated "Memorandum" by John Armstrong enclosed in a letter of 13 September 1839 to Hugh Mercer, were available at the Clarke House Museum on the Princeton Battlefield State Historic Site. Others such as the accounts by Major Apollos Morris (Sparks Collection at Harvard University), Robert Beale (Virginia Historical Society), Samuel Massey (John Reed Collection, Valley Forge NHP) or George Weedon (Weedon Papers, Chicago Historical Society) were collected from archives and repositories across the United States.

If the total count of primary sources that mention the Battle of Princeton grew to more than 120, accounts on the British side barely amount to 20 sources, a fraction of the count for the Continental Army. Most of these sources are already published, though the records of the Courts-Martial of Henry Evatt in the National Archives of Great Britain (formerly Public Record Office) and the papers of General James Grant (microfilm in the Library of Congress) together with a series of letters surrounding the death of William Leslie published by Marianne M. Gilchrist in 2005 add much to our knowledge. Appendices I and II contain the first-person accounts.

Locating and cataloguing primary sources is a necessary but mechanical task which by itself says nothing about the value of a source for the task at hand. It needs to be followed by a critical reading and evaluation of the information contained in these sources based on criteria such as chronological proximity of the author to the event described, whether the author was a participant in the event he or she describes or whether he or she (re-) tells information received from others, taking into account possible reasons for compiling an account and/or the general reliability of the

author based on what we know about her or him. It should always be the goal of any researcher to work as much as possible from primary source evidence: heuristic devices can not be substitutes for evidence.

In spite of the most thorough research, however, an image of the past can not always be reconstructed based solely on primary-source evidence and an educated guess, logical deductions, or simply common sense must be used to provide as completely as possible that coherent and logical image of past events historians strive to paint. This was also the approach pursued by the compilers of this report as we approached the task of evaluating and ranking the primary sources available.

The sequence of events during the battle of Princeton that emerged as a result of this approach, based on hundreds of primary sources, led to a re-evaluation of some of the most commonly used sources, particularly the account by James Wilkinson, written in 1816. Wilkinson, whose work has been quoted extensively in prior studies, was an aide-de-camp to Washington and certainly in a position to know about the battle plan and the sequence of events. But Wilkinson wrote 40 years after the event and himself repeatedly qualified his account with statements such as "as I was told". Another source frequently used is *The Life and Correspondence of Joseph Reed, Military Secretary of Washington*. But Reed's journal of events in the winter of 1776/77 ends before the battle of Princeton and his *Life* was published only in 1847 by his grandson William B. Reed. This in itself does not disqualify these accounts, but a careful comparison with diaries and journals, particularly that of Thomas Rodney, showed numerous discrepancies in chronology and geography. Once information contained in dozens of contemporary letters, newspaper accounts and pension applications were added to accounts such as Rodney's, a very different sequence of events emerged which places general Mercer no longer on Stony Brook Road and for the first time also takes into account the movements of Colonel Hausegger's German Regiment and those of General Mifflin.

The sequence of events presented in this report also shines a new light onto the role of the Commander-in-Chief himself. The inclusion of Hausegger's and Mifflin's brigades into Washington's battle plan, transmitted to his colonels and general verbally shortly before the final approach on Princeton, and his reaction to the discovery of Crown forces, shows a series of questionable decisions on his part. As he had done before and would do again, Washington not only divided his already small force into even smaller units but devised a complicated plan of attack which that depended on too many imponderables and a coordination of movements that went beyond the capabilities of his inexperienced forces. Once he had been discovered and thereby lost the crucial element of surprise which had made possible the victory at Trenton, he remained focused on Princeton to the detriment of careful and thorough reconnaissance of who exactly the forces behind him were. When Mercer repeated the mistake he and many of Washington's most valuable officers such as Colonel Haslett paid for it with their lives. What saved the Continental Army was the overwhelming superiority in numbers which allowed Washington to occupy Princeton. If Princeton was a military victory at all, it was at best short-lived: within hours Crown forces were in control of the village again. Its real value consists of the boost in morale which it provided to the Continental troops and the confidence which Washington's undoubted personal courage on the battlefield instilled in his soldiers.

All excerpts were then listed and catalogued in a uniform format and the location of the writer as well as all chronological as well as topographical information, wherever such information was contained in the report, listed in a chronological chart preceding the primary source account. Next

these findings were applied to topographical features both on contemporary maps as well as nineteenth and twentieth century maps which allowed tracing of the impact of civilization.

The second major component of the project was the development of an accurate battlefield map depicting the defining features, core area, troop movements, and significant topographic elements. The Battle of Princeton Mapping Project incorporates the technology of ESRI's Geographic Information System (GIS). A GIS is the intersection of computer mapping software, database capabilities, qualitative and quantitative analysis, and expert user input. For this project, a GIS was used to bring together various geographical datasets, aid in the interpretation of the battle, and create renderings of the projects findings.

The GIS component of the proposed Princeton Mapping Project consisted of three main tasks: 1) entering historic information (explained above), battle movements, and natural landforms into the GIS, 2) conducting military terrain analysis (KOCOA) using environmental and historical data, and 3) creating maps of themes pertinent to the battle. The division of tasks in this way is beneficial in that each task builds off the information produced by the previous task.

The GIS task included georeferencing historical documentation gathered by the team and physical features of the landscape obtained using a Global Positioning System (GPS). Historical information with a spatial component included troop affiliations and movements, battle line locations, land-cover features, and roads. When the precise location of features relevant to the battle can be found, a GPS was used to map the exact location. Field methods used in gathering GPS data closely follow the GPS methodology described in the *Guide to Sustainable Earthworks Management* by the National Park Service (NPS). Historically referenced places with imprecise locations were mapped using historic maps and modern aerial photographs. The resulting synthesis of available spatial and historical information into a single GIS location allows the layers of historic and natural locations to be overlain and interpreted within any number of contexts.

Viewshed analysis was used to aid in the corroboration of historical battle accounts and in determining vantage points from view certain views may be possible (Figure 2). Viewshed analysis is a Geographic Information technique that utilizes digital elevation models, slope, and observation points to establish line of sight visibility. According to the ESRI ArcView manual, "Viewshed analysis identifies the areas on a surface that are visible from one or more observation points. It answers the question: What can I see from these locations?" The basics of the method are quite simple in that the algorithm draws a straight line from an observer points or points to every other raster cell within the search radius. A cell is assigned to the "visible" category if the straight line between it and the observer is uninterrupted by the intermediate topography; it is assigned as "not visible" if that line is interrupted. If multiple observation points are used, each cell in the search radius is assigned to either "not visible", or if visible, it is assigned the number of observer points that can view that location. This technique is commonly employed within the studies or battlefield preservation (Benson 2000, Carlson-Drexler 2009, Heckman 2009, la Cour 2007) and landscape archeology (Lock and Harris 1996, Wheatley 1996, Wheatley and Gillings 2002, Whitley 2004).

For the Princeton Battlefield, viewshed analysis was used primarily as a heuristic method to test the validity of hypothesis and to find potential landforms from which recorded lines of sight could have happened from (e.g., Lt. Beale's account). Multiple observation points were used in each viewshed analysis to better account for the uncertainty of viewer location. Additionally, each observer point had an offset of two meters added to its elevation to account for the height of

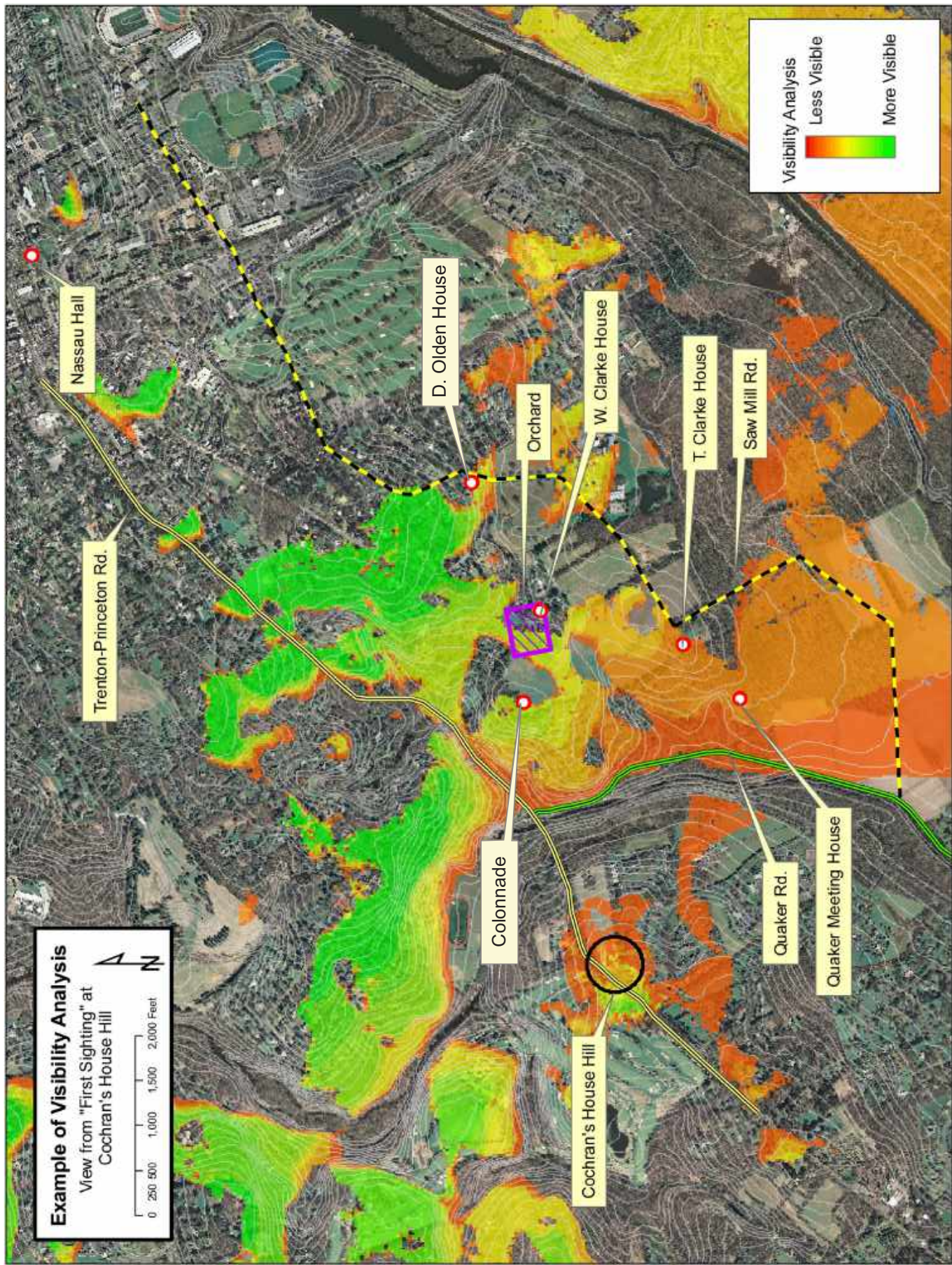


Figure 2. Example of the viewshed analysis.

mounted horseman. This approach to viewshed analysis provides an estimate of “view-ability” to and from any point within the study area and the observer landform by calculating the number of observer points viable from each location. This estimate is more helpful than a binary “view” or “no view” analysis because it allows for the degree of “view-ability” to be considered (Fisher 1994). However, the viewshed analysis method in general has drawbacks that were considered within these analyses (Wheatley and Gillings 2002; 209). One such drawback is that this model only considers a landscape with no vegetation. Stands of trees, hedge rows, and atmospheric conditions would adversely affect the visibility portrayed in these models. This was taken into consideration when interpreting the results. Furthermore, the use of an offset for the observer points affects the visual reciprocity between the viewer and the viewed (Wheatley and Gillings 2002: 210-211). However, it is unlikely that an offset of only two meters would have an adverse effect. The use of a non-binary viewshed analysis as a heuristic aid in interpreting written documents sidesteps some of the pitfalls commonly associated with this type of analysis. The results of these analyses were factored into the overall evaluation of documentary evidence, military terrain analysis, and troop movements.

The GIS task also included the execution of a military terrain analysis for the battle. As explained above, the KOCO method was used to interpret the significance of features on the Princeton battlefield. The KOCO elements were defined using a variety of sources including historical documentation, previous battlefield surveys, maps, and the extant natural landscape. The interpretation of these features was conducted using the quantitative capabilities of the GIS in conjunction with the expert knowledge of team historians and other experts. All of the spatial data included in the GIS are available in the form the ESRI shapefiles or comparable GIS formats and metadata for each GIS file is provided in the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) standard format.

To accurately map the amount of space a particular military formation occupied (frontage and depth), we used information derived from contemporary military manuals. Plotting this data for Crown Forces formations was comparatively simple; the most recent detailed review of British manuals and regulations in use at the time of the battle is provided by Spring (2008:87-95, 139-145). The Crown Forces at Princeton were under general orders from Sir William Howe to engage in battle in two ranks. By the mid-1770s manuals prescribed an interval (termed order) between soldiers of 1.5 feet to two feet. Light infantry and dismounted dragoons (acting as light infantry) maintained an interval of four feet (open order); greater intervals up to ten feet were termed extended order (Spring 2008:139).

At Princeton the Crown Forces battle line at the time of the initial firing consisted of approximately 800 rank and file. Assuming that an individual soldier occupies approximately two feet of space and applying the orders for intervals described above, the length of the Crown Forces battle line was at least 1,600 feet (533 yards), or more than a third of a mile. This calculation does not take into account the interval between companies or other divisions within the regiment or the spacing provided for the artillery; we know for example that the dismounted dragoons noted that their formation was 30 feet (ten yards) from the nearest formation to their left.

Determining the frontage and depth of American formations is somewhat problematic, since a variety of drill manuals were in use at the time of the battle and the standardization developed by von Steuben was still a year in the future (Whitehorne 2006:30-31). In most cases the military manuals available to the various state Continentals and militia formations were based on British

manuals. We have therefore used the same calculations for the American formations that we applied to the Crown Forces.

The research into contemporary maps and post-battle maps and aerials, combined with primary-source descriptions of events in the morning on 3 January 1777, were crucial in preparation of the GIS overlay map, which is intended as a basis to support further archaeological surveys and excavations on the battlefield and approach routes. This pertains particularly to the crucial access route of General Mercer's forces on the Sawmill Road from the Quaker Meeting House, which has finally been located as a result of this study, to the battlefield, the jump-off point for Crown Forces interdicting Mercer's units at the outset of the battle, and the pursuit route through Frog Hollow to Princeton and Nassau Hall.

3.0 DEFINING FEATURES ON THE PRINCETON BATTLEFIELD (KOCOA)

3.1 HISTORIC TERRAIN OF PRINCETON BATTLEFIELD

“Understanding the historic terrain of a battlefield as it was at the time of the action is critical to the understanding of any battle” (Foard 2009:136). Battles are temporary, albeit seminal, events fought on cultural landscapes that had a variety of cultural actions – transportation routes, agricultural development, settlement patterns, population change – already occurring before the battle and that continue to exert influences on the field after the battle. Field patterns and farmsteads are changed and give way to subdivisions, road are altered, vacated, rerouted or widened, woodlands are reduced or removed from the landscape. Following Foard’s analysis of the battlefield at Sedgemoor and adapting it for application to a North American setting, the primary terrain elements affecting the battlefield are physical geography, settlements, land use, and communications (Foard 2003:33-35).

3.1.1 Physical Geography

The Princeton Battlefield is located in the Piedmont Lowland of central New Jersey a short distance north of the boundary with the Inner Coastal Plain. The Piedmont Lowland is chiefly a low undulating plain divided by a series of higher ridges. Topography is nearly level to gently sloping, with elevations range from 90 to about 200 feet above sea level. Elevations that figure prominently in the battle include Cochran’s Hill (167 feet asl), the Thomas Clarke farm (120 feet asl), the ridge called Mercer Heights (144 feet asl), and the village of Princeton (200 feet asl). The principal drainage affecting the battle was Stony Brook, a tributary of the Millstone River. Smaller unnamed streams feed into Stony Brook, for example along the east side of US Route 206, or on the golf course in the area known as Frog Hollow. The region where the battle was fought is situated close to the fall line which provided locations for a series of mill seats, such as Worth’s Mill and the Saw Mill, both on Stony brook.

A significant landscape transformation occurred after the battle with the construction of the Delaware and Raritan Canal a short distance south and east of the battlefield. The D&R Canal extends from Trenton to the Raritan River and parallels Stony Brook.

3.1.2 Settlements and Land Use

The landscape over which the battle was fought had been occupied by people of European and African descent for nearly a century. At the time of the battle the governmental subdivision was Middlesex County. Contemporary descriptions suggest that it was a well-cultivated and long-established region, with a patchwork of fields and woodlots. Nearly three decades before the Swedish naturalist Peter Kalm commented on the general lack of woods on the landscape between Trenton and Princeton, noting that “more woods have been cut down [than in Pennsylvania] and the country more cultivated, so that one might easily imagine oneself in Europe” (Kalm 1937:120). He further characterized the area’s landscape by observing that there were “extensive cultivated fields,” that “near almost every farm was a spacious orchard full of peaches and apple trees,” and that “cherry trees were planted near the farms, on the roads, etc.” (Kalm 1937:118). Farms in the region were engaged in mixed agricultural production, combining grain farming with orchard crops and livestock. Shortly after the war, the Abbé Robin described

the areas as open plains “adorned with large and handsome edifices; and the country abounds with orchards, fields of wheat, rye, barley, Indian corn, and flourishing woods” (Robin 1783:41). The median farm size at the time was about 139 acres. Farmsteads were generally sited on a well-drained rise. The orchard and gardens were typically situated near the farm complex (Wacker 1995:95; 109-111). A few years after the battle, one French officer passing through remarked on the openness of the country south of the village of Princeton where the battle was fought. “From behind the college” he wrote “one has a superb view of the surrounding country, which is very rich and well cultivated” (Rice and Brown 1972a:164). Numerous battle accounts mention the presence of woodlands but their precise locations are difficult to depict.

A somewhat contemporary sketch of the battlefield was prepared by John Trumbull in 1790. Draw fourteen years after the battle, it is annotated sketched “from the Field on which the battle was fought” (Rice 1968:127). The sketch seems to depict the lands northeast of The Graduate College at the location of the golf course. A small ravine or depression is visible in the middle distance and is Frog Hollow. A fence line is shown and a single tree, suggesting the open character of the land, at least in 1790. In the background are Nassau Hall and the village of Princeton, while to the right is the Baldwin farm (Rice 1968:128).

A second contemporary image of the battle was painted by James Peale in 1781 or 1782, and later copied by William Mercer in 1787. All three depict the battle around the Clarke farms and the death of General Hugh Mercer. The character of the battleground is clearly shown, and includes the farm houses of William Clarke and Thomas Clarke, William Clarke’s barn, the Clarke orchard and five rail fences. No evidence of in-ground crops is shown; however, the ground is devoid of any cover of any kind (Egbert 1952; Holst 1985).

Damage claims made by Princeton area residents provide additional views of the agricultural landscape surrounding the village and over which the battle was fought. Many residents claimed the loss of flax in the sheaf and bushels of wheat, corn, and oats. Several mentioned the loss of bushels of potatoes. Collectively the residents of the area lost over 50 tons of hay. Two residents, both Quakers, reported the loss of wood: Joseph Olden lost two cords of sapling wood, while Thomas Olden claimed the loss of five cords of wood. Damage and destruction to fencing, reported as worm, panel, four and five rail, and pole, was claimed by many area residents. Isaac Anderson reported the loss of 96 grafted apple trees, only three years old, and an additional 50 common apple trees, only one year planted. Johnathan Dear also reported the loss of 50 apple trees in his orchard “destroyed by the British about ½ mile from the town.” (New Jersey Damage Claims, 1776-1782).

Several residents claimed damages to crops that appear to have still been in the field. Martin Moone claimed the loss of 70 bushels of wheat in the stack and 60 bushels of corn in ears. Joseph Skelton, Esquire claimed the loss of 500 sheaves of wheat, while Jonathan Baldwin of Princeton (whose farm is depicted in the Trumbull sketch described above) noted the loss of 300 bushels of flax in the sheaf, 400 bushels of wheat, 200 bushels of corn, and 15 bushels of oats (New Jersey damage Claims 1776-1782). In addition to crops, orchards, and personal property, claimants noted the destruction of dwellings, barns, and outbuildings.

The region along the Millstone Valley had been settled by a variety of peoples, including a large number of Scots-Irish immigrants. Several of the families, such as the Oldens and the Clarks, over whose lands the battle was fought, were members of the Society of Friends, or Quakers. By the second decade of the eighteenth century a Friends Meeting House had been established a

short distance south of the Thomas Clarke farm and the rural community was known as Stony Brook (Craig 2005:437).

The middle decade of the century saw the establishment of the college at Princeton and the construction of Nassau Hall. In 1748 Peter Kalm described Princeton as a place with houses mostly “built of wood,” not contiguous, “so that there were gardens and pastures between them” (Kalm 1937:120). In 1777 the village of Princeton was a single-street village, a small country town of about 60, mostly wooden, dwellings. The college buildings, constructed of stone, were the principal features in town. Robin remarked about Princeton in 1783 that the village “is inconsiderable, but remarkable for its charming situation, elegant houses, and above all a college built of stone...” (Robin 1783:42).

Transformations since the battle include the division of former farms and agricultural properties into housing subdivisions. The development of the State Park has served to preserve a portion of the battlefield. The creation of the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) and the on lands south of the village of Princeton, and the general development out from the core of the University and village have progressed since the late nineteenth century. Large estates, such as Drumthwacket, Morven, and the former Mercer Manor, served for a time to preserve much of the agricultural or rural character of the landscape.

3.1.3 Communications

The major roadway traversing the battlefield was the Post Road or King’s Road which connected New York with Philadelphia. Now following the general course of US Route 206 the King’s Road locally linked Princeton with Trenton. Contemporary descriptions of the road leading south out of the village noted a gradual descent to Stony Brook with cultivated fields and some settlement along both sides of the road (Rice and Brown 1972b:70).

A second important road for the battle was the road known as Saw Mill Road. Based on contemporary sources, this trace apparently ran nearly parallel to the King’s or Post Road and entered Princeton on the east side, behind the College. The road is no longer on the landscape.

A third principal route which figures in the battle was the road called the Quaker Road. Established as early as 1764 this road extended from the Province Line to the bridge at Stony Brook.

The major road system of the area is relatively unchanged since the eighteenth century. Essentially the main carriage ways follow earlier transportation routes. A short-lived transportation transformation was the creation and use of a trolley line in the late nineteenth century. While no longer in use, the route of the trolley line is clearly visible and used as a pedestrian path today.

3.2 DEFINING FEATURES

The KOCOA analysis is applied to all ABPP projects (Lowe 2000). As stated above, the acronym KOCOA stands for: Key Terrain, Observation and Fields of Fire, Cover and Concealment, Obstacles, Avenues of Approach. Terrain features, be they manmade such as roads or buildings or natural such as ridges or forests, mean different things to different people. A painter looks at forests, hills, waterways or meadows for their artistic value. A farmer considers them with a view

toward producing foodstuffs or generating income. A soldier looks at them for their military value, how he could integrate them into offensive or defensive positions, how they fit into his plans for offensive or defensive action. This is not only important for understanding why a commander would (or would not) position infantry or artillery or cavalry at a certain place on the terrain at a certain point during the engagement (why faulty positioning would occasionally have disastrous consequences), but also helps to interpret the authenticity of battlefield maps. Furthermore, evaluation of terrain from a military point of view can help to provide reasonable explanations to "fill in" gaps in our knowledge of events caused by a scarcity of primary sources, e.g., in the case of troop movements. "Military usage" of terrain would demand that forces be re-deployed under cover of ridges or through low-lying ravines outside the view of the enemy. Similarly depending on the task assigned to a force during any stage of the engagement, troops might be redeployed via a causeway or road if speed is of the essence or through a forest or circuitously if the element of surprise is paramount. Taking these, and similar military aspects into consideration, the terrain becomes an integral part of the reconstruction of a battle as the stage on which the action unfolds.

In the following section of this report, we will present in tabular form a summary of the key defining features of the core and study areas of the Princeton Battlefield. Each of the key defining features is presented, along with their relevance to the battle, their KOCOA analysis, and their location/status. Following the table are more in-depth discussions of each of these features and how they relate to the battle. The defining features are also keyed to Figure 3.

Table 1. Defining Features of the Princeton Battlefield

Key Defining Features	Relevance to Battle	KOCOA Analysis	Location
Saw Mill Road	American attack route	Avenue of Approach; Observation	Currently not known with certainty
Quaker Road	American attack route	Avenue of Approach	Modern Quaker Road
Trenton-Princeton Road	British march route	Avenue of Approach/Retreat	Modern Route 206
Cochran's House Hill (aka Millett's Hill)	Farthest point of Mawhood's march	Observation	Hill on Route 206
William Clarke farm (house, barns)	British battle line and American battle line	Observation; Field of Fire; Key Terrain	North of the park, along Mercer Road; no longer extant
Thomas Clarke farm (house and barns)	Second American battle line	Observation; Cover and concealment; Key Terrain	Princeton Battlefield Park, IAS lands
William Clarke Orchard	Initial battle line between Mercer and Mawhood	Field of Fire; Cover and concealment; Obstacle; Key Terrain	North of the park, along Mercer Road
Frog Hollow Ravine	British 55 th Foot defensive line	Obstacle	Alexander Street, Princeton Theological Seminary and Golf Course
Nassau Hall and President's House	British defensive position	Cover and Concealment	Princeton University, south side of Nassau Street
Stony Brook	Western limit of	Obstacle	Stony Brook

Key Defining Features	Relevance to Battle	KOCOA Analysis	Location
	battlefield area		
Princeton	Town occupied by Crown Forces	Obstacle; Cover and Concealment	Princeton (the 18 th -century boundary)
Stony Brook bridge	American defensive position	Obstacle; Key Terrain	Modern bridge across Stony Brook on Route 206
Worth's Mill		Avenue of Approach/Retreat	On west bank of Stony Brook on Route 206
Mercer Hill (from Fischer 2004)	British Artillery position; position of the 55 th Foot	Observation; Field of Fire	
Quaker Meeting House	Post-battle hospital	Obstacle; Cover and Concealment	Meeting House property
Princeton to Kingston Road, then to Somerset Courthouse	Route of the Americans out of Princeton	Avenue of Approach/Retreat	
Princeton to New Brunswick Road	Route of British Pursuit	Avenue of Approach/Retreat	

3.2.1 *Saw Mill Road (Avenue of Approach, Observation)*

Saw Mill Road is a significant battlefield terrain feature. The road was the principal avenue of approach used by the American forces on the morning of 3 January 1777 and portions of the road served as an observation area of the action at the William Clarke farm.

According to Smith, “this road, then known as “Saw Mill Road”, had been used very little since sometime shortly after the “20th of September 1764” when the approximately ¾ mile section of Quaker Road from Worth’s Mill south along the east bank of Stony Brook was authorized to be built, connecting Quaker Road with the main Trenton-Princeton Road” (Smith 1967:11).

Cadwalader has a description of the Saw Mill Road as follows: “This Road leads to the back part of Prince Town, which may be entered anywhere on this side – the country cleared, chiefly, for about 2 miles, of [everything?], few Fences.” The road enters the town where the “Road to Scudders Mill” is shown leaving. He further shows [or more correctly someone has penciled in] the Clarke House at the intersection of the Quaker Bridge Road and Saw Mill Road, showing the road to intersect above the house, not below (Figure 4).

Saw Mill Road is no longer extant, although portions of it may still be vestiges on the landscape. The placement of this road on the landscape is critical to the reconstruction of the battlefield. Our project team reviewed several property deeds related to the eighteenth century Clarke farm and plotted these in GIS. One of the property corners identified in deed G-3:393 (William Clarke and Anna, his wife, to Thomas Clarke, 1 April 1772) is described as “a stone planted on the east side of Saw Mill Road and about 30 links [19.81 feet] southward of a gate...”. Field inspection of the metes and bounds described in the deed was conducted by John Mills along with JMA team members. Remarkably, a large stone, vertically planted, is situated at the location of the stone described in the 1772 deed (Figure 5). The stone borders a large linear depression, approximately 1 foot deep and between 16 and 18 feet in width, which trends north-south (see Figure 3). The depression of this road trace is also visible in the woods south of the state park property (Figure

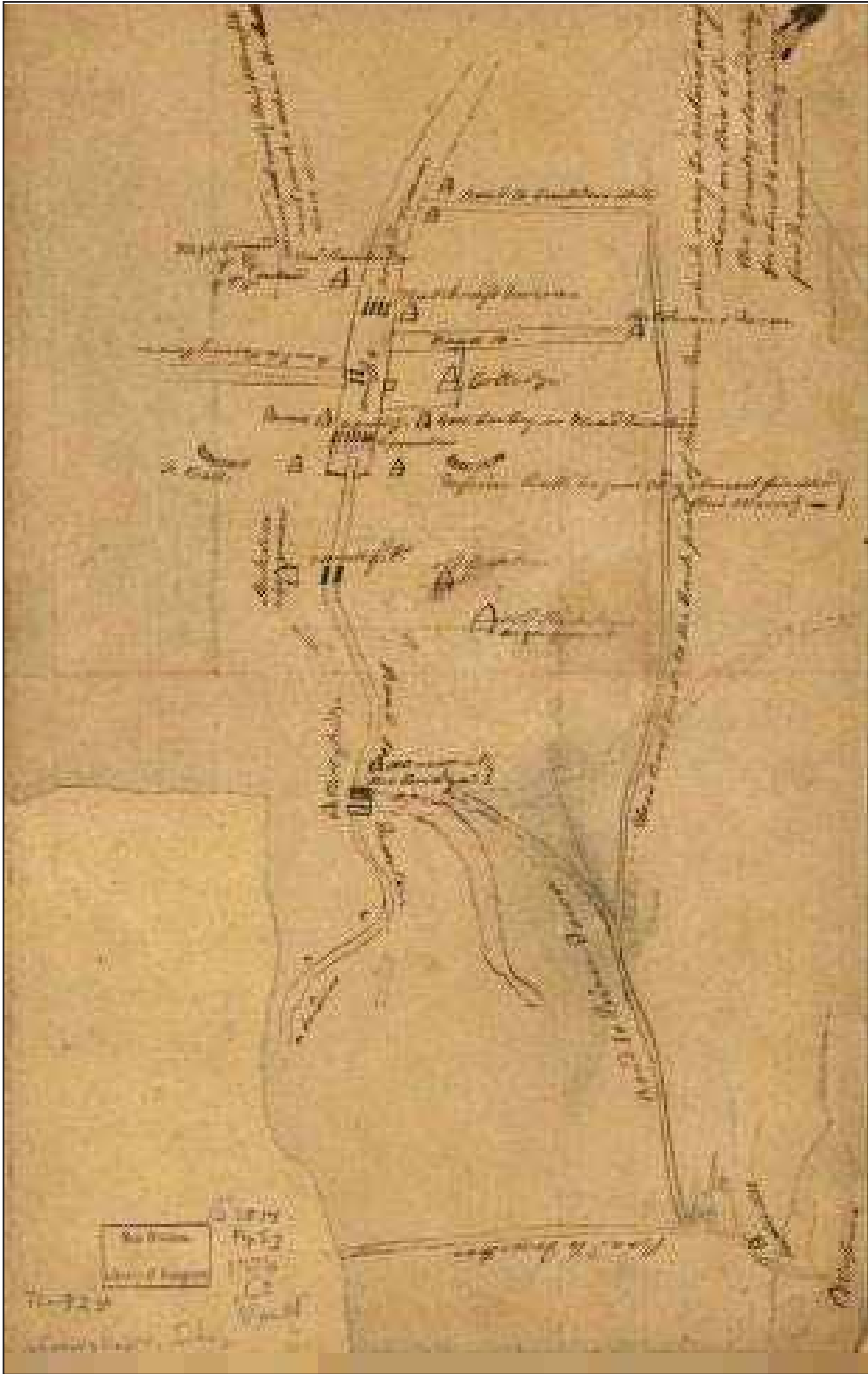


Figure 4. Cadwalader's Map of Princeton, December 31, 1776.



Figure 5. Property Stone of the Clarke Farm "...a stone planted on the east side of Saw Mill Road..." Matt Harris is standing in the former electric trolley line right-of-way. View is to the northeast.



Figure 6. View to the north looking up the trace of Saw Mill Road. The Thomas Clarke House is visible through the trees to the left background.

6). A second segment of this road trace may remain on the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) property. It is situated in the hedge line separating the IAS property immediately adjacent to the State Park lands. Like the road segment southeast of the Clarke House, the hedge line on the IAS property is composed of two parallel lines of trees separated by a linear depression (Figures 7 and 8).

The segment of Saw Mill Road on the State Park property trends north-south, reaches a slight topographic rise and then abruptly terminates. At the point of termination, early aerial images of the project area depict a linear feature extending east across the State Park property. This linear feature coincides with the possible Saw Mill Road segment on the IAS property (Figure 9). As will be explained in the battle narrative below, the placement of Saw Mill Road in this location meshes with the first-person descriptions of the battle.

South and west of the State Park lands and northeast from the Park to Princeton the precise route of Saw Mill Road is conjectural. Its placement for this report is based on several of the previous historic maps and plats, some first-person accounts, the archeological data from State Park and IAS properties, and on discussions with John Mills, members of the PBS, and others (Figures 10 and 11).

The placement by the project team of Saw Mill (or the Back Road) in the general location shown in the GIS is also supported by several historical accounts. Appollo Morris notes that the Trenton-Princeton Road and the Back Road were essentially parallel routes only one-half mile apart; in his words "...the distance between the two roads in which they [the Americans and the Crown Forces] marched did not here exceed half a mile..." (Morris 1776:13). Henry Knox's account of the battlefield supports Morris' account, with Knox noting that "...they [Mawhood's 4th Brigade] were on their march down to Trenton on a road about a quarter of a mile distant from the one in which we were..." thus indicating that the roads were less than a quarter mile apart (Knox 1777).

Further support for the location of Saw Mill Road is provided by an anonymous officer (thought to be Hall) with the Crown Forces. In his account, published in 1780, the officer writes that Mawhood "...advanced, with the light dragoons and the 55th regiment, to gain some heights which the rebels were making for in their way to the town, and *over which they must necessarily pass...*" (Hall 1780:248-49; emphasis added). Brigadier General John Cadwalader of the Philadelphia Associators corroborates this account commenting that the Crown Forces "...returned to the town, and made ready to receive us; one division of their troops [the 55th Regiment of Foot and the mounted detachment of the 16th Light Dragoons] formed in front of a house on the south side of the college, and on the right hand of the road" (Cadwalader 1777). Forming on the right hand side of the road would place the Saw Mill Road within the battle line of the 55th Foot.

From these accounts it would follow that the trace of Saw Mill Road was over a topographic rise that Mawhood needed to command, and thus he placed the 55th Regiment of Foot and the mounted dragoons across the path of the advancing American forces.

Saw Mill Road also served as a location of observation for the American forces under Sullivan. Several accounts note that the battle at the William Clarke farm and orchard were clearly visible to them as they waited to continue their advance into Princeton. The archeological evidence from the IAS and State Park lands suggests that the bed of Saw Mill Road may have served as the main American battle line (see Appendix V).



Figure 7. View to the south towards the northern field of the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) property. Location of segment of Saw Mill Road is marked by the hedge and tree line in the distance.

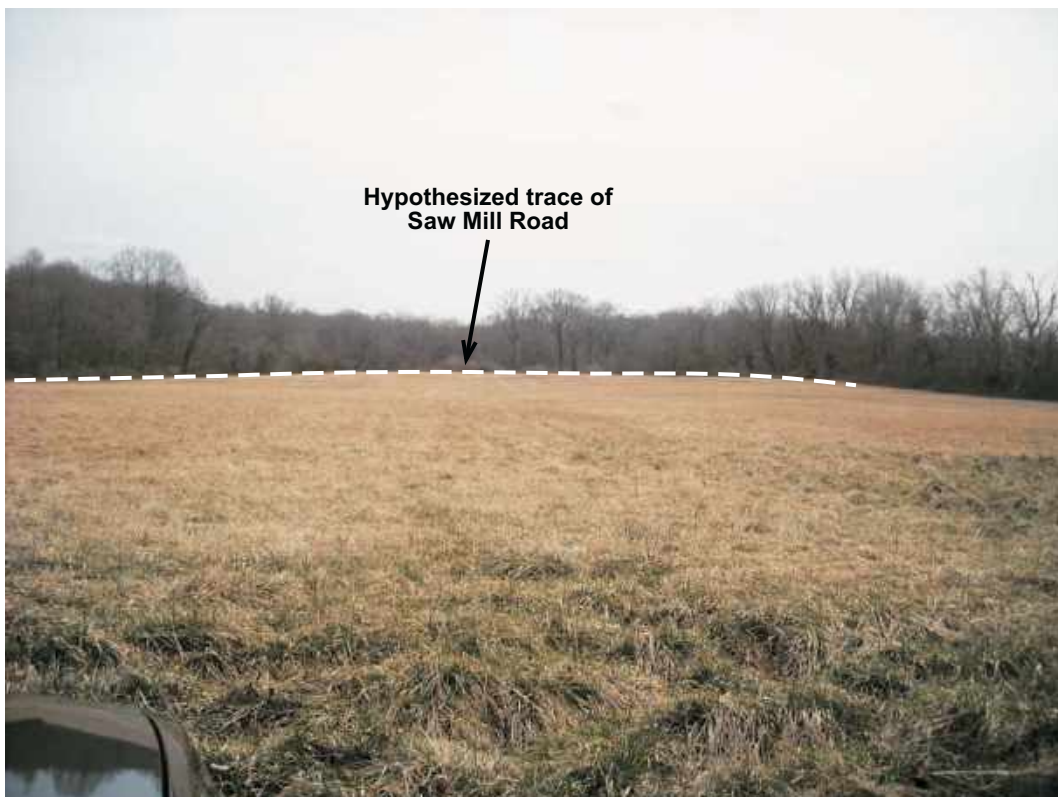


Figure 8. View to the north from the former trolley line towards the southern field of the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) property. Location of segment of Saw Mill Road is marked by the hedge and tree line in the distance.

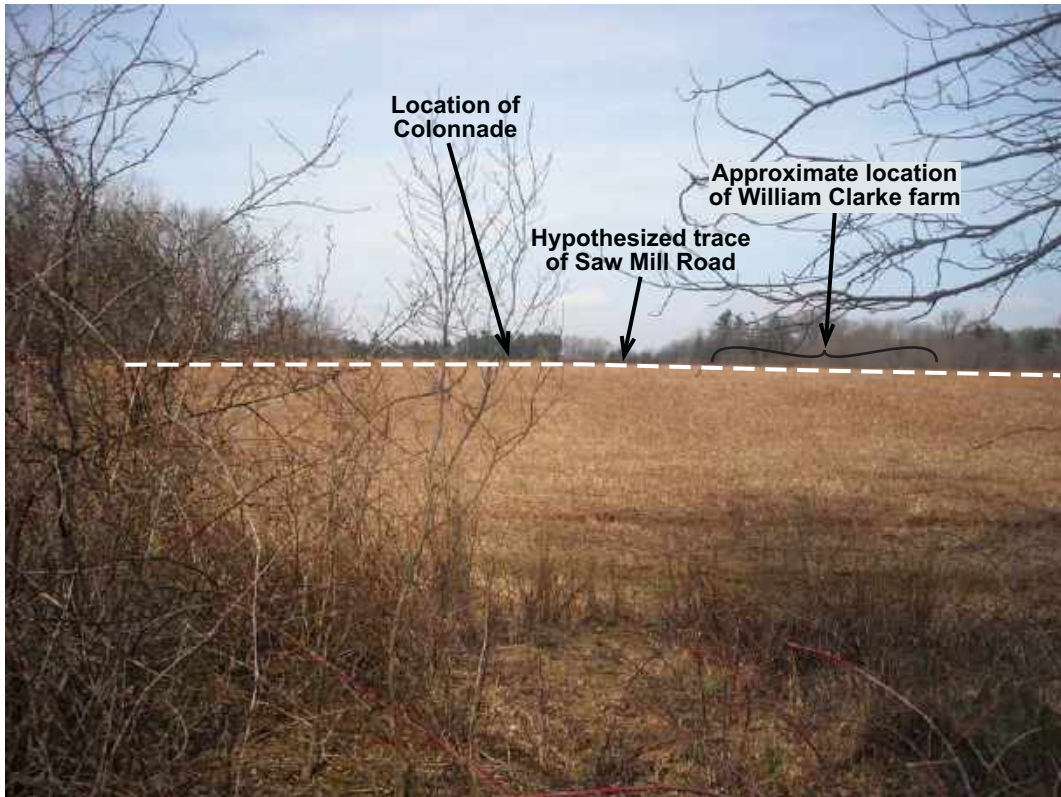


Figure 9. View to the north of the State Park Lands from the field edge near the former trolley line. The slight rise is shown in the foreground, with the hypothesized location of Saw Mill Road depicted. Note that the rise prevents the observer from seeing the Colonnade. The former location of the William Clarke farm is in the woods to the right background. IAS lands are to the right of the image.

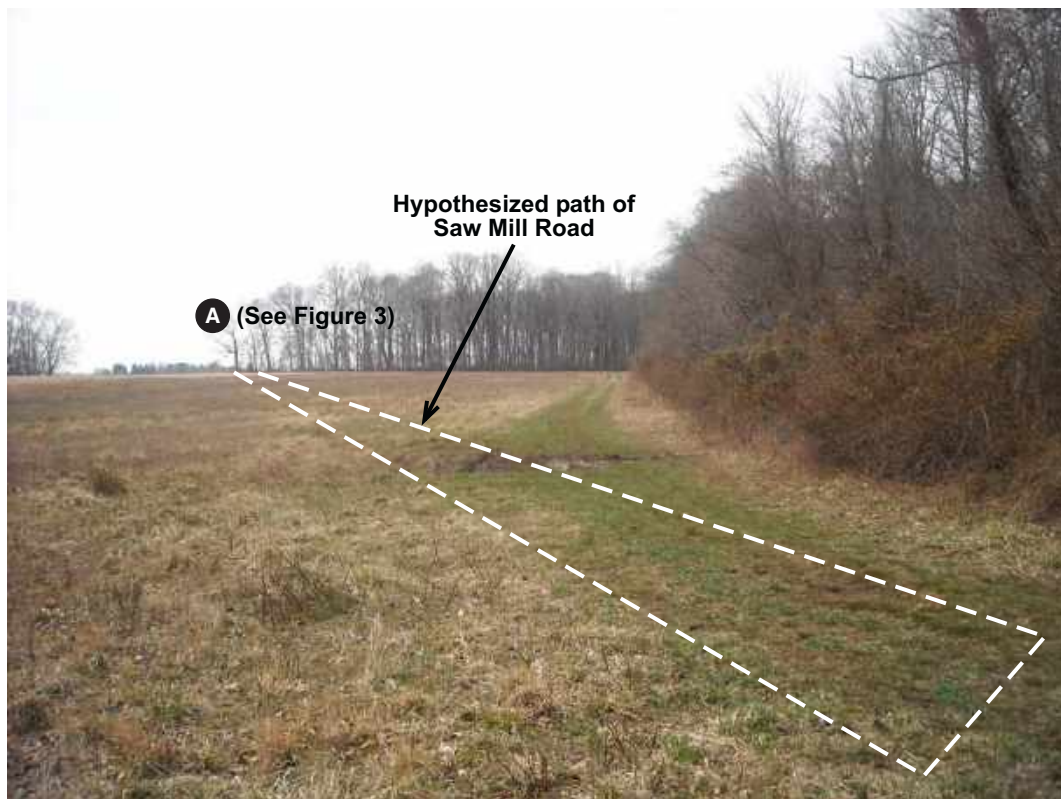


Figure 10. View to the southwest along the hypothesized route of Saw Mill Road. This location is south of the battlefield and depicts the approximate route over which Washington forces approached Princeton after leaving Quaker Road.

To date, additional research by the project team at the New Jersey State Archives has not been able to locate the original metes-and-bounds written description of the establishment of Saw Mill Road. No record of the road's establishment or vacation has been found, its precise beginning point on Quaker Road (Figures 11 and 12) is not known with certainty, its route from Quaker Road towards the Clarke farm is conjectural, and portions beyond the Institute for Advanced Study property are equally problematic.

3.2.2 Quaker Road (Avenue of Approach)

The Quaker Road was used as an avenue of approach by American forces on the morning of 3 January (Figure 12). Running from Princeton to Allentown, Washington's night marching columns would reach the Quaker Road at the location of Rozel's Mill on Assunpink Creek, continuing the advance towards Princeton.

Prior to the battle the initial American advance towards Princeton marched on Quaker Road and crossed at the bridge at Stony Creek about three miles south of Princeton. Difficulties in getting the artillery across this bridge delayed the advance somewhat. Washington reorganized his columns at this point and according to one account it was dawn when the formations moved out along Quaker Road.

Previous historical studies of the battle describe Mercer's column as advancing along Quaker Road with the bridge over Stony Creek at Worth's Mill and Village as the objective of his column, and this conclusion is based on the accounts of several officers (cf. Rodney 1777; Wilkinson 1816). A re-examination of the first-person accounts however, suggests that Mercer did not advance along the Quaker Road towards Worth's Mill and that his objective was not a fixed position such as the bridge, but the more mobile and potentially lethal British 4th Brigade. Thus the stretch of Quaker Road roughly between the Quaker Meeting House and Worth's Mill was not part of the initial American avenue of approach.

However, following the battle at the Clarke farms the Quaker Road was used as an avenue of approach by a detachment from General Thomas Mifflin's brigade (Pennsylvania militia under Colonel James Potter, supported by artillery) to reach the Stony Brook Bridge so that they could command the stream crossing (Wilkinson 1816:148).

The road is still extant, principally following its eighteenth century route, and runs along the east side of Stony Brook. The eighteenth century route of the road is documented in a road return dated 1764. The route at the time of the battle is provided in the GIS overlay.

3.2.3 Trenton-Princeton Road (aka Post Road) (Avenue of Approach)

The Trenton-Princeton Road is the modern route of Route 206. It was also known as the King's Highway and was the principal overland route between Trenton and Princeton in the eighteenth century. It originally crossed Stony Brook at a ford approximately 230 feet north of the present steam crossing. The original roadway was realigned in 1712 to approximately its current route, a trace that was substantially established between 1765 and 1770. In the early nineteenth century it was supplanted by the Turnpike Road (established 1807) that now slices through the battlefield. Portions of the road are depicted on two 1772 property plats compiled for this report.

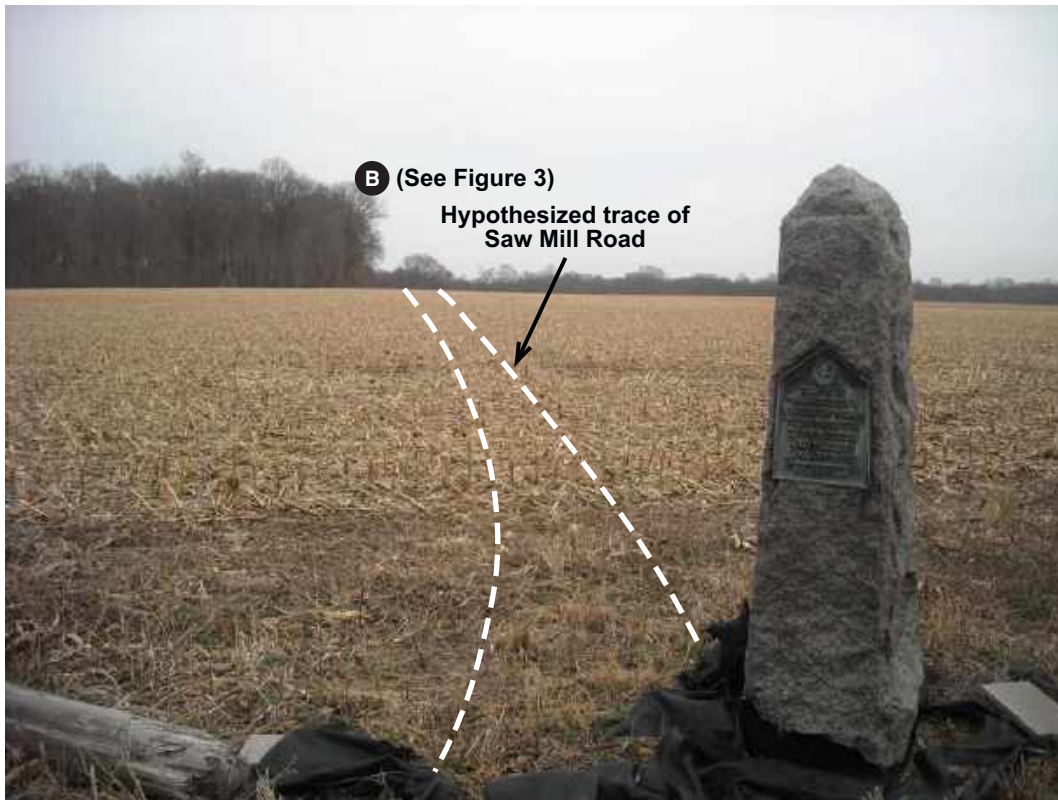


Figure 11. View to northeast from one of the Route markers depicting the hypothesized route of Saw Mill Road at its junction with Quaker Road.



Figure 12. View to northeast of Quaker Road, near its hypothesized junction with Saw Mill Road. Stony Brook is located to the left of the image, and the Quaker Meeting House is in the right background.

The Trenton-Princeton Road was the main avenue of approach for the Crown Forces under Mawhood (the 4th Brigade) and for Cornwallis' advance following the battle. It also served as an avenue of retreat by the American forces out of Princeton.

3.2.4 Cochran's House Hill (aka Millette's Hill) (Observation)

This hill is located west of Stony Brook along the Trenton-Princeton Road (modern US Route 206). The hill, at approximately 160 feet asl, was referred to as Cochran's by Wilkinson in his *Memoirs of My Own Times* (1816:142). It was a principal and crucial observation point for Colonel Mawhood, as at this point his forces initially observed the advance of the Americans, likely along a portion of Saw Mill Road. It was from this location that Mawhood reached his decision to withdraw down the hill and take a position east of the Trenton-Princeton Road at the "rising ground" (Hall 1780:171) where the William Clarke farm was situated.

While foliage now obscures the battlefield from the observation point afforded by Cochran's Hill, it is possible to see the graduate school bell tower on the Princeton University campus from the hill (Figure 13).

3.2.5 William Clarke Farm Complex (house, barn, outbuildings) (Key Terrain, Observation, Cover and Concealment, Obstacle)

The William Clarke farm, no longer extant, occupied a topographic rise that was the focal point of Colonel Mawhood's battle line (Figures 14 and 15). The placement of the house location is based on the ABPP GIS for the project and on the detailed study by Wertenbaker (1932:88) regarding the location of the Clarke farm complex and orchard (Figures 14 – 16).

Referred to by some participants as situated on "rising ground" about a quarter-mile east of the Post Road, Mawhood may have chosen this ground because it dominated the Saw Mill Road approach (Figure 16). Hall's account indicates that Mawhood was familiar with the ground (Hall 1780:248). At 140 foot elevation asl, the farm complex offered a field of fire that could check the American advance along Saw Mill Road (Figure 17). The position at the William Clarke farm was the initial battleline of the Crown Forces (Figure 18).

The farm complex apparently consisted of the dwelling house, several outbuildings in the vicinity of the house, and a barn sited at some distance southwest of the dwelling. The arrangement of the farm buildings may have been linear, a pattern typical of many eighteenth-century farmsteads in the region. Captain Thomas Rodney of the Dover (Delaware) Light Infantry notes that there was a "long string of buildings and an orchard" (Rodney 1888:34) and Appollos Morris described the Clarke farm by stating that Mercer's column reached a fence near the "summit of the declivity... between a house and a barn..." (Rodney 1777; Morris 1776:13). Wilkinson mentions a "house and barn" (Wilkinson 1816:142). Mercer's aide de camp, John Armstrong, wrote that "The march was rapidly made and without seeing an enemy till gaining a position between Clarke's house and barn" (Armstrong 1839). Lieutenant William Hale of the British grenadiers commented that the Americans at the farm were "...strongly posted in an orchard covered with some Barns..." (Hale 1913:18).

In his description of the battle Armstrong recalls that during the battle at the Clarke farm General Mercer's line was in danger of being outflanked, so Mercer determined that "we have but one chance of holding our position - our line must be shortened – order the left to fall back to the barn



Figure 13. View to southeast from Cochran's Hill. The image is taken from the approximate high point in the field adjacent to Route 206. The graduate school tower is visible in the tree line.

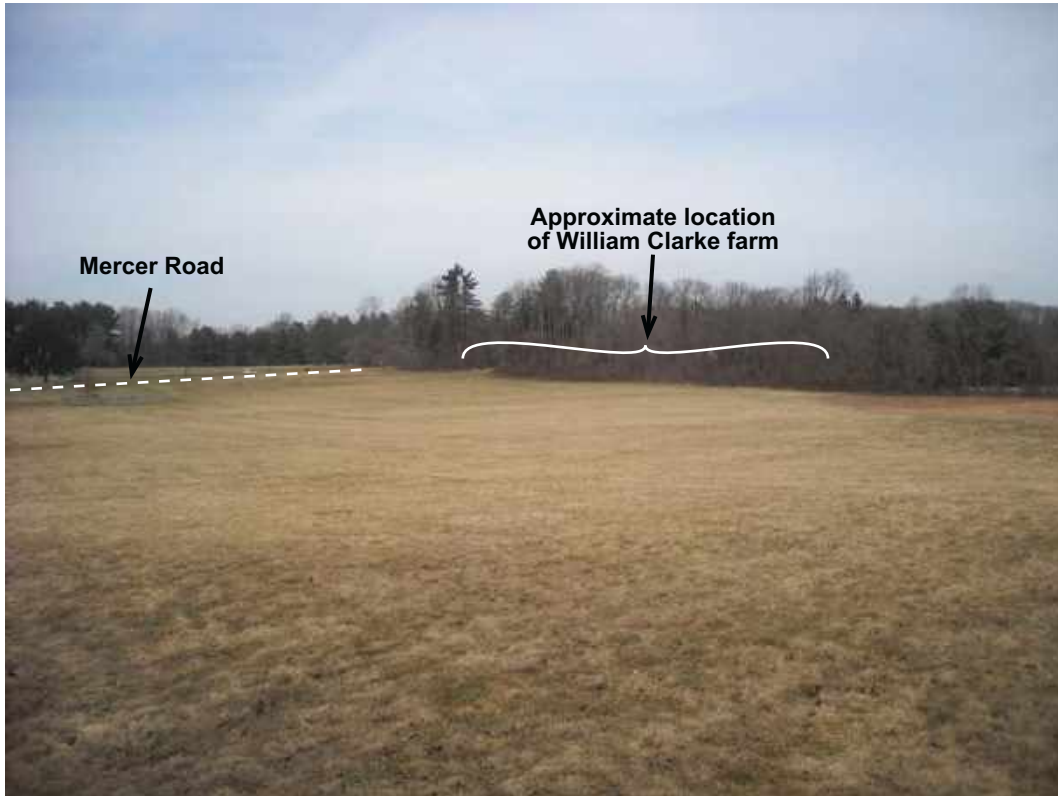


Figure 14. View to northeast showing the former location of the William Clarke farm complex. Mercer Road seen in the left background. The Clarke farm complex was situated in the wooded area in the center background. The open ground in the center of the image was the scene of the advance of Mercer towards the Clarke farm.

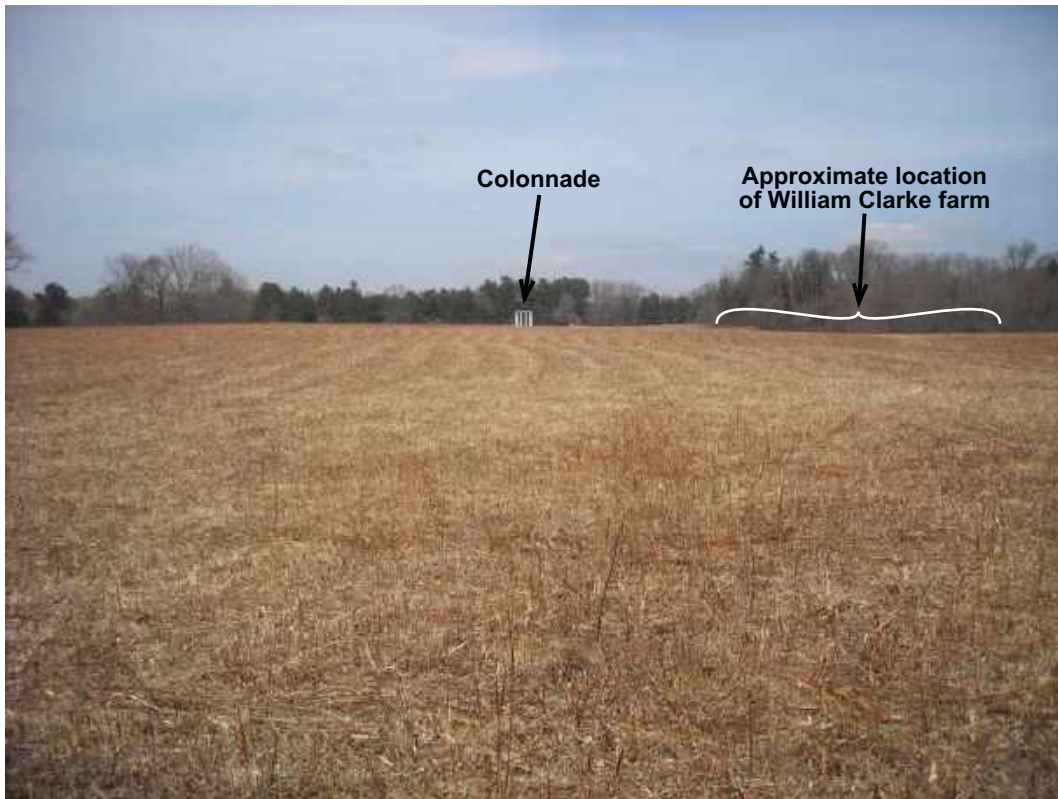


Figure 15. View to the north showing the Colonnade (center distance) and the approximate location of the William Clarke farm complex (right background).

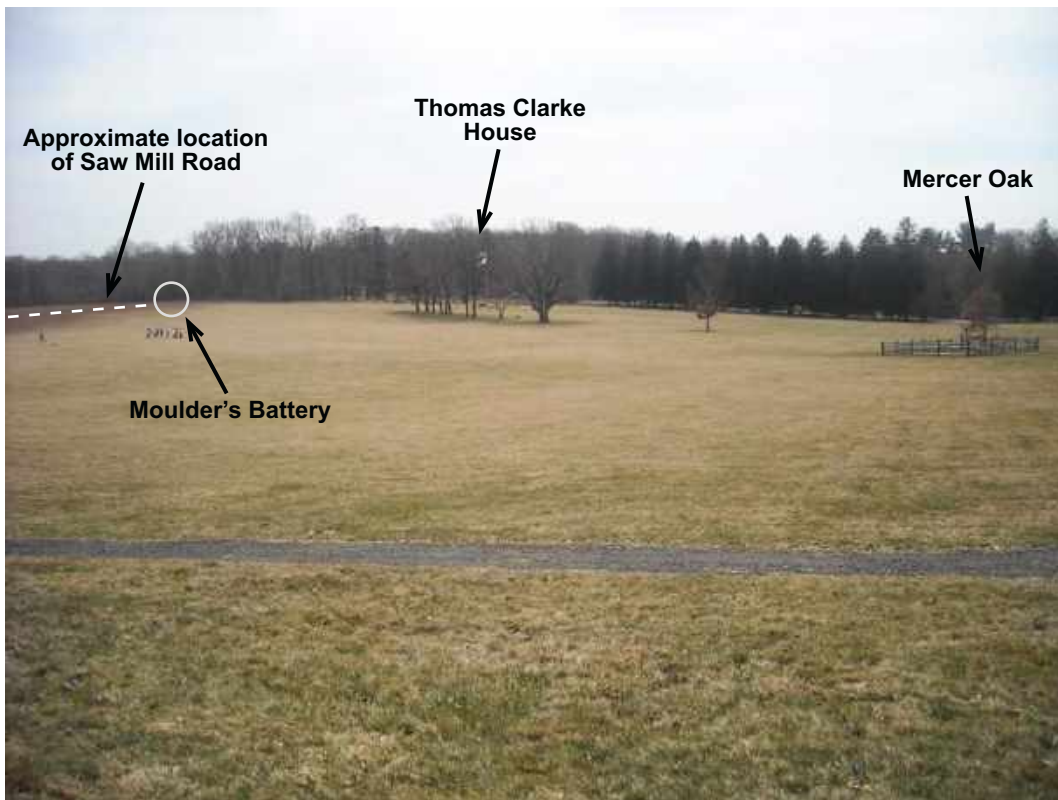


Figure 16. View looking south from the “rising ground” where the William Clarke farm was situated looking towards the Thomas Clarke House (flag in the center distance marks the house location). This is the view that Crown Forces formations had following their rout of Mercer’s column. The approximate location of Saw Mill Road is shown in the left background and the location of Moulder’s battery is also depicted.



Figure 17. View to the southeast from the approximate location of the maximum Crown Forces advance. The rising ground where Moulder's Battery was sited is shown in the center background, as is the approximate location of Saw Mill Road. The Thomas Clarke house is located beyond the right side of this view.



Figure 18. View to the east from the steps of the Colonnade, showing the location of the extreme right of the Crown Forces battle line. This portion of the line was initially held by the dismounted 16th light dragoons. The location of Saw Mill Road and the location of the William Clarke farm are depicted. Mercer Road is marked by the passing automobile.

and the right to rouse itself by the dwelling house” (Armstrong 1839). This description provides a rough idea of the orientation of Mercer’s battle line.

From the Crown Forces perspective, William Hale described the bayonet attack by the 17th Foot as an advance “in excellent order...and we drove them through the railings, barns, and orchards, back on their main body...” (Hale 1913:18). Wilkinson notes that the bayonet charge by the 17th Foot forced Mercer’s disorganized formation back through the orchard, and that the Crown Forces “...pursued the detachment of General Mercer as far as the brow of the declivity (Figure 17), when discovering our whole army, instead of a partisan corps, they halted and brought up their artillery” (Wilkinson 1816:143).

The present topography of the battlefield suggests that the “the brow of the declivity” is located along the northern edge of the IAS property along the treeline separating the field from the housing in the vicinity of Stone House Drive. It is this topographic rise that served as the main Crown Forces battle line following the initial route of Mercer’s formation from the William Clarke farm complex. The archeological record from the State Park and IAS lands reveals a density of military-related artifacts extending from the Mercer Oak enclosure on the west approximately 1,400 feet to Maxwell Lane on the east. The recovered artifacts include dropped and impacted musket and rifle balls, cartridge box parts, ramrod and bayonet fragments, and pieces of grapeshot. The distribution and density of the recovered artifacts is indicative of the presence of a military formation. The recovery of grapeshot clearly indicates the presence of infantry (see Appendix V).

3.2.6 William Clarke Orchard (Key Terrain, Cover and Concealment, Obstacle)

The William Clarke Orchard was a key terrain feature of the battlefield. No longer extant, the orchard served as an obstacle to Mercer’s column as it approached the waiting battleline of the 17th Foot. The orchard’s placement masked the location of the 17th Foot’s line from Mercer’s troops until they were nearly on top of them – within 40 yards (25 paces).

Wilkinson depicts the orchard as nearly square (Wilkinson 1816) and Wertenbaker’s secondary study of the battle illustrates that shape for the orchard, with measurements of 100 to 125 feet on a side (Wertenbaker 1932:88). However, Morris, who apparently interviewed some of Mercer’s officers after the battle, describes it as “thick planted” and “...narrow tho’ it extended a good way to the right and left” (Morris 1776:13) suggesting that its configuration was more rectangular. The rectangular form of the orchard has been used in Smith’s study of the battle (1967:21) and Fischer’s more recent treatment (Fischer 2004).

3.2.7 Thomas Clarke Farm Complex (house, barns, outbuildings, hay stacks) (Key terrain, Observation, Cover and Concealment, Obstacle)

The Thomas Clarke farm complex is still extant and forms the basis for the Princeton Battlefield State Park (Figure 19). The house is located on a topographic rise (120 foot elevation asl) south and east of the William Clarke House complex. Following the initial engagement in the William Clarke orchard and the subsequent routing of Mercer’s and Cadwalader’s formations, the Thomas Clarke farm complex served as an observation point for the American forces. The farm complex offered cover and concealment of the American forces, particularly the light infantry formations of Rodney and Henry. Rodney notes that the stacks and buildings provided cover for the light infantry and the rallying formations of Mercer and Cadwalader (Rodney 1888:34).



Figure 19. South elevation of the Thomas Clark House.



Figure 20. View to the southeast along Frog Hollow ravine. Crown Forces (the 40th Regiment of Foot) was drawn up along the left side of this image, and American forces under Sullivan approached from the right. It is likely the Saw Mill Road crossed this ravine near here.

From the position on the hill at the William Clarke farm approximately 200 yards away, the main Crown Forces battle line came under fire from the American formations situated at the Thomas Clarke farm complex (Figure 15). The hill on which the Thomas Clarke house sits was the location for the placement of Captain Moulder's two-gun battery (Figure 17). Moulder's guns were situated to the northeast of the house on the high point that commanded the shallow valley between the two forces (Figures 16 and 17). One of Moulder's gunners recalled that "At Princeton the guns of Moulder were again active, and while the British fired too high (over his men) he mowed them down in rows as if they had lain down to rest" (Cuthbert 1867:44-47). Archeological evidence from field east of Moulder's position in the State Park and IAS property includes grape shot, providing physical evidence of the "overshooting" of the Royal Artillery (Appendix V). Stephen Olney of Rhode Island also mentions the overshooting of the Crown Forces (Olney 1839:198).

Wilkinson notes that at least one attempt was made by Crown Forces to dislodge or overrun Moulder's battery; "being encouraged by the irresolution of the militia [Cadwalader's formation], notwithstanding the exertions of the commander in chief, and their immediate officers to press them forward, they attempted with a company of infantry to carry Captain Moulder's battery ..." (Wilkinson 1816:143). This attack in company strength is thus the maximum advance of any Crown Forces on the day of battle.

3.2.8 Mercer Hill (Key Terrain, Observation)

Mercer Hill may have served as the location for the placement of the 55th Regiment of Foot's battleline. The hill, at 194 foot elevation (asl) is commanding ground and is likely the "heights" where Mawhood posted the mounted dragoons and the 55th, since the trace of Saw Mill Road apparently ran close to this position. The hill at the time of the battle may have been covered by trees or other foliage, since Sullivan's column apparently did not continue its advance into Princeton due to the presence of the 55th on the hill.

"Their [sic] was rising ground which commanded the country about half a mile back & a quarter mile off the road this he [Mawhood] wished to gain..." (Belsches 1777:171).

3.2.9 Hedges, Fences, Ditches (Obstacles)

There are numerous first-person references to hedges, fences, and ditches on the battlefield. All of these would have served as obstacles to the movement of linear battle formations. In many cases, identical obstacles have different descriptions provided by battle participants, making precise fencing descriptions impossible.

Examples of descriptions of fencing are found in Wilkinson (1816:142) where he references a "worm fence" at William Clarke's farm; in describing the same fence, Morris (1776:16-17) describes a "fence and gate, and " a two-bar fence." A British description of the William Clarke farm fencing comes from Hale (1913:18) who notes the presence of "railings" at the William Clarke farm, and lieutenant Howell of the dismounted 16th Light Dragoons testified that "the whole detachment was formed in a line behind a rail," with no further description of the fencing.

In his description of the fighting at the William Clarke farm Thomas Rodney notes the presence of a "fence and ditch" and later in describing the property between the two Clarke Farms he mentions a "fence between two hills" (Rodney 1888:34).

Interesting alternative descriptions of the William Clarke farm fencing include at least two that describe the fence as a hedge or a thorn hedge. According to John Borrows of the Philadelphia Associators Mercer's column encountered the 17th Foot "who had secreted themselves behind a thick thorn hedge, when within a few paces they rose and gave us a warm reception" (Borrows).

Overall it is difficult to place these on the landscape today with any certainty but it is clear that fields were defined and divided by fences of a wide variety.

3.2.10 Frog Hollow Ravine (Obstacle)

Frog Hollow was a ravine and small tributary extending roughly northwest-southeast to Stony Brook. The ravine was relatively deep and had steep banks on both sides, making it an ideal defensive line for the Crown Forces. Early in the battle Mawhood had detached the 40th Regiment of Foot to occupy this location in a blocking position between the advancing American forces under Sullivan and the town of Princeton.

Wilkinson depicts Frog Hollow as a significant ditch with both the 40th and 55th regiments drawn up along its northern side. The presence of the 55th Foot at this location is problematic, since it seems more likely that the regiment was drawn up on Mercer Heights (see description). Morris describes the action at Frog Hollow as "...some of the 40th appeared pouring out of the back gate of the college and taking possession of a dike which extended from thence down the hill. These [the men of the 40th Foot] were soon removed by the fire of two field pieces" (Morris 1776:15). Morris's use of the word "dike" is likely how he viewed the ravine.

The land use around Frog Hollow ravine is considerably changed from what it was in 1777. It is now located on the golf course at Seminary near Alexander Street. The ravine is not particularly steep-sided today, but its general course is still visible as part of the battlefield (Figure 20). Despite the use of the property, a contemporary image by Trumbull sketched in 1790 depicts the area around Frog Hollow as relatively open land, with a clear field of vision east toward Nassau Hall. The image also includes the depiction of a fence line, possibly providing the location of a part of the eastern trace of Saw Mill Road (Rice 1968).

3.2.11 Nassau Hall (Cover and Concealment)

Completed in 1756 Nassau Hall was the principle building on the Princeton Campus at the time of the battle (Figures 21 and 22). Contemporary images of the college show it to have been landscaped on its northern side and the yard surrounded by a paling fence. The building and grounds served as an expedient fortification for elements of the 40th Regiment of Foot following their retreat from Frog Hollow.

Several American sources note that cannon fired at the college. As recorded by a Philadelphia Associator: "they fired one Shot into the College, when a man waved his Hat, another Shot was fired & a flag was sent out & they surrendered" (Hood 1886:264). Wilkinson comments that the cannon firing at the college was accidental and that the incident took place at the rear of the building (Wilkinson 1816:145). Today an indentation on the east side of Nassau Hall is interpreted as the scar caused by the cannon ball.

According to Rhode Islander John Howland "...a body of them [British infantry] retreated to the college yard behind a breastwork, and when we had approached within fifty or sixty feet, an officer came through a sally port, with a white handkerchief on the point of his sword. General



Figure 21. View to the east of Nassau Hall. American forces approached this building from the other side of the structure.



Figure 22. The President's House (the Maclean House), Princeton University Campus, view to west (photo by Denise Applewhite).

Sullivan rode up to him, and we were ordered to halt. There were about two hundred and fifty in this party which surrendered, and as many as fifty more brought in by detachments, so that we left Princeton with over three hundred prisoners, and a string of British baggage wagons loaded with their camp equipage” (Howland 1857:75). Smith’s study of the battle suggests that it was the 55th Regiment that surrendered to Sullivan at the college, but that supposition is not borne out by other sources.

Nassau Hall and the college grounds provided cover and concealment for the Crown Forces.

3.2.12 Stony Brook Bridge (Key Terrain, Obstacle)

The bridge crossing of Stony Brook was a key terrain feature of the battle (Figure 23). The bridge itself posed an obstacle for any formed body of infantry, cavalry, artillery, or baggage moving on the Trenton-Princeton Road. The bridge was essentially a “choke-point” for military formations. The importance of the bridge is shown by the detachment of portions of Mifflin’s command to block the crossing. Mifflin’s men were able to partially dismantle the bridge prior to the arrival of Cornwallis’ troops.

The bridge’s tactical significance is revealed in the court martial testimony of members of the 16th Light Dragoon dismounted detachment under Lieutenant Wilmot. The testimony indicates that the principal mission of the dismounted dragoons was to extend the right flank of the Crown Forces line to maintain a connection to the bridge and road, which in turn would link Mawhood’s brigade with Cornwallis’ division at Trenton.

The present bridge crossing was established in 1712 when the road was realigned from a ford crossing approximately 230 feet north of the bridge. The first bridge was built in 1738-40. Following its destruction by the Americans in 1777, the bridge was rebuilt in 1792. Later changes occurred in 1895-97, and again in 1923.

3.2.13 Stony Brook (Key Terrain, Obstacle)

Just as the bridge crossing Stony Brook was an obstacle and a key terrain feature, so too was the brook itself. Stony Brook formed the western side of the battlefield. While not particularly deep or difficult to traverse, the stream did present an obstacle to troop movements. British formations under Cornwallis were forced to deploy at the brook and bridge during their advance to Princeton following the battle. They were eventually able to cross the brook at a ford about 230 feet north of the bridge.

3.2.14 Worth’s Mill (Cover and Concealment)

While no accounts specifically mention Worth’s Mill it is likely that the mill complex on Stony Brook offered cover and concealment to Cornwallis’ advancing column. The mill was established in 1712-1714 focused on the ford crossing. The mill was situated north and west of the creek. Portions of the mill building were incorporated into the bridge abutment at Stony Brook when Route 206 was improved in the late nineteenth century (Greiff and Gibbons 1964:184-187).

3.2.15 Princeton (Obstacle)

While no combat formally occurred in Princeton, the town itself would have functioned as a significant obstacle to movement, observation, and fields of fire.



Figure 23. View to the north of Stony Brook Bridge. Worth's Mill was situated on the left bank of the creek.

The village of Princeton in the eighteenth century was an open country village (Greiff and Gibbons: 190-195). While the village was not urban in the modern sense, military formations attempting to maneuver in a town would have been severely hampered due to buildings, fences, and other obstacles. It should be noted that few battles in the American Revolution were fought in “built-up” areas, the exceptions being Trenton and Germantown.

3.2.16 Princeton to Kingston Road, then to Somerset Courthouse (Avenue of Approach/Retreat)

Following the battle Washington’s forces vacated Princeton by way of Nassau and Witherspoon streets to modern Route 27. This route was used by both American and Crown Forces until the American troops crossed the Millstone River at Kingston.

3.2.17 Princeton to New Brunswick Road (Avenue of Approach/Retreat)

The Crown Forces under Cornwallis diverged from the above pursuit route when they reached the New Brunswick Road.

3.2.18 Hill B (Obstacle, Cover and Concealment)

Based on the Cadwalader map it appears that several Crown Forces batteries were erected on the south side of Princeton as defensive works. The location we have identified as Hill B may have been the position of the unfinished battery (“Fascine Batt. begun 30th [December] & almost finished this morning”) shown on Cadwalader’s map (dated 31 December 1776). One American officer, Robert Beale of the 5th Virginia, describes the storming of this battery and finding it empty of artillery and unoccupied. Beale writes “...a small battery stood to our left and the College to the right - 'twas said they were in the battery then up the battery we went + no one there, then they were in the College...” (Beale nd). Beale’s description and the topography in the area support the hypothesis that Hill B may have been the site of the unfinished battery.

4.0 THE BATTLE OF PRINCETON AS A KOCOA MILITARY TERRAIN ANALYSIS

4.1 PREFACE

This report contains several important changes to the standard interpretation of the chronology and geographical distribution of opposing forces before the Battle of Princeton and their subsequent movements as the battle unfolded on 3 January 1777.

Specifically these changes are:

- 1) a reinterpretation of the route of General Mercer's forces to and beyond the Thomas Clarke House;
- 2) the position of General Mercer's forces on the battlefield at the initial exchange;
- 3) the composition and distribution of Crown Forces and the location and orientation of the British battle line from the bridge across the Stony Brook to Nassau Hall;
- 4) the location of the main battlefield on the State Park and Institute for Advanced Study properties;
- 5) the route of the American forces under Washington's command toward Princeton; and
- 6) the composition of and the flanking maneuvers by American forces sent to take and destroy the bridge across the Stony Brook.

These changes are based on:

- 1) the discovery of a portion of the trace of Sawmill Road;
- 2) the discovery of important new accounts, both American and British, including the correspondence surrounding the death of Capt. William Leslie of the 17th Regiment of Foot and the Court Martial proceedings of Cornet Henry Evatt of 16th Regiment of Light Dragoons;
- 3) a critical reading of previously known accounts;
- 4) the extensive use of pension applications;
- 5) the interpretation of archeological evidence; and
- 6) the extensive use of computer technology.

The chronology of events and geographical distribution of forces presented in this report emerged when the available information was analyzed using modern computer technology such as georeferencing of historic maps, computer-based distance analyses, and the use of three-dimensional topographical feature maps showing lines of vision at different times across the battlefield.

The chronology of events and geographical distribution of forces presented in this report emerged when the available information was analyzed using modern computer technology such as geo-referencing of historic maps, computer-based distance analyses, and the use of three-dimensional topographical feature maps showing lines of vision at different times across the battlefield.

The report is based exclusively on primary sources but these sources are neither equal in the amount and detail of the information they provide nor are they of equal reliability and/or trustworthiness concerning the information contained in them.

The criteria applied for evaluating the sources were:

- 1) closeness in time. The shorter the time-span between 3 January 1777 and the recordation of events by the participant or witness, the higher the source ranks in trustworthiness
- 2) physical closeness of the participant or witness to the events he described. The closer the participant or witness is to the battlefield, the higher the source ranks in trustworthiness

Of less importance were:

- 3) the rank of the reporter. The account of a private or sergeant who was in the thick of the action was considered *primo facie* as valuable as that of a major or colonel in the recordation if not the interpretation of events. Participants described what they saw, but what appeared as flight to a private on the field may have been a re-deployment of forces ordered by superior officers
- 4) the legal status of the reporter. The account of a civilian was considered *primo facie* as valuable as that of a combatant

For the methods applied in collecting these sources and for evaluating the information contained in them see the Methodology section. This analysis is to be read concurrently with the locations listed in the KOCOA Table accompanying, and the maps generated for, this report.

Table 2. Order of Battle -- Continental Army

Sullivan's Division	MG John Sullivan	
<i>St. Clair's Brigade</i>	<i>BG Arthur St. Clair</i>	1,200 -1,400
Stark's New Hampshire Continental Regiment	Colonel John Stark	Remnant
Reed's New Hampshire Continental Regiment	Colonel James Reed, absent	Remnant
Poor's New Hampshire Continental Regiment	Colonel Enoch Poor	Remnant
Patterson's 1st Massachusetts Continental		Remnant

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Regt		
Shepard's 4th Massachusetts Continental Regt		Remnant
Webb's 19th Massachusetts Continental Regt		Remnant
Glover's 14th Massachusetts Continental Regt		Remnant
Bailey's 23rd Massachusetts Continental Regt		Remnant
Sargent's 16th Massachusetts Continental Regt	Colonel Paul Dudley Sargent	Remnant
Ward's Connecticut Regiment	Colonel Andrew Ward	Remnant
Connecticut State Troops	Colonel John Chester	Remnant
Read's 13th Massachusetts Continental Regt	Colonel Joseph Read	Remnant
Greene's Division	MG Nathaniel Greene	
<i>Mercer's Brigade</i>	<i>BG Hugh Mercer</i>	325-350
Smallwood's Maryland Continental Regiment	Captain John Stone	50
Miles Pennsylvania Rifle Regiment	Major Ennion Williams	200
Rawlings Maryland and Virginia Rifle Regiment	Colonel Moses Rawlings	75
New Jersey State Artillery (2 guns)	Captain John Neil	20 (?)
<i>Stirling's Brigade</i>	Remnant	? 50 - 75
1st Delaware Regiment	Colonel John Haslet	6
1st Virginia Regiment	Captain John Fleming	20
3rd Virginia Regiment	Colonel George Weedon	(?)
6th Maryland Regiment	Colonel Otho Williams	(?)

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<u>Stephen's Brigade</u>	<i>Colonel Charles Scott</i>	400
4th Virginia Regiment	Lt. Colonel Robert Lawson	
5th Virginia Regiment	Major Josiah Parker	
6th Virginia Regiment	Major Richard Parker	
<u>Fermoy's Brigade</u>	<i>BG Mathias-Alexis Roche-Fermoy</i>	610
German Regiment	Colonel Nicholas Hausseger	410
1st Pennsylvania Rifle Regiment	Colonel Edward Hand	200
<u>Cadwalader's Brigade</u>	<i>BG John Cadwalader</i>	1,150
1st Battalion Philadelphia Associators	Colonel Jacob Morgan	
2nd Battalion Philadelphia Associators	Colonel John Bayard	
3rd Battalion Philadelphia Associators	Colonel John Nixon	
Philadelphia Rifle Battalion	Colonel Timothy Matlack	
Philadelphia Light Infantry Company	Captain George Henry	
Chester County Militia		
Dover [Delaware] Light Infantry Company	Captain Thomas Rodney	
United States Marines	Major Samuel Nicholas	
2nd Company Artillery, Philadelphia Associators	Captain Joseph Moulder	
<u>Hitchcock's Brigade</u>	<i>Major Israel Angell</i>	353
Lippitt's Rhode Island Regiment	Colonel Christopher Lippitt	160
2nd Rhode Island Regiment	Colonel Daniel Hitchcock	120

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1st Rhode Island Regiment	Colonel James Varnum	7
4th Massachusetts's Regiment	Colonel John Nixon	63
12th Massachusetts's Regiment	Colonel Moses Little	3
Massachusetts's Company of Continental Artillery	Captain Lt. Wintrop Sargent	
<i>Mifflin's Brigade</i>	<i>BG Thomas Mifflin</i>	1,500
2nd Pennsylvania Regiment	Colonel Philip De Haas	
4th Pennsylvania Regiment	Colonel Daniel Brodhead	
10th Pennsylvania Regiment	Colonel Joseph Penrose	
11th Pennsylvania Regiment	Colonel Richard Humpton	
12th Pennsylvania Regiment	Colonel William Cooke	
	Total: 5,600 to 5,800	

Table 3. Order of Battle -- Crown Forces

Formation	Commanding Officer/ Officer Present	Strength
British 4th Brigade	Lt Colonel Charles Mawhood	
17th Regiment of Foot	Lt Colonel Charles Mawhood	246
40th Regiment of Foot	Major Samuel Bradstreet	333
55th Regiment of Foot	Major Cornelius Cuyler	250
16th Light Dragoons, (Queens Light)		70-100
Grenadiers, 1 company (43rd; 52nd)	Captain Hatfield (43rd) Captain Williams (52nd)	32
Light Infantry, 1 company (44th Regt of Foot?)	Lieutenant Campbell (44th)	50

Formation	Commanding Officer/ Officer Present	Strength
42nd Regiment of Foot, 1 co.		50
Royal Artillery detachment (4 guns)		30 (?)
71st Regiment of Foot, detachment	Captain Munro	70 (?)
Convalescents, recruits (excl. transfers)		100 (?)
	Total	~ 1,500

4.2 CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS ON 3 JANUARY 1777- THE BATTLE OF PRINCETON

Having departed Trenton around midnight of 2/3 January 1777, the Continental Army reached "a small wood, south of a Quaker meeting, on the left of Stoney brook, a little before sunrise." (Wilkinson 1816).¹ The time was around 7:10 a.m. to 7:15 a.m.: on 3 January 1777, the sun rose at 7:22 a.m. Here, almost 2 miles from Princeton, Washington collected his forces, organized them into three tactical units, designated their avenues of approach and assigned them specific tasks in the attack.

James Wilkinson, who served as aide-de-camp to Washington at Princeton and whose account of the initial phase of the Battle of Princeton is among the most frequently quoted accounts, identified two columns and their tasks:

- 1) "the main column wheeled to the right, and turning the south-east corner of the wood, marched directly for Princeton" (Wilkinson, 1816).
- 2) "General Mercer, accompanied by several volunteers, with a detachment consisting of the fragments of Smallwood's regiment, commanded by Captain Stone, the first Virginia regiment commanded by Captain Fleming, and two field pieces under Captain Neal, and probably other corps which I do not recollect, but in the whole certainly not exceeding 350 men, marched immediately up Stoney brook, as I was informed at the time, to take possession of the bridge, for the double purpose of intercepting fugitives from Princeton, and to cover our rear against Lord Cornwallis from Trenton." (Wilkinson 1816).

Wilkinson's account does not identify the other columns and makes it appear as if General Mercer was not part of the "main column" but, "as I was informed at the time", was detached for the task of taking and holding the bridge over the Stony Brook.

¹ The numbers behind the name indicate the year in which events were recorded. For exact bibliographic data see the attached "List of Primary Sources" for Continental Army and Crown Forces accounts. The discrepancy in departure times from Trenton -- up to four hours -- given in various accounts is primarily due to the fact that it took time to quietly line up thousands of men in preparation of the march in complete darkness. St. Clair: "about ten o'clock at Night our Army moved of in great Silence and took a back Road." Shaw: "We began our march about midnight." Rodney: "At two o'clock this ... secret orders were issued to each department and the whole army was at once put in motion".

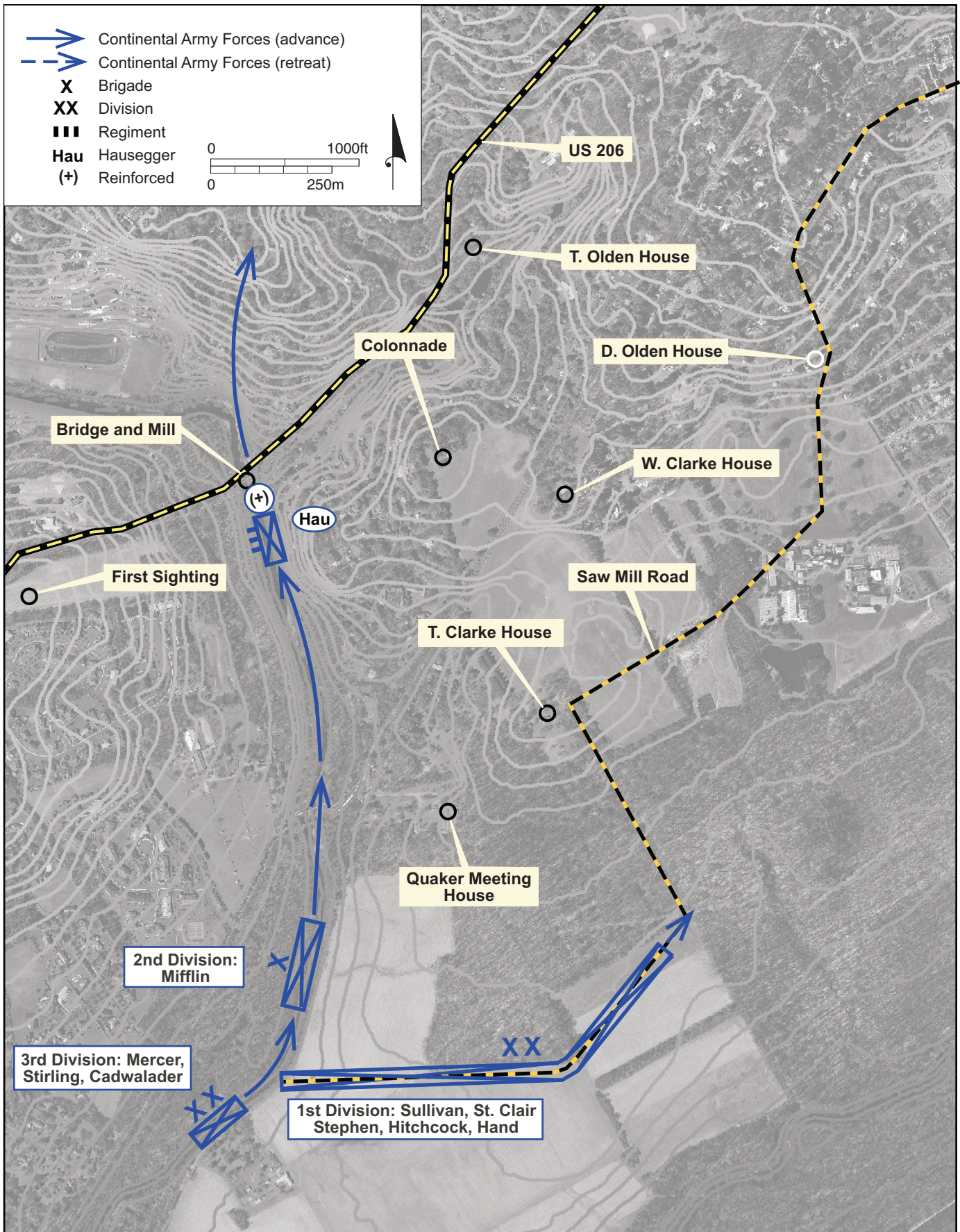


Figure 24. Location and tactical organization of American forces for the attack on Princeton, 0700-0720.

Writing in his diary on 2 (i.e., 3) January 1777, Captain Thomas Rodney gives a much more detailed account and identifies three columns with three separate and clearly defined tasks. Shortly before dawn on 3 January, Washington met with his field-grade officers and handed out the orders for the attack. Since these orders were most likely given verbally, no documentation exists, but Rodney's diary allows for the reconstruction of the meeting. "When we had proceeded to within a mile and a half of Princeton and the van had crossed Stony Brook, Gen. Washington ordered our Infantry to file off to one side of the road and halt." As Washington's aide-de-camp Wilkinson should have been part of this meeting, though the "as I was informed at the time" seems to imply that he was not and rather received his information through an intermediary.

The orders for the attack as outlined by Rodney were as follows:

- 1) "Gen. Sullivan was ordered to wheel to the right and flank the town on that side"

This was the First Division composed of Brigadier General Arthur St. Clair's Brigade with the remnants of twelve New England regiments, some 1,200 to 1,400 men strong. Eyewitness and pension accounts show that for the attack on Princeton the division was re-enforced with Colonel Stephen's/Colonel Charles Scott's Virginia Brigade, Colonel Daniel Hitchcock's New England Brigade, and Colonel Hand's Pennsylvania Rifles. This brought the strength of this lead division to around 2,200 to 2,400 men or half the strength of Washington's Continentals. This arrangement made perfect sense from a tactical point of view: these were Washington's best troops, the remnants of experienced line units who were to deliver the first blow to Crown forces in Princeton.

- 2) "two Brigades were ordered to wheel to the Left, to make a circuit and surround the town on that side and as they went to break down the Bridge and post a party at the mill on the main road."

This was the Second Division consisting of Fermoy's and Mifflin's Brigades. From a tactical view-point and considering the goals and purposes of the march on Princeton, this organization again made sense. A march by this Second Division along the Stony Brook and across the Princeton-Trenton Road to the north into the back of Princeton describes exactly the flanking maneuver Washington needed to accomplish to cut off the British retreat to New Brunswick and capture or destroy as large a portion of the British garrison in Princeton as possible. But in order to play the role of anvil in Washington battle plan it had to be sufficiently strong to seal off escape routes to the north-east. At close to 2,000 Continentals, this division was almost as large as Washington's attack division and strong enough to play the role Washington had intended for it. Created in the pre-dawn minutes before the final approach it consisted of two brigades. One was a strike force made up of the German Regiment, likely the largest intact unit available to Washington, possibly re-enforced with the 3rd Battalion, Philadelphia Associators to a total strength of a little over 500 men. The other was Thomas Mifflin's Brigade, some 1,500 men constituting the remnants of five Pennsylvania regiments. All contained large numbers of German-speaking troops, an aspect of immense importance for command and control on the battlefield.

Eyewitness accounts of the activities and whereabouts of these two brigades confirm the two tasks of this Second Division, i.e., a) "surround the town on that side and b) as they went to break down the Bridge and post a party at the mill on the main road." William McCracken, who served with Capt. Thomas Strawbridge's Company of the Chester County militia in Mifflin's Brigade, confirms this distribution of forces when he wrote in his pension application "that he belonged to

General Mifflin's brigade. that ... he went with his company across the country to Princetown & as they marched on heard the firing of the compheting armies and was ordered to break down a bridge which they in part cut down & set fire to repose of it when the British fired field pieces from an adjoining Hill, they went from thence to Princeton & followed the regular Army." Not only was it Mifflin's Brigade which had orders to break down the bridge, McCracken was also marching on a road from which he could only hear "the firing of the compheting armies" but not see the fighting on the plain in front of the Clark House. In order for this to be true he, and by implication Mifflin's brigade, had to be marching along Stony Brook from where it is impossible to see the plain where Mercer fell.

British accounts confirm that Mifflin's Brigade did indeed march toward the bridge across the Stony Brook as Mifflin had been instructed to do in to Rodney's account and as is confirmed in McCracken's pension application. In the court-martial of Cornet Henry Evatt of the 16th Regiment of Light Dragoons, Lieutenant David Howell testified that "his (the Witness's) Division becoming then the right hand division; and upon looking to the right he saw that the Enemy had gained their right flank considerably, and were running as he imagined to endeavour to gain possession of Stoney Bridge, which was then in a line with them."

Concurrently the German Regiment under Colonel Nicholas Hausegger, together with the 3rd Battalion of the Philadelphia Associators (?) separated from Mifflin's Brigade in order to "surround the town on that [i.e., the left] side", which, according to Rodney, they did: "The first two Divisions of our army therefore passed wide to the right and left and leaving them undiscovered went on to Princeton."

But in order for the Battle of Princeton to unfold as it did, Hausegger's brigade had to be the first to file off and move very quickly indeed. It had to have reached the Princeton-Trenton Road and crossed it before the lead elements of Mawhood's forces turned the corner in the road south-west of the Olden House from where they would have seen Hausegger's troops. Such a scenario is possible. It is about 4,000 feet or 3/4 of a mile from the jump-off point to the bridge and Hausegger's hurrying troops could have covered the distance in 20 minutes, arriving at the bridge at around 7:30 a.m. and before Mawhood's forces. But their tracks would not have gone unnoticed, which may help to explain the appearance of the Light Dragoons on a reconnaissance mission on Cochran's Hill some 15 minutes later, from where they sighted the van of Sullivan's forces about 3/4 of a mile to the east. At that point on Washington's battle plan began to unravel.

That it would unravel with the sighting of the van of Sullivan's forces is not something Washington could have foreseen. From hindsight it is easy to forget that Washington made his dispositions without the knowledge that the garrison at Princeton was on the march rather than asleep in their barracks. Had Washington known that Mawhood was on his way to Trenton with his whole force he would not have sent this Second Division on a flanking maneuver where they ran the risk of running into Mawhood nor would he later have sent Mercer to take on forces that turned out to be stronger than his own.²

3) "The third Division was composed of Gen. Mercers brigade of Continental troops, about 300 men, and Cadwaladers brigade of Philadelphia militia to which brigade the

² For a detailed discussion of the activities of this division see "Notes on the movements of Colonel Hausegger's detachment on 3 January 1777" in Appendix IV.

whole of our light Infantry Regiment was again annexed. Mercers brigade marched in front and another corp of infantry brought up the rear. My company flanked the whole brigade on the right in an Indian file so that my men were very much extended and distant from each other; I marched in front and was followed by sargeant McKnatt and next to him was Nehemiah Tilton [afterwards Lieut.-Col. Tilton]. "

This was the Third Division, whose composition is described by Wilkinson (1816) as well. It consisted of Mercer's and Stirling's Brigades of Continental Line troops, fewer than 400 men and New Jersey, Delaware and Pennsylvania militia (minus at least the 3rd Battalion, Philadelphia Associators) under General John Cadwalader, was clearly defined: "Mercers brigade which was headed by Col. Haslet of Delaware on foot and Gen. Mercer on horseback was to march straight on to Princeton without Turning to the right or left." Crown forces were aware of this distribution of the Continental Army as well when Ensign George Inman of the 17th Regiment of Foot wrote that "we attacked their Centre Column". At around 1,400 officers and other ranks, 1,000 of whom were militia, it was the weakest of Washington's three divisions. When Mercer's division of around 400 men ran into Mawhood's more than 800 veterans the outcome was almost predictable. In the words of Thomas Rodney: the British "being greatly superior in number returned the fire and charged bayonets, and their onset was so fierce that Gen. Mercer fell mortally wounded and many of his officers were killed, and the brigade being effectually broken, began a disorderly flight."

Besides infantry, Washington's brigades and division also contained artillery units. At the Second Battle of Trenton, General Henry Knox reported "30 or 40" guns in action at Assunpink Creek. Hackett Fischer assumes "that his high estimate was the total number of guns in the army, and the lower number was his guess of the guns in action at the creek."³ John Cadwalader reports that upon departure from Trenton around midnight of 2/3 January 1777, "about five hundred men, and two pieces of iron cannon, were left to amuse the enemy." That would give the Continental artillery around 33 to 35 guns that could have made the march to Princeton.⁴ No exact numbers of Continental field pieces deployed at Princeton are available, but an inventory of 16 January 1777, not quite two weeks after the battle, shows this distribution of artillery.

Table 4. Distribution of field pieces in the American Army, 3 January 1777

Major General Sullivan

Capt. Allen--	2 Braß 3	Capt Lt Clarke--	2 Braß 3
Lt. Swartwout--	1 do 3	Capt Lt Freeman--	1 do 6
Lt Reed--	1 do 6	Lt Slewman--	1 Howitzer

General Mifflin's Brigade

Major Proctor--	1 Iron 3	Capt. Brown--	1 Iron 4
	2 Braß 6		
Capt. Forrest--	2 do 6	Capt. Jones--	2 Iron 3

General Cadwalader's Brigade

Capt. Lee--	2 Braß 6	Capt. Bruster--	1 do 3 [i.e., brass]
Capt. Ayres--	1 do 3	Capt. Moldry--	2 Iron 3

³ Hackett Fischer, *Washington's Crossing*, p. 404, note.

⁴ "An Account of the Battle of Princeton." *The Pennsylvania Evening Post*, 16 January 1777. The identification of John Cadwalader as the author is made in Smith, *The Battle of Princeton*, p. 38.

Genl St. Clair's Brigade

Capt. Frothingham--	1 Braß 6	Lieut. Wescute--	1 Braß 6
Capt. Sargent--	2 do 3	Capt. Lt. Stevens--	2 do 3
Capt. Lt. Rumney & Lt. King--	2 Howitzers		

Lt. Morrison & Men with an Iron 4 pounder & Amunition march'd to join Genl Dickenson on the Rariton, 3 miles above Bound Brook.⁵

It is unknown whether this table also reflects the distribution of artillery at Princeton since orders had been issued only verbally, but primary-source evidence suggests that this list very closely reflects the distribution on the morning of 3 January 1777: Sergeant White under Capt. Frothingham is also in St. Clair's Brigade at Princeton, on 16 January Capt. Moulder ("Mouldry") is still with Cadwalader, Forrest and Proctor are still with Mifflin, and Capt. Thomas Clarke, who had taken over Neal's company after Neal was killed at Princeton, is listed with Sullivan's Brigade, where Neal had served before being attached to Mercer for the march on Princeton.

Assuming that the distribution of 16 January in its basic structure also reflects the situation on 3 January, the First Division included Sullivan with five field pieces in his brigade and St. Clair with six. To these must possibly be added a two-gun battery of Major Thomas Proctor,⁶ giving the First Division, scheduled to lead the attack under the direct command of Washington, 13 guns or half of the total artillery.⁷ Mifflin's brigade, part of the Second Division, possibly had as few as four cannon: the two-gun battery under Capt. Forrest known to have fired at Crown forces approaching the bridge over Stony Brook and possibly a two-gun battery under either Capt. Brown or Capt. Jones.⁸ This was also the total of the artillery in this division: in view of the

⁵ Henry Knox Papers, Reel 3, No. 116 a. The use and deployment of artillery at Princeton stands in need of a new study. Both Fairfax Downey, "No Artillery Better Served: The Beginnings of U.S. Artillery-Trenton, Princeton and Monmouth Court House." *Army Combat Forces Journal* 6 (September 1955), pp. 54-58 and Jac Weller, "Guns of Destiny: Field Artillery in the Trenton-Princeton Campaign 25 December 1776 to 3 January 1777." *Military Affairs* 20 (Spring 1956), pp. 1-15, contain much incorrect information. There were no French cannon at Princeton. Knox' table does not list one any and can not as Beaumarchais' first vessel, the *Amphitrite*, sailed from France on 25 January 1777, and arrived in Portsmouth, NH only on 20 April 1777.

⁶ Knox' list of 16 January 1777 gives Proctor a three-gun battery, but such a battery is not envisaged in the organizational structure of the Continental Artillery and highly unlikely in battle.

⁷ The assumption that Proctor was this column is based on the fact that he had time to exchange his iron guns for captured brass cannon. In order to do this he had to have been in Princeton before Forrest's battery opened up against Crown forces at the bridge over the Stony Brook since he probably would not have had time to carry out the exchange as the Continental Army hastily retreated from Princeton. The only other (unlikely) explanation is that Proctor's battery accompanied the infantry of Mifflin's brigade as it scaled the very steep incline from the road along Stony Brook to reach the plain where the battle was taking place and accompanied it all the way to Princeton where Proctor then exchanged his cannon. We know that Forrest did not and in view of the large amount of artillery already with the other two divisions there was no need for that either.

⁸ This distribution is based on John Cadwalader's note that upon departure from Trenton around midnight of 2/3 January 1777, "two pieces of iron cannon, were left". On 16 January 1777, only Brown and Jones in Mifflin's brigade and Moulder still have iron cannon and Moulder is known to have been at Princeton. Only Forrest is known to have fired his guns.

distance and terrain Hausegger's German Regiment was scheduled to cross it would have been impracticable to equip him with artillery.

Mercer's brigade, part of the Third Division, included Capt. Neal's two-gun battery while Cadwalader's brigade had six cannon for a total of eight cannon.⁹ Since Mifflin with two (or four?) guns was detached to destroy the bridge across the Stony Brook, a total of 22 (24?) guns accompanied the two divisions marching directly on Princeton.¹⁰

Theoretically Crown forces under Mawhood with their four cannon were severely out-gunned, but in reality not even half of the guns in the attack divisions are known to have seen action during the "hot" phase of the Battle of Princeton: eyewitness accounts identify only four cannon batteries as having fired their eight guns at Princeton and two of those were with Mifflin's brigade at Stony Brook.

- 1) Sergeant White who at Princeton on 3 January served in Captain Frothingham's battery of two cannon in the Massachusetts Company of Continental Artillery, the future 3rd Regiment of Continental Artillery, commanded by Winthrop Sargent, in Hitchcock's Brigade in Sullivan's Division, the same division he is listed under on 16 January 1777¹¹
- 2) Captain Moulder's battery in Cadwalader's Brigade, who on 16 January is listed with two iron 3-lb guns in Cadwalader's brigade.
- 3) Captain Neal of the New Jersey State Artillery with two guns, who served under Mercer at Princeton where he was killed.
- 4) The two guns of Captain Forrest in Mifflin's Brigade at the bridge across the Stony Brook holding off Cornwallis' forces.

Though Rodney claims to have seen eight cannon in action at Princeton, the number was only half that. Lieutenant Wetherall of the 17th Regiment of Foot recorded that "On "Jany 1st ... Col Mawhood with 3rd/3d dismounted Dragoons, Squadron of Dragoon, 4 Six Pounders & Convalescends & Recruits for the Flank Corps was left at Prince Town."¹² Similarly Capt. William C. Hall of the 28th Regt. of Foot, while not with Mawhood at Princeton but with Cornwallis in Trenton at the time, recorded that "at five in the morning [Mawhood] began his march, with four pieces of cannon."¹³ This is confirmed by BG Samuel Cleaveland, commanding

⁹ It is unknown which unit Lt. Morrison with his iron 4-lb gun was attached to if he indeed was at Princeton.

¹⁰ A return of 22 January 1777 gives a total of 35 guns, i.e., 9 iron 3-lb guns, 12 brass 3-lb guns, 1 iron 4-lb gun, 10 brass 6-lb guns and 3 howitzers. Ibid. Reel 3, No. 118. According to the "Return of Brass & Iron Ordnance at the different Posts - 21 March 1777", Knox' artillery had decreased to 14 brass and two iron cannon, a 3-pounder of unknown make and three brass howitzer for a total of 21. Ibid., Reel 3, No. 632.

¹¹ "The Good Soldier White." *American Heritage* 7 no. 4 (June 1956), pp. 73-79, p. 78.

¹² "Operations of the Army under Lt. G. Clinton (beginning on 12 February 1776)." David Library of the American Revolution, Sol Feinstein Collection No. 132 (Card No. 409).

¹³ An Officer of the Army, *The history of the Civil War in America* vol. 1 (London, 1780), pp. 245-252. the "Officer" was Capt. William C. Hall of the 28th Regt. of Foot.

officer of the Fourth Battalion Royal Artillery, in his dispatch to the Board of Ordnance: "The heavy fire of the enemy at the first of the attack obliged the Regiment to retire, under cover of four 6-pounders advantageously posted. ... they were obliged to leave two 6-pounders, all the horses belonging to the guns being shot and the axle-tree of the other carriage broke by firing."¹⁴

This loss of two cannon is confirmed in American accounts, e.g., by General Washington in his letter to the Continental Congress of 5 January, in which he wrote: "We took two Brass Field pieces from them."¹⁵ Proctor immediately exchanged one, but more likely two, of his iron guns for them and appears on Knox' table of 16 January 1777 with two brass 6-pounders.¹⁶

If this table reflects the distribution of artillery (excluding the howitzer which would have been of no use in an open battle) at Princeton, Sullivan had seven field pieces in his brigade, Mifflin eight, Cadwalader six and St. Clair six plus possibly Morrison with his iron 4-pounder for a total of 28 guns. Since some of Mifflin's guns were detached to the bridge across the Stony Brook, a total of 20 to 25 guns accompanied the attack columns.¹⁷

This was the distribution and armament of Washington's eight brigades as they set off for the final 1 1/2 miles of their march toward Princeton. It deviates considerably from the usual interpretation of the Battle of Princeton which follows Wilkinson's 1816 account which has General Hugh Mercer rather than Mifflin marching along Stony Brook to occupy and eventually destroy the bridge across Stony Brook leading from Princeton to Trenton. As an aide-de-camp to Washington, Wilkinson would, or could, have been in a position to hear the actual orders to that effect, but apparently did not since he expressly excludes that option in his 1816 account when he writes "as I was informed at the time".

This is of the utmost importance since Wilkinson is the only eyewitness who assigns Mercer the task of occupying and holding the bridge; nothing in Rodney's account, the only other account that provides information on the distribution of forces, indicates that Mercer was tasked to march to the bridge, as a matter of fact, he expressly rules this out when he writes: "Mercers brigade marched in front and another corps of infantry brought up the rear." In this scenario, the forces that "brought up the rear" were Pennsylvania militia forces under General John Cadwalader while Continental Army forces under General Thomas Mifflin, which constituted half of the Second Division, marched to the bridge across the Stony Brook.

¹⁴ New Jersey. Revolutionary War Miscellaneous Bound Books, 1776-1783, Book 43 B, Number 122, David Library of the American Revolution.

¹⁵ Quoted from the on-line edition at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gwhtml/gwhome.html>

¹⁶ "We brought off a large number of arms and 2 field pieces and a great quantity of ammunition". Greene to Governor Nicholas Cooke of Rhode Island, 10 January 1777. Richard K. Showman et al., eds. *The Papers of General Nathanael Greene* vol. 2: 1 January 1777-16 October 1778 (Chapel Hill, 1980), pp. 4-5. "we took all their Cannon which amounted of two brass six pounders & considerable quantity of military Stores". Henry Knox to Lucy Knox, Henry Knox Papers, Microfilm ed., Reel 3. John Cadwalader reported that Proctor "left an iron three-pounder, and brought a brass six-pounder." That may not be correct since Cadwalader also incorrectly reported that "We took three pieces of brass artillery."

¹⁷ A return of 22 January 1777 gives a total of 35 guns, i.e., 9 iron 3-lb guns, 12 brass 3-lb guns, 1 iron 4-lb gun, 10 brass 6-lb guns and 3 howitzers. Ibid. Reel 3, No. 118. According to the "Return of Brass & Iron Ordnance at the different Posts - 21 March 1777", Knox' artillery had decreased to 14 brass and two iron cannon, a 3-pounder of unknown make and three brass howitzer for a total of 21. Ibid., Reel 3, No. 632.

Equally important is the fact that unlike Rodney Wilkinson himself did not march with Mercer's brigade: Wilkinson was with Washington in the First Division while Rodney's "company flanked the whole [i.e., Mercer's] brigade on the right in an Indian file so that my men were very much extended and distant from each other; I marched in front and was followed by sargeant McKnatt and next to him was Nehemiah Tilton." Rodney continues that "Mercers brigade which was headed by Col. Haslet of Delaware on foot and Gen. Mercer on horseback was to march straight on to Princeton without Turning to the right or left." Once Mercer had departed from the jump-off point, he was to continue "straight" on the road he was on.

Joseph Reed's "Narrative" is the third account that is frequently used to place Mercer on the road to the bridge across Stony Brook. But that too does not stand up to close examination since in the section narrating the Battle of Princeton it is William Reed who is narrating events in 1847, not Joseph Reed, whose "Narrative" ends before the battle of Princeton.¹⁸ Following Wilkinson's 1816 account, Reed wrote that "After crossing Stoney Brook, the Americans pursued its bank till they reached a blind road at the edge of the wood below the Meeting-House, by which, according to the information of the guides, there was a more direct and less exposed route to Princeton than by the main road still some distance in advance. The main body [i.e., Sullivan] defiled on this road to the right, while Mercer with his brigade, composed principally of the remains of the Delaware and Maryland regiments, pushed on along the creek to take possession and if possible destroy the bridge, — over Stony Brook, — by which Lord Cornwallis's approach, should he have taken the alarm, might be obstructed."

A critical reading of primary sources and an analysis of marching routes and events between 7:10 a.m. and 7:30 a.m. places Mercer firmly on the road to Princeton behind the division led by Major-General Sullivan. Such a position was also the most logical for Mercer's forces: Washington would hardly have detached almost half of his valuable line troops at the outset of the engagement to take an object which was not yet important in this, the early phase of the operation.

Events during the next half hour leading up to the opening of hostilities around 8:00 a.m. confirm this distribution of Washington's forces. By the time the re-organization of the Continental Army was completed and the men had had an opportunity to rest and consumed their portion of rum, fortified with gun powder, it was around 7:30 a.m.¹⁹ Hausegger's Brigade had (presumably) left already. General Sullivan's forces were the next to set out on their march. Around 7:50 a.m. they had covered about 3,500 feet from the jump-off point, crossed the Stony Brook, marched on Quaker Road past the Quaker Meeting House onto Sawmill Road past the Thomas Clarke House and were marching north-north-east toward the David Olden House. Writing shortly after the battle, Major Apollos Morris, who served as an aide-de-camp to Washington, reports that was at that point that "some officers in the rear of Sullivan's division which lead the army, perceived two or three British light horse-men on the heights to the left" (Figure 25).

¹⁸ William B. Reed, *The Life and Correspondence of Joseph Reed, Military Secretary of Washington* vol. 1 (Philadelphia, 1847), p. 287. "General Joseph Reed's Narrative of the Movements of the American Army in the Neighborhood of Trenton in the Winter of 1776 - 77" *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 8 (1884), pp. 391- 402.

¹⁹ "A little before we got in sight of the enemy, our whole army halted. The captain sent me a sergeant with a bucket full of powder and rum, every man must drink a half gill. He came to me to know if I had drank any, I told him no: drink some, said he, I have, so I took a little." "The Good Soldier White." *American Heritage* 7 no. 4 (June 1956), pp. 73-79, p. 78.

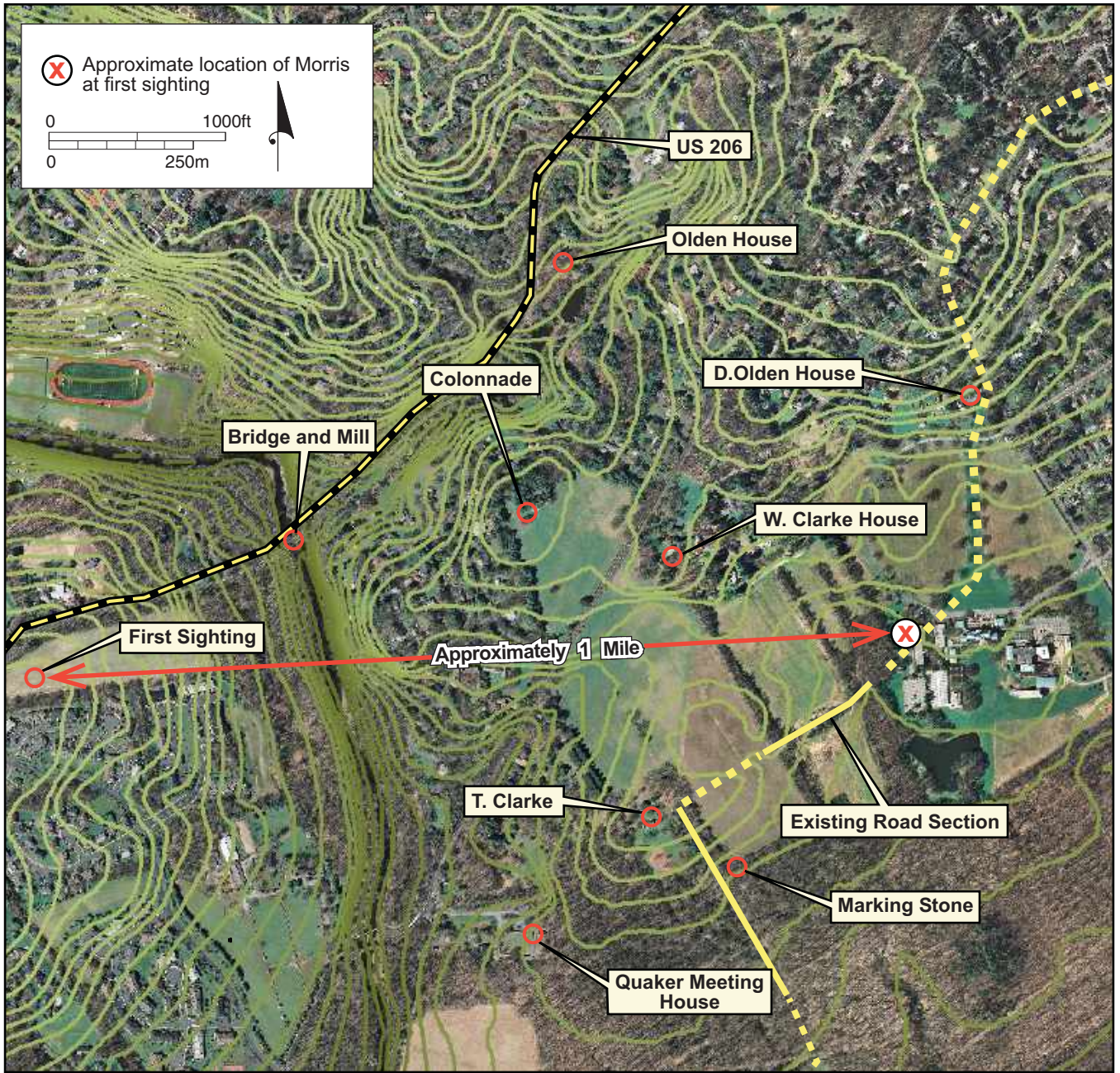


Figure 25. Approximate location of forces at the time of first sighting, 0740-0745.

He placed the event at "About sunrise just after passing a little river about one and a half mile from Princetown". The only location "just after" Morris had crossed a "little river" and from where Morris could have seen the horsemen is a small brook past the end of the surviving road section at the boundary of or on the property of the Institute for Advanced Study. Wilkinson confirms this first sighting when he writes that "[we] discerned the enemy, by the reflection of their arms against the rising sun, ascending the hill in the wood near Cochran's."²⁰

The distance between the "light horse-men" and the van of Sullivan's division was at least one mile, too far to make out details with the naked eye in the early morning light. Washington's aide-de-camp Morris recorded that "General Washington happened to be near and with a glass descried a body of infantry, but the intervening trees &c made it impossible to form any judgment about their numbers. Supposing this a detachment sent out of Princetown to reconnoiter, he ordered Mercer's brigade, the next which followed, to quit the line of march pursue and attack it. He then rode on after Sullivan's division, which continued its march towards Princetown." Morris' statement clearly indicates that Mercer's Brigade was on Sawmill Road directly behind Sullivan, otherwise it would not have "followed" Sullivan. An analysis of lines of vision shows that even the van of Sullivan's forces had to be on the ascent toward the Olden House for Washington to be able to observe the dragoons and to send orders back to Mercer to "attack" the British column. The statement also indicates, however, that Washington was not aware of the strength or composition of the Crown Forces he had reconnoitered, otherwise he would not have instructed Mercer "to quit the line of march pursue and attack it."

Where was General Mercer? Unwilling to wait for Cadwalader to organize his militia, Mercer had apparently set out after Sullivan. Around 7:45 a.m. to 7:50 a.m., Mercer's forces had covered the about 2,200 feet from Stony Brook on Quaker Road past the Quaker Meeting House and were marching on the ridge extending north-east from the Thomas Clarke House on Saw Mill Road. Shortly after, if not concurrently with, General Washington observing the dragoons on Cochran's Hill, Mercer too became aware of the British forces on his left.²¹ Writing in 1839, Lieutenant John Armstrong, aide-de-camp to Mercer wrote, "As the day broke upon us, we discovered troops apparently on the march on the road from Princeton to Trenton. ... the Brigade was accordingly halted until Gen. Washington joined it." Armstrong's memory failed him here as there is no indication that Washington joined Mercer's forces at this point in their approach on Princeton. Unless Mercer had sent word to Washington that enemy forces had been sighted, or had received orders from Washington to halt and wait for him, it was impossible for him to know that Washington, who was riding ahead of him, was about to join his column. This suggests that Mercer discovered Crown Forces independently of Sullivan and/or Washington and sent word to the Commander in Chief. Upon his return the officer sent by Mercer brought Washington's orders. On 30 January, a "Mr. Richmond", an officer who had served in Hitchcock's Brigade at Princeton, told Ezra Stiles that "Gen. Mercer with the Philada[delphia] Militia desired & were permitted the honor to begin the attack."²² The only forces Mercer could have discovered had to have been on Cochran's Hill, and in order to do so he had to be in Sawmill Road on the little hill north-east of the Thomas Clarke House, not on the road along Stony Brook leading up to the mill and bridge.

²⁰ Cadwalader estimated that the British "saw our army about a mile and a half distance."

²¹ Since a quick walking speed is about 3.3 miles/ph or 17.500 feet/ph, it would have taken the column about 10-12 minutes to cover this distance.

²² Franklin Bowditch Dexter, *The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles*, vol. 2: March 14, 1776 - December 31, 1781 (New York, 1901), pp. 118-120.

Who were the British forces sighted by Mercer as well as by the officers at the end of Sullivan's column? As Mawhood marched out of Princeton in the morning of 3 January, a troop of the 16th Light Dragoons under Captain Thomas Trewren rode at the head of his column. Behind them came the 17th Regiment of Foot, followed by the 55th Regiment, convalescents, stragglers and recruits.²³ Lieutenant Frederick Augustus Wetherall of the 17th recorded that "On "Jany 1st Genl. Grant & Lord Cornwallis arrived at Princetown reinforced with 2 Battns of British Grenadiers one Battalion of Guards, Battn of Koelher 17th 40th & 55th Regts." As Grant and Cornwallis moved on to Trenton the following day, "Col Mawhood with 3^d/3d dismounted Dragoons, Squadron of Dragoon, 4 Six Pounders & Convalescends & Recruits for the Flank Corps was left at Prince Town."²⁴

Captain Hall of the 28th Regiment of Foot confirms this when he writes that "At five in the morning [Mawhood] began his march, with four pieces of cannon, about fifty light horse, and some stragglers from various regiments, who had been differently employed, and were so far on their way to join their respective corps. He had scarcely advanced more than a mile on the road, when the light horse, who formed his advanced guard, discovered a large column of the enemy moving towards Prince Town: as this was in the grey of the morning, at the first appearance they were mistaken for Hessians."²⁵

Lieutenant Inman (1777) of the 17th too has Mawhood "mark off the Parade at 5 o'Clock that Morning." The forces "were ordered ... from Prince Town as an Escort to Stores and at sunrise a large Body of the Enemy were discovered on our left wch Col. Mawhood immediately determined to attack." It must have been closer to 6 a.m. when Mawhood's forces finally set out: even if the wagons accompanying the troops were drawn by slow-moving oxen with a walking speed of less than 1.5 mph it can hardly have taken them 2 1/2 hours to cover the 1 1/2 miles to Cochran's Hill.²⁶

Lieutenant Hale of the 45th Regiment of Foot (1777) also described the composition of Mawhood's forces: "we left Princeton with the 17th, and 55th, a troop of mounted and other dismounted Dragoons, the 40th remaining in the College at Princeton. ... About a mile and a half from that place [i.e., Princeton] we discovered the Rebel Army in two columns, entering a wood on the other side of a Rivulet we had just passed." Hale had just crossed the Stony Brook at Worth's Mill and was ascending Cochran's (or Millett's) Hill. Not knowing who these troops were, "[w]e drew up on a woody eminence and looked at them for a considerable time."²⁷ The two columns of forces were most likely the van of Sullivan's and Mercer's columns: Hale apparently did not detect Cadwalader's militia column or the forces under Mifflin marching on the road along Stony Brook directly toward him nor was he aware of Hausegger's brigade north of him.

²³ For a description of this group see "Notes on the composition of the Crown Forces transfers and recruits on 3 January 1777" in the Appendix.

²⁴ "Operations of the Army under Lt. G. Clinton (beginning on 12 February 1776)." David Library of the American Revolution, Sol Feinstein Collection No. 132 (Card No. 409).

²⁵ An Officer of the Army, *The history of the Civil War in America* vol. 1 (London, 1780), pp. 245-252.

²⁶ George Inman's "Narrative of the American Revolution." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 7 no. 3 (1883), pp. 237-248; his account of the battle of Princeton is on p. 240.

²⁷ "Letters written during the American War of Independence. By the late Capt. W. Hale, 45th Regt." In: *1913 Regimental Annual. The Sherwood Foresters. Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment.* Col. H. C. Wylly, ed., (London, 1913), pp. 9-59, p. 16

In the 1778 Court Martial proceedings of Cornett Evatt, Lieutenant Wilmot testified that "dismounted Light Dragoons flanked the Detachment; on ascending the Hill on the Trenton side of the Stoney Bridge, Cornet Evatt [16th Light Dragoons] discovered a (!) Column of the rebel Army, as they were marching thro' a wood on the left Flank; that he (the witness) immediately acquainted Lieutenant Col. Mawhood of it, who sent him down to the Edge of the wood to see what they were; that he knew them to be a part of the Rebel Army, but Lieut. Col. Mawhood not being Sufficiently satisfied, but taking them to be a body of Hessian Troops sent him down a second time; that he advanced so near, as to find his retreat hazardous and difficult, he however returned to Lieut. Col. Mawhood with the discovery of two Columns more." The additional columns Wilmot had seen were Cadwalader's men following Mercer's forces.

Hale's observations and Wilmot's testimony are important for the time-line of events before the initial exchange of fire. While Crown Forces were waiting "for a considerable time", Mawhood sent Wilmot to inquire not once, but twice. The second time he came so close "as to find his retreat hazardous", which most likely means that he was within rifle range. Upon Wilmot's return from the second reconnaissance Mawhood knew that there were three columns of Continental Army forces on his left flank. They were marching to Princeton on Sawmill Road only about 1/2 mile from where his forces were stretched out on the Trenton-Princeton road. Morris (1777) wrote that "the distance between the two roads in which they marched did not here exceed half a mile." It is indeed almost exactly 1/2 mile between Sawmill Road and Princeton-Trenton Road.²⁸

Washington with Sullivan's column and Mercer (though not necessarily Cadwalader) also knew that they had been detected and were being observed.²⁹ Once the "two or three British light horsemen" on Cochran's Hill had informed Mawhood of the presence of un-identified forces on Sawmill Road, Mawhood, who as commanding officer was more likely to be riding with the 17th Regiment than the reconnoitering Light Dragoons, sent out a two-man party to identify the troops. Wilkinson remembered that "two horsemen leaped a fence, and advanced to reconnoitre us a minute or two, and returned to the road."

Suspecting, rightly so, that these were American forces rather than Crown Forces headed for Princeton, Mawhood decided to turn around and hurry back. "Having hurried his wagons to re-pass the bridge, and make back to the town, [Mawhood] at the same time sent to the 40th regiment to march out and sustain him, he advanced, with the light dragoons and the 55th regiment, to gain some heights which the rebels were making for in their way to the town and over which they must necessarily pass; the 55th regiment having orders to begin the attack with him."³⁰ Stryker claims without any verification that the detachment of the 55th Regiment sent

²⁸ Writing to his wife on 7 January 1777, General Henry Knox wrote the British "were on their march down to Trenton on a road about a quarter of a mile distant from the one in which we were". Knox' statement is only true for the later stages of the fight as Continental Army forces moved closer to Princeton.

²⁹ Armstrong: "As the day broke upon us, we discovered troops apparently on the march on the road from Princeton to Trenton. ... the Brigade [Sullivan's] was accordingly halted until Gen. Washington joined it."

³⁰ An Officer of the Army, *The history of the Civil War in America* vol. 1 (London, 1780), pp. 245-252.

Turning the wagons around would have been difficult and took some time but was not impossible: marching on the road on 30 August 1781, Sergeant-Major Hazen of the Canadian (Congress' Own) Regiment recorded that he and his regiment "Passed thro it (i.e., Princeton) and about one Mile and a half from it, on the Road to Trenton, halted and rested this night." That not only places the camp on Stony Brook but also indicates that there was enough open space for an encampment of a regiment of more than 250 officers and men. Leaving the roadbed the wagons could have turned around on that open space, solidly

back to Princeton was commanded by Captain James Taylor Trevor. Trevor was rushing his forces back to Princeton on NJ-SR 206/ Stockton Street and turned due east, possibly across today's Marquard Park, to gain the "heights". The only heights between Sullivan and Princeton where Mawhood could have tried to intercept Sullivan were Mercer Heights, which is where Stryker claims Trevor set up a defensive position that was close enough to Princeton for the 40th to "march out" to provide support against the approaching rebels.³¹

Wilkinson confirms Mawhood's decision when he "soon [...] observed the line come to the right about and descend the hill in quick time." The result of his triple intelligence gathering gave Mawhood a clear advantage over Washington. Mawhood had detected almost all of Washington's forces. Assuming that the forces he had observed were but a reconnoitering party that would try to escape back to Princeton to alarm the garrison, Washington hoped that Mercer would be able to intercept it and sent him to the William Clarke House. Anxious to reach Princeton he had but cursorily observed the horsemen on Cockran's Hill before giving orders to Mercer to go and attack them while he himself was continuing on his march. This negligence, combined with Mercer's rushing off without a screen of riflemen, cost Mercer his life and Washington almost the battle.

Where is Mawhood headed? On 21 May 1777, John Belsches informed his father-in-law Lord Leven that according to Andrew Wardrop, the surgeon of the 17th Regiment, that when Mawhood was "about a mile and a half from [Princeton] the advanced guard discovered a body of Americans which tho' superior in number Coll. Mawhood had no doubt defeating, however he went himself to reconnoitre them & discovered their vast superiority in numbers w^h. made him wish to retreat to the town from whence he had come but this he found impossible as the enemy was so near, Their was a rising ground which commanded the country about half a mile back & about a quarter of a mile off the road this he wished to gain."³² This statement contradicts Captain Hall's description of Mawhood trying "to gain some heights which the rebels were making for in their way to the town and over which they must necessarily pass." But Hall's statement is nevertheless important as it provides important information about the location of Saw Mill Road confirming our routing as laid out for the position of Morris and the van of Sullivan's division at first sighting. Nothing indicates that Continental Army forces had already left the road they were on, a road, which led over "some heights" as it approached Princeton. The only heights between Sullivan and Princeton where Mawhood could have tried to intercept Sullivan's division are today's Mercer Heights.

But there is another reason that suggests the course of this road would lead across Mercer Heights: the David Olden House. Roads lead to houses, and houses sit close to roads. Sullivan's forces had passed the Thomas Clarke House and were marching in a north-easterly direction on a road a piece of which still exists to the west of the Institute for Advanced Study. If that road indeed led to Mercer Heights, it ran in a north-north-easterly direction skirting Maxwell Lane

frozen on 3 January 1777, and returned to Princeton. This they apparently did since all American accounts agree that the British wagon train was captured in Princeton proper rather than along the road.

³¹ According to Stryker it was Trevor who discovered Sullivan and deployed his forces on Mercer Heights. Mawhood had only seen Mercer's forces and remained unaware of Sullivan column until it was too late.

³² "Captain Hon. William Leslie (1751-77). His Life, Letters and Commemoration." Marianne M. Gilchrist, ed. Military Miscellany II; Manuscripts from Marlborough's wars, the American War of Independence and the Boer War. David G. Chandler, ed., Army Records Society 23 (Stroud, 2005), pp. 133-196, p. 171.

toward the intersection of Battle Road and Olden Lane ending on the height where Princeton Graduate College is located today.

Belsches description based on information provided by Armstrong, the surgeon of the 17th, points to the height where the William Clarke House is located as the destination of Mawhood's forces: it is about 1/2 mile from Cochran's Hill and a quarter mile off the road. The question is: was this Mawhood's original destination or is Armstrong only describing what happened? If Mawhood had discovered Sullivan's forces rather than Mercer, which we believe he did since officers in Sullivan's column, indeed Washington himself had discovered the mounted 16th Light Dragoons, the height near the William Clarke House can not have been his destination since Sullivan's forces were already past those locations. Something must have happened that made Mawhood change his destination and take up a position near the William Clarke House where the battle eventually began.

As Washington and Sullivan were continuing toward Princeton and Mawhood's forces were doubling back to their base as well with the hope of reaching Mercer Heights before Sullivan's column would get there, Mawhood sent Wilmot back a second time.³³ "Lieut. Col. Mawhood not being Sufficiently (sic) satisfied, but taking them to be a body of Hessian Troops sent him down a second time; that he advanced so near, as to find his retreat hazardous and difficult, he however returned to Lieut. Col. Mawhood with the discovery of two Columns more." The two additional columns Wilmot had seen were Mercer's forces followed by Cadwalader's men. As he reported the news to Colonel Mawhood, the Englishman immediately changed his plan. There would not be time to intercept the first, i.e., Sullivan's, column or to try and reach Princeton before it did. The 40th Regiment of Foot and Trevor's detachment would have to take on that task. Mawhood decided to intercept the second column and immediately gave orders to the men of the 17th and 55th regiments to ascend the incline to the right of the road back to Princeton and to take up battle positions behind the orchard. Since they had already reversed their line of march and were on their way back from the bridge, this manoeuvre could be executed in a much shorter time than it took for Mercer's men to reach the William Clarke House and the orchard. When Mercer arrived, the 17th Regiment was waiting for them (Figure 26).

Washington, as discussed earlier, thought the horsemen he had seen had been "sent out of Princetown to reconnoiter", and had seen no reason to alter his plans for the sake of a small detachment. Instead he had sent orders to Mercer to leave the line of march and to take on that detachment. Mercer rightly expected that the enemy force, which, based on information provided by Washington he assumed to be but small, would try to return to its base at Princeton: "The account given by the officers of Mercer's brigade was that Mercer expecting that the British corps would have kept the road and returned towards or taken the woods to the northward." His task was to intercept it and so he rushed for the Princeton-Trenton Road. Lieutenant Armstrong remembered that Mercer "was ordered to march rapidly to the left [i.e., his left] and take a position between the Corps we had seen and Princeton." (Armstrong 1839). The march to that position led past the William Clarke House straight north toward the Thomas Olden House.

As he followed this order, Mercer left Sawmill Road and moved almost straight north toward the William Clarke House (Figure 26). The scenario is confirmed by the anonymous Sergeant R_ of Colonel Miles Pennsylvania Rifle Regiment who wrote (1777) that "About sunrise of the 3rd January 1777, reaching the summit of a hill near Princeton we observed a light-horseman looking

³³ Wilkinson who rode with Washington never reported seeing the second reconnaissance by Wilmot.

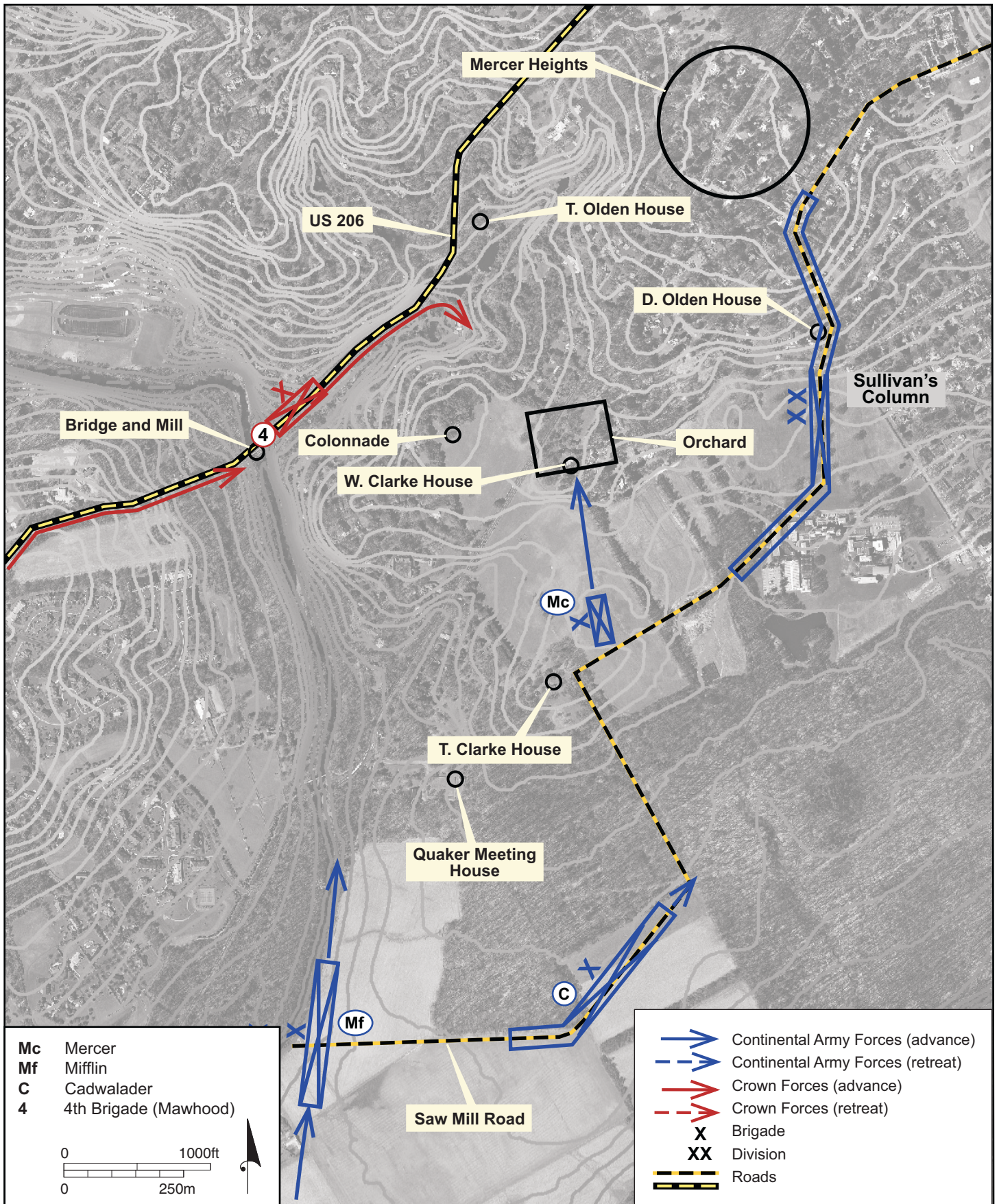


Figure 26. Movements of opposing forces just before the commencement of hostilities, 0800-0815.

towards as, as we view an object when the sun shines directly in our faces." This means that at that time of day in early January the horseman was looking toward the south-east. Mercer saw Wilmot, but Washington, who had continued with Sullivan toward Princeton, did not. Next "Gen Mercer observing him, gave orders to the riflemen who were posted on the right to pick him off" (Figure 27). The horseman was Lieutenant Wilmot of the 16th Light Dragoons, who quickly hurried back to Mawhood with the news of two more columns of rebel forces, which in turn led Mawhood to change his battle plan. Mawhood knew that enemy forces would try to intercept him and could and did prepare for the encounter. Mercer did not and paid for it with his life.

The chronology and geographical distribution of forces as laid out prior to the first exchange of fire clearly shows that Mercer was not on his way to the bridge across the Stony Brook (Figure 28). From that road he would not have seen Wilmot, Wilmot would not have been looking into the sun, and he would not have been following Sullivan's forces. It also means that Mercer had received Washington's orders to intercept Crown Forces moving on the Princeton Road: without orders Mercer would hardly on his own authority have given orders to open fire and alert other enemy forces there might be in the vicinity to his presence.

Secondly, the horseman was at most 250 yards from the riflemen ("so near, as to find his retreat hazardous and difficult"), which suggest, given Mercer's route on Sawmill Road, the horseman was somewhere south of the William Clarke House while Mercer's riflemen were about halfway between the Thomas Clarke House and the existing road section, approximately 100 yards on the south-eastern side of where Mercer Road runs today. Given the position of the sun at around 8:00 a.m. on 3 January 1777, the qualifier "about sun-rise", the distance and the direction of the dragoon's movements, Sergeant R_'s "hill" can only be the crest east-north-east of the Thomas Clarke House and a bit north of Sawmill Road rather than the hill leading up to the William Clarke House.

Contemporary accounts confirmed by re-enactors familiar with firing rifles agree that a rifle bullet was powerful enough to kill a man at 400 yards and more. Period accounts report and provide evidence that under ideal conditions the best riflemen could and did hit their targets at 300 yards or more. George Hanger, an English officer who had served with the Hessian Jägers in the American War, wrote that "I have many times asked the American backwoodsmen what was the most their best marksmen could do; and they have constantly told me that an expert rifleman, provided he can draw good and true sight (they mean by this expression, when they can distinctly see the object aimed at in a direct line with the two sights on the rifle), can hit the head of a man at 200 yards."³⁴

³⁴ Hanger, George, *A letter to ... lord Castlereagh ... proving how one hundred and fifty thousand men may be acquired in the short space of two months; with instructions to the Volunteers. To which is added a plan for the formation of a corps of consolidated marksmen* (London, 1808), p. 79. About musket accuracy he wrote that "as to firing at a man at 200 yards with a common musket, you may just as well fire at the moon and have the same hopes of hitting your object. I do maintain and will prove, whenever called on, that no man was ever killed at 200 yards, by a common soldier's musket, by the person who aimed at him. ... A soldier's musket, if not exceedingly ill-bored (as many of them are), will strike the figure of a man at eighty yards; it may even at 100; but a soldier must be very unfortunate indeed who shall be wounded by a common musket at 150 yards, provided his antagonist aims at him; and as to firing at a man at 200 yards with a common musket, you may just as well fire at the moon and have the same hopes of hitting your object. Ibid., p. 78.

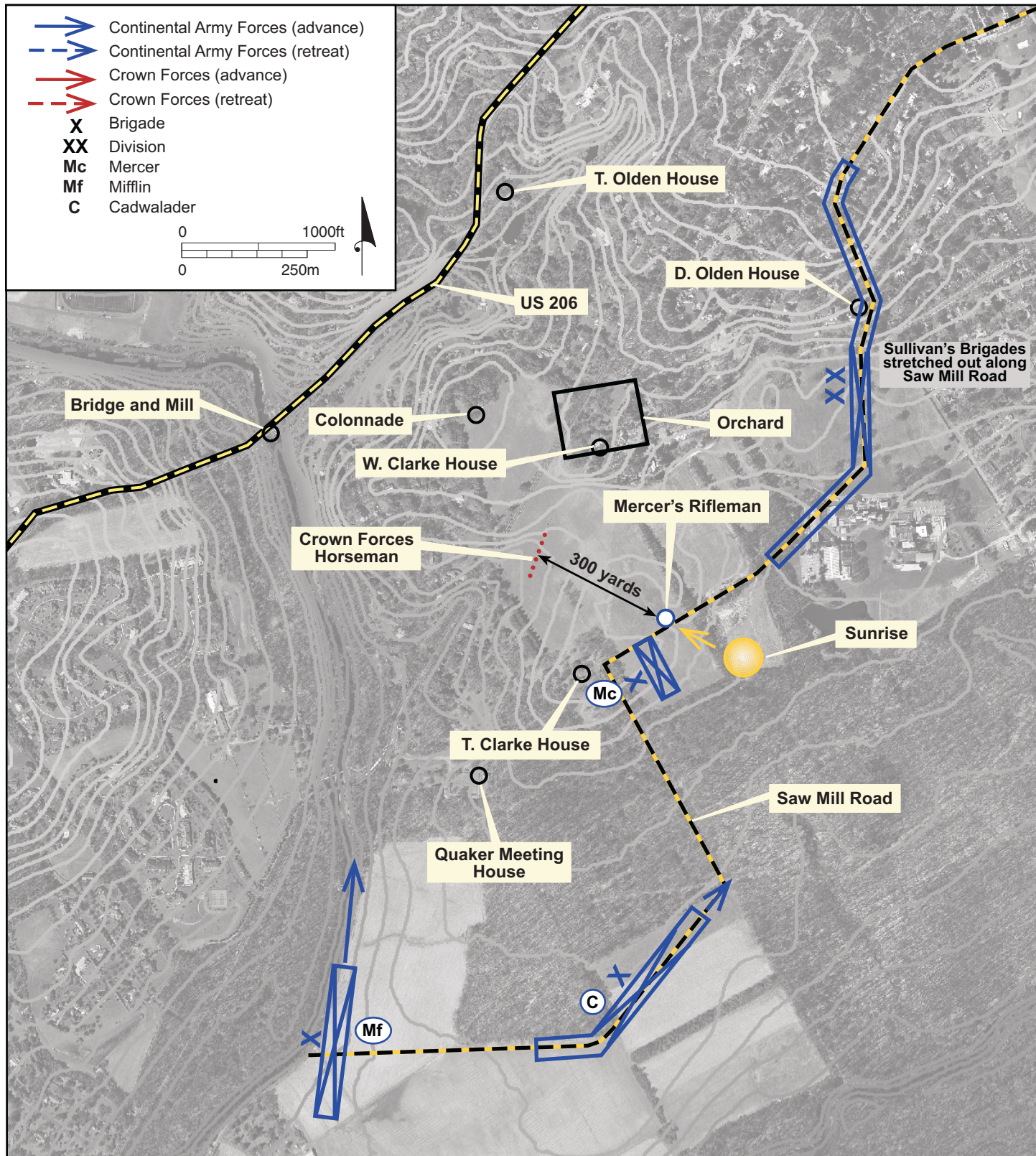


Figure 27. Location of Mercer's forces when he gives orders to fire at Lt. Wilmot ("horseman"), 0745-0800.

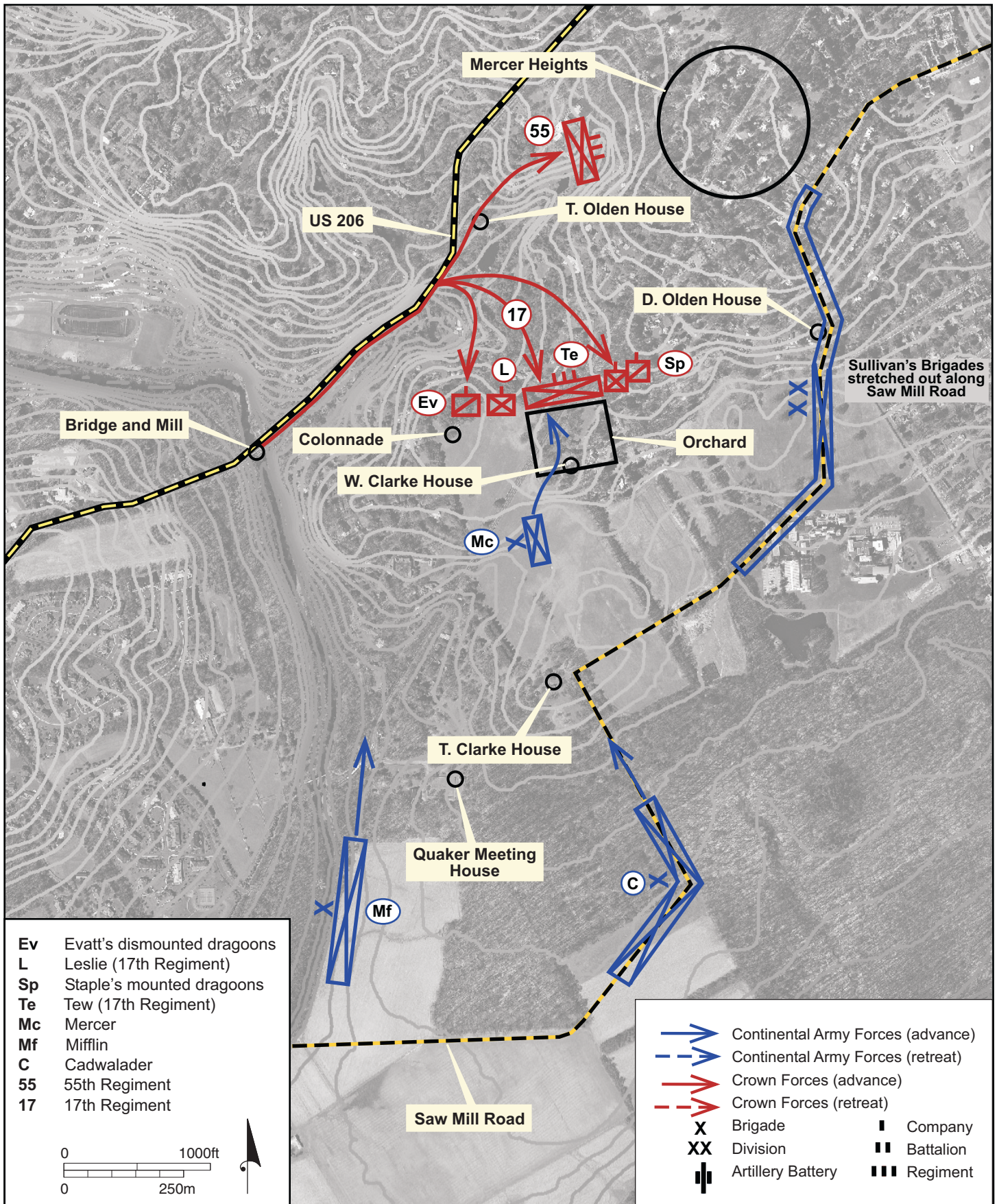


Figure 28. Location of the Crown Forces at the initial exchange of fire, 0815-0830.

But around 8:00 a.m. in the morning of 3 January 1777, conditions at Princeton were not ideal. It was cold with temperatures around 20° F, there was a light wind blowing but visibility was good since the sun had risen about 30 minutes ago. The riflemen were cold and tired, having just walked all night from Trenton, they were standing in the middle of a field near the Clarke House with little if anything to rest their rifles on. "Pick him off" was possible, had to be possible for Mercer to give the order, but it would not have been easy. Eventually the riflemen did not get the opportunity to show off their skills. "Several made ready, but at that instant he wheeled about, and was out of their reach."

This statement indicates that the distance was at the limits of rifle range – for Mercer's riflemen to be within 200 to 250 yards range of a location near the present-day Colonnade they would have had to be almost at the Mercer Road/orchard/William Clarke House already, in which case it would have been 1) impossible for the 17th to take position behind the orchard before Mercer's men had reached it and 2) the horseman would have had to ride toward the riflemen to warn the men of 17th. The distance from the bridge across Stony Brook to Thomas Olden House is about 2,500 feet or 1/2 mile. Watching proceedings from the Thomas Olden House, Lawrence (1777) reported Crown forces pass by toward Trenton but "in about half a hours time we saw them comeing back faster then they went." Standard British walking speed for a column, or the common pace, was about two miles per hour, while quick time speed is about 3.3 to 3.5 mph (Spring 2008:87, 144-145). At these contemporary rates it would have taken forces rushing down from Cochran's Hill five minutes at most to reach the point half-way between the bridge and the William Clarke House. It was in that vicinity that Wilmot reached Mawhood and informed him of the approaching Mercer. Mawhood responded by ordering the 17th up the slope and take position behind the orchard. Knowing that Mercer was approaching it took the 17th at most 5 minutes to get in position: they had less than 1/4 mile to cover to get to orchard. Lawrence (1777) reported that "a Party of them came into our Field, and laid down their Packs there and formed at the corner of our Garden about 60 Yards from the door and then marcht away Immediately to the field of Battle Which was in William Clarkes wheat field and Orchard Round about his house and how much further to the westward I Know not It was plain within sight of our door at about 400 Yards distance."

By now it was just after 8:00 a.m. Aware that the dragoon would report his approach, Mercer's men sped up their advance and were soon "push[ing] up the hill inclining to his [Mercer's] right to prevent" Mawhood's escape to Princeton (Morris 1777). The "hill" was the hill leading up to the William Clarke House.³⁵ Sergeant R_ records that "Soon after this [i.e., the sighting of the lone horseman] as we were descending a hill through an orchard, a party of the enemy who were entrenched behind a bank and fence, rose and fired upon us. Their first shot passed over our heads cutting the limbs of the trees under which we were marching. At this moment we were ordered to wheel." The fighting had started.³⁶ Where was Sergeant R_?

This line-up of forces - Mercer's men firing downward at Crown forces as they were "descending a hill through an orchard" at the initial exchange of fire is also confirmed in the pension application of Jacob Hefflebower, Second Pennsylvania Battalion/Third Pennsylvania Regiment,

³⁵ Borrows (1732): "After crossing Stoney brook a little after sun rise, we ascended a hill within one mile of Princeton."

³⁶ Robertson: "Untill about 8 o'clock a very Brisk fire of Small Arms and Smart Cannonading was heard in our Rear towards Prince Town." Margaret Morris: "3d This Morning between 8 & 9 oClock we heard very distinc[t]ly, a heavy firing of Cannon".

Captain Smith's Company: "as soon as we reached the rising ground near to Princeton, the British soldiers ... fired upon us – having the advantage of the ground, we kept it, being protected from the aim of the enemy. By the smoke of our own guns, that the wind blew towards them – being above the enemy, their fire generally fell short of us." The fighting had started.³⁷ Where were Hefflebower and Sergeant R_?

From Sawmill Road to the orchard it is about 450 yards the way a crow flies. A quick walking speed is about 3.3 mph or 17.5 feet. To cover the 1,300 or so feet would have taken Mercer's men about five minutes, which confirms Sergeant R_'s "soon thereafter. Mercer's men had made contact with the 17th Regiment positioned behind the orchard. Following the first volley they were "ordered to wheel" - but in which direction?

Armstrong (1839) states that Mercer "was ordered to march rapidly to the left and take a position between the Corps we had seen and Princeton." In order to carry out this order, Mercer, upon reaching the orchard had to wheel to the left to establish a front toward the Princeton-Trenton road. Colonel Mawhood and 17th Regiment for their part, having sent a warning to the 40th Regiment in Princeton of the approaching rebels, and having been informed by Wilmot that Continental Army forces were advancing across the wheat field, took up a position almost parallel to today's Mercer road (the 1807 turnpike). His task at this point was to keep open the road to Trenton. Subsequent events confirm this deployment and explain 1) why Mercer's forces had to wheel: as he was entering the orchard Mercer is inclining to the right, and with Crown Forces on his left flank Mercer was, as Armstrong reported, greatly outflanked when Mawhood appeared on his left. Hence the "left wheel" of Sergeant R_.

There is no general agreement as to who opened first fire on whom, but the most likely scenario suggests that it was Mercer's "rapidly" moving men, charged with cutting off the retreating Crown forces, while the troops of Mawhood's 17th Regiment were waiting for them.³⁸ The "march was rapidly made and without seeing an enemy till gaining a position between [William] Clarke's house and barn, a British Regiment already in line and greatly out-flanking us presented itself" (Armstrong 1839). Since Mercer could not have been unaware of the presence of Crown forces near him – Washington had ordered him to intercept troops retreating toward Princeton and he had just ordered his sharpshooters to pick off a mounted dragoon – stumbling into Mawhood in the manner he did suggests that Mercer had neglected to send out patrols ahead and was unaware of the location of Crown Forces (Figure 28). This lack of reconnaissance is supported by Morris' account, who wrote "that coming near the summit of the declivity a fence between an house and a barn presented itself thro' a gate in it they rushed without reconnoitering into a thick planted orchard and were soon surprised to find themselves in presence of a well up line of infantry with a flanking piquet and two pieces of cannon. This line was in an open field, separated from the orchard only by a two bar fence. There was no being off, they therefore pushed across the orchard (which was narrow tho' it extended a good way to the right and left) to get possession of the fence hoping from the appearance of a little bank at bottom, that it would afford some shelter."

³⁷ Robertson: "Untill about 8 o'clock a very Brisk fire of Small Arms and Smart Cannonading was heard in our Rear towards Prince Town." Margaret Morris: "3d This Morning between 8 & 9 oClock we heard very distinc[t]ly, a heavy firing of Cannon".

³⁸ Accounts by members of Crown forces have Continental Army open fire first, Continental Army vice versa, e.g., Lieutenant Hale: "The advanced guard of 800 reserved their fire till we advanced within 40 yards, and then gave us a very heavy discharge, which brought down 7 of my platoon at once, the rest, being recruits, gave way."

Rodney also recorded in his diary that Mercer "never discovered the enemy until he was turning the buildings they were posted behind, and then they were not more than fifty yards off."³⁹ Lieutenant James McMichael (1777) of Miles' Pennsylvania Rifle Regt in Mercer's Brigade recorded: "We reached Stony Brook at 9 A.M. where we sighted the enemy. Gen. Mercer with 100 Pennsylvania riflemen and 20 Virginians, were detached to the front to bring on the attack. The enemy then consisting of 500 paraded in an open field in battle array. We boldly marched to within 25 yards of them, and then commenced the attack, which was very hot."⁴⁰

Following the initial British volley Sergeant R_ reports that "we formed, advanced, and fired upon the enemy. They retreated eight rods [44 yards] to their packs, which were laid in a line." The initial élan of the attack had carried Mercer's men forward, but as the 17th advanced with fixed bayonets, Mercer's riflemen were thrown back and collided with Cadwalader's militia following on the heels of Mercer's detachment (Figure 28).

Cadwalader did not continue the march for long: after overrunning Mercer, the 17th "advanc'd upon another Column just then leaving out of a wood which they likewise put in some disorder" (Knox 1777). The column was Cadwalader's militia coming from the Thomas Clarke House. As Cadwalader lined up his forces he saw "About fifty light infantry of the enemy [who] posted themselves behind the fence, about an hundred yards distance". To counter that threat "on our left flank, I despatched Captain Henry, with a body of light infantry, about an hundred, to flank that party."⁴¹ Henry's Light infantry, combined with an artillery barrage, stopped the advance of the 17th under Mawhood: "The first discharge from our field pieces on the left, drove them up to the main body." The "field pieces" were those of Moulder's battery in Cadwalader's Brigade.⁴²

Washington "had just got to the head of the division which was now ascending thro the open grounds near Princetown" when he became aware of the fact that Mercer's had made contact with Mawhood since "an irregular firing was heard." The "open grounds near Princeton" indicates that Continental Army forces were now well past the present-day IAS property on their way to the David Olden House. Washington was not the only one who could see the fighting: Major Beale of the Virginia line also recorded "A severe fire of Musketry commenced on our left clearly within sight. When we saw our men run, they were rallied and brought to the charge, and we saw them run the second time."

The "firing" in itself would not have concerned Washington unduly: he had given Mercer orders to intercept Mawhood and a firefight was to be expected. Fortunately the "open grounds" revealed that the engagement did not develop to Washington's liking. Washington quickly back-

³⁹ Cadwalader (1777) confirmed that "Gen. Mercer's brigade filed off to the right, and was attacked by the other division. The brigade did not fire till they advanced within forty yards."

⁴⁰ "Diary of Lieutenant James McMichael, Of The Pennsylvania Line, 1776 – 1778." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 16, (1892), pp. 129 – 159, and in *Pennsylvania Archives*, Second Series, vol. 15, pp. 195 – 218, the quote on p. 203.

⁴¹ Rodney: "Capt. Henry with the other three companies of Philadelphia light Infantry brought up the rear."

⁴² Lieutenant Peale (1777) serving with Cadwalader's militia wrote: "The sun had risen just before we saw Princeton "march on to within a mile, "A short time after, the battalion just ahead of us, began an exceedingly quick platoon firing, and some cannon. We marched on quickly and met some of the troops retreating in confusion. We continued our march towards the hill where the firing was, though now rather irregularly. I carried my platoon to the top of the hill, and fired, though unwillingly, for I thought the enemy too far off, and then retreated, loading. We returned to the charge, and fired a second time, and retreated as before. Coming up the third time, the enemy retreated."

tracked his steps to rally the militia while ordering New England forces with Sullivan's column to attack Mawhood's forces on their left flank. Wilkinson: "On hearing the fire, General Washington directed the Pennsylvania militia to support General Mercer, and in person led them on with two pieces of artillery, under Captain William Moulder of the city of Philadelphia, who formed in battery on the right of Thomas Clarke's house, the enemy pursued the detachment of General Mercer as far as the brow of the declivity, when discovering our whole army, instead of a partisan corps, they halted and brought up their artillery; and being encouraged by the irresolution of the militia, notwithstanding the exertions of the commander in chief, and their immediate officers to press them forward, they attempted with a company of infantry to carry Captain Moulder's battery, but being galled by his grape, and perceiving Hitchcock's and another continental regiment [i.e., **Hand's Rifles**] break off and advance from the rear of our column," i.e., Sullivan's column, "after a few long shot with the militia, they retreated precipitately, leaving the artillery on the ground, which for want of horses we could not carry off." Wilkinson: "although my view of the combatants engaged in this short, sharp, close rencontre (sic) was obstructed by a swell in the ground, the retreat of the Americans by William Clarke's house and barn ... was under my eyes, and I noted it to General St. Clair, who charged me not to mention the circumstance".

What did this phase of the battle look like from the British side (Figure 29)? Captain Hall of the 28th Regiment, though not a participant in battle (he was with Cornwallis in Trenton) tells us that "Having hurried his wagons to repass the bridge, and make back to the town, and at the same time sent to the 40th regiment to march out and sustain him, he advanced, with the light dragoons and the 55th regiment." Mawhood's forces had reversed order: what was left of the 55th Regiment was now in the lead, the 17th followed and the 16th Light Dragoons under Captain Thomas Trewren, who had been in the lead, now formed the rear of his column. The location of the convalescents, transfers and recruits is unclear. Since they were only temporarily attached to his command, Mawhood had most likely organized them into company-size units under junior officers for the march; their known positions in the subsequent battle suggest that they were marching between Mawhood's 17th and the 55th. As Mawhood's forces line up in a north-north-westerly direction from approximately the location of the Colonnade behind the orchard "drew up the two regts with 50 light horse on one flank & (50,) who were dismounted), [sic] on the other". The two Light Dragoon detachments constituted the flanks of the right wing of five divisions of Mawhood's forces arranged in the following order:

16th Dragoons Mounted		Capt. McPherson 17th Left	Capt. Francis Tew 17th Center	Capt. Leslie 17th Right		16th Dragoons Dismounted
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These are the five divisions of what eyewitnesses referred to as the "First Battalion" under the command of Captain Francis Tew, senior captain present with the 17th regiment who also commanded the detachment of Mounted Dragoons. By the time the battle began, the Mounted Dragoons had placed themselves on the left flank of Mawhood's column. Mawhood with what is referred to as the 2nd Battalion constituting the right wing of his forces was presumably between the mounted dragoons and Princeton and the 55th Regiment as the lead regiment even further on its way to Princeton. This arrangement is confirmed by Major Robert Beale of the 5th Virginia Regiment with Sullivan's column who also observed five different detachments holding five different areas: "The enemy had formed themselves into five different positions about 1/4 of a mile apart." They are stretched out for at least one mile from "nearly opposite the College". The five divisions of Mawhood's right flank identified above constituted the first of Beale's divisions; Mawhood with the rest of the 17th, the "Second Battalion" represents the second division, the 55th

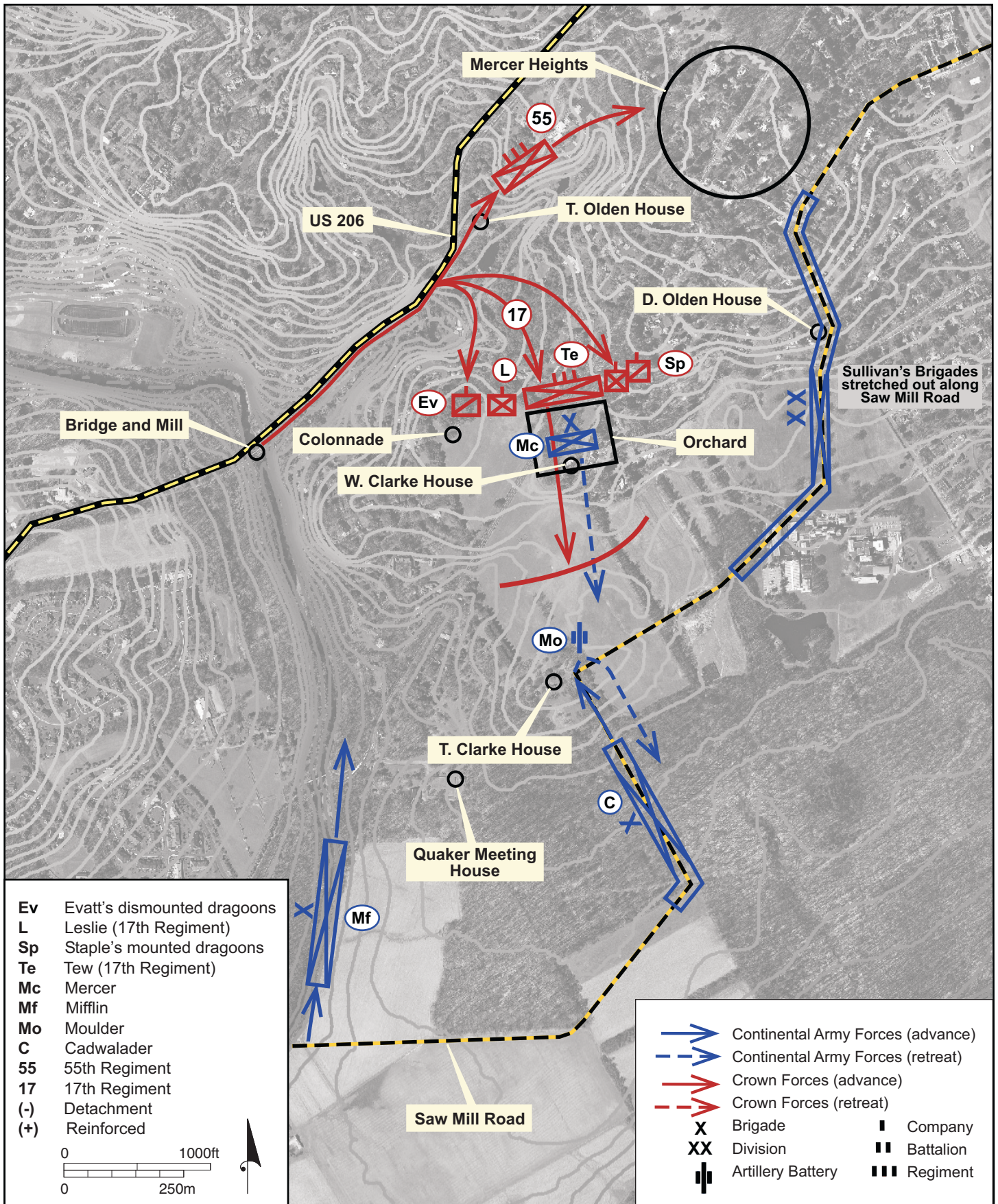


Figure 29. Movements of forces during the battle at Clarke's farm (Mawhood's Advance until American counterattack), 0830-0855.

the third, Captain Trevor with a detachment of the 55th Regiment the fourth and the 40th Regiment the fifth division.

Writing in 1777, British Lieutenant William Hale recorded that "The [American] advanced guard of 800 reserved their fire till we advanced within 40 yards, and then gave us a very heavy discharge, which brought down 7 of my platoon at once, the rest, being recruits, gave way. I rallied these with some difficulty, and brought them on with bayonets, the Rebels poured in a second fire, and killed Capt. [Thomas] Williams[on] of the 52nd Grenadiers and Leslie of the 17th which Regiment advanced in a most excellent order, and at length we drove them through the railings, barns and orchards, back on their main body which also fell into confusion and I am convinced that had the other Brigade been with us, we might have defeated the whole army. We kept possession of the orchard for 20 minutes, turning one of their own guns [Capt. Neal's] upon them; during this time they discovered our weakness, and brought three pieces of Cannon in play on our right with grape and case, but our nearness, 100 yards, saved us greatly."

In his letter of 21 May 1777 to the Earl of Leven, Captain Leslie's father, John Belsches provides the most detailed description of the initial phase of the battle, an account that heretofore has not used by previous battle scholars. As Belsches writes, it was Mawhood's

"...wish to retreat to the Town from whence he had come but this he found impossible as the Enemy was so near, Their was a rising ground which commanded the country about a half mile back and a quarter of a mile off the road this he wished to gain & The Americans endeavoured also to gain this rising ground & their first Column reached the one side of it rather before the two regts. got to the other, so that first when the 17th reached the top they received the fire of this column composed of about 2000 men by which all the mischief was done. The 56 [55th Regiment of Foot] (who wd not advance in a line with the 17th in spite of Coll. Mawhood's frequent calling out to Capt. ----- who commanded them to mind his orders & come up) as soon as they saw such a slaughter among the first rank of the 17th, immediately run off, on their commanding officer saying it was all over with the others; the 17th returned a very well leveled fire [against] the provincial collm. & instantly leaped over some rails which were bet[wixt] them and charged them with their bayonets upo[n them] tho' ten times their number almost, they ru[n] off & retreated to the other collm.s of the rebels, four in number, & consisting of 2000 men each[.] when the provincials first fired they were about 25 paces he thinks from the 17th & is certain they were not above 30 [paces]. Upon the whole rebel army advancing, the 17th Regt. & the 50 light horse who were mounted (& who behaved very well) retreated as fast as possible leaving their killed & wounded, when Washington came up he assured Capt. McPherson & other wounded that their [sic] was not a private man in that regt. [the 17th] but should be used like an officer on account of their gallant behaviour – The 56th [55th Regiment of Foot] run off in the greatest confusion to Princetown – the 40th [regiment of Foot] who wer left to guard Pr[ince]t[ow]n never came up with the 17, Altho' Col. Mawhood sent for them as soon as he suspected the strength of the enemy...."

As the 17th was driving Mercer's Brigade across the field and into Cadwalader's militia the outcome of the battle did indeed hang in the balance and a determined attack by the 55th could well have dispersed Cadwalader's men as well. What, according to Morris, "contribut'd to restore order was the alertness of the Philadelphia light infantry which ran up on the right flank of the

pursuers and the good countenance of a New England battalion which advanced in good order in front, and some rounds of grape fired from two field pieces opportunely advanced on their left flank." Cadwalader too recorded that at that moment of the battle "I just then saw a considerable party of horse moving off to our right, to take advantage of the confusion, but a discharge or two from the cannon immediately dispersed them. I asked the General if it would not be proper to form about an hundred yards in the rear." The artillery were Moulder's pieces; the horsemen mounted dragoons under Cornett Staples (Figure 30).

So far most of the action had taken place between the Thomas Clarke House and the William Clarke House; accounts clearly reveal that Cadwalader's men never reached the orchard. The reforming of his forces "an hundred yards in the rear" took place under the cover of the hillside on the south side of Sawmill Road toward the wood. As Cadwalader was reforming his troops "I collected some of the brigade and some New Englandmen, and advanced obliquely to the right, passed a fence, and marched up to the left of the enemy. Two small parties were formed on the left, and advanced at the same time, and bravely pushed up in the face of a heavy fire. The enemy then left their station and inclined to the left, and gave us several heavy fires, in which two were killed and several wounded."

Captain Stephen Olney with the Rhode Island forces in Hitchcock's Brigade confirms this sequence of events: "We then marched a short distance with a wood upon our right, and partly in front, and the first notice that I had of the enemy being so near, they, to the number of 30 or 40, fired a full volley on the front of the column composed of Jersey or Pennsylvania militia, who broke and came running through our ranks. When clear of the woods and other obstructions, our column displayed and marched in line; at this instant the enemy made a full discharge of musketry and field-pieces, loaded with grape shot, which made the most horrible music about our ears I had ever heard, but as they overshot, there were but few but what continued the march." Cadwalader's description of the British posting of field pieces on an "eminence" and Olney's experience of overshooting of advancing Continental Army forces mutually re-enforce each other: firing downhill, guns as well as cannon tend to fire high. An "eminence" at that distance has to be the hill to the south-west of the William Clarke Farm (Figure 30).

A few days after the battle, a "Mr. Richmond", an officer in Hitchcock's Brigade, told Ezra Stiles that "Gen. Mercer with the Philada Militia desired & were permitted the honor to begin the attack - they accordg met the Enemy, gave two fires, suffered Gen. Mercer to fall wounded into the Enemys hands, & began to be broken. Gen. Washington then in the midst of the Fire ordered the N Engl. Brigade under Col. Hitchcock about 400 to attack. They rushed on, made five fires & in six minutes had the Enya Arty & pushing on routed the Party, & took about 200 and marched to Princetown." A few days later, "Two officers of Col. Lippets Rh. Isld Regt present in the Battle of 3 Jany" also visited with Stiles and told him that "After the Rout of the Pensy. Militia, G. Wash, ordered Col. Hitchcock's Brigade to advance. They formed about 200 yds distance fr. the Enemy - began the fire within 100 yds, & in that 100 yds. discharge twice & thrice - rushed on with Impetuosity - the Enemy retreating to their Artilly of two field pieces - our men rushed on, took the Artilly & routed the Enemy".

There was no need for Hitchcock's New Englanders to hurry all the way back to the Thomas Clarke farm before they could engage the enemy (Figure 30). As Hitchcock's men turned west in that vicinity they placed themselves "in front" of Mercer's and Cadwalader's forces. As Hitchcock's forces attacked from the front, Colonel Hand approached from the north-east. The arrival of Mifflin's forces from the south-west broke the British line.

During Cornet Evatt's Court Martial, Lt. Wilmot of the 16th Light Dragoons testified that as the engagement unfolded and "both Flanks having retreated over the Bridge, the Witness received Orders from Lieut. Col. Mawhood to take possession of the height on their right [i.e., the British] flank; on gaining the summit, he found the 17th Regiment of Foot Engaged, he wheeled to the [i.e., his] left to support the 17th regiment, and found his right Flank exposed to the fire from the rebels who had gained an advantageous piece of Ground, and were playing upon them with Grape Shot from two Pieces of Artillery [i.e., Moulder's at the Thomas Clarke Farm] which obliged him to wheel to the right, to prevent their further advancement and thereby kept open a Communication between them and Lord Cornwallis".

The turn-about of Mawhood's column had reversed his marching order. On the way out of Princeton the mounted and dismounted 16th Light Dragoons had formed his van, followed by the Grenadier transfers under Captain Leslie, the 17th Regiment of Foot with Mawhood, the Light Infantry, recruits and other personnel while the 55th Regiment brought up the rear. As the column was hurrying from the Stony Brook back to Princeton, Lieutenant Wilmot with the dismounted 16th Light Dragoons brought up the rear, following behind the Grenadiers under Leslie, the 17th Regiment of Foot while the mounted Light Dragoons under Cornett Staples galloped ahead to become the van. Concurrently Mawhood ordered one detachment of the 55th to occupy "Hill B" as the hill over which Continental Army forces would have to march to reach Princeton while the rest of the 55th hurried ahead of Mawhood's 17th toward Mercer Heights. This line-up explains why Lieutenant Wilmot with his dismounted 16th Light Dragoons, being the last in the column, reached the battlefield after hostilities had already begun and became the British right flank while Cadwalader can report that he saw mounted dragoons on his right flank which had to be stopped by a few cannon shots.

Evatt confirmed this scenario that: "he received Orders again from Lieut. Colonel Mawhood, after they had passed the Bridge which was to this purpose, Sir, you will immediately take your men to that Hill, pointing to one then on his [i.e., Mawhood's] right which was the ground that they engaged on; he told Colonel Mawhood that he was not the Commanding Officer of the Dismounted Dragoons, but that he would acquaint him with his orders as soon as he came up, and in the mean time moved with the men as fast as he could, Lieutenant Wilmot being then in the rear; and when Lieutenant Wilmot came up he gave him the Orders." The "hill" Mawhood directed Evatt to occupy can only be in the vicinity of where the Battle of Princeton monument is located today. "Looking to the right" Howell next "saw that the Enemy had gained their right flank considerably, and were running as he imagined to endeavour to gain possession of Stoney Bridge, which was then in a line with them."

Who were the American forces on the British flank "running ... to gain possession of Stoney Bridge"? The only American force still on that part of the battlefield was Mifflin's Brigade which had been ordered to "wheel to the Left, to make a circuit and surround the town on that side and as they went to break down the Bridge and post a party at the mill on the main road." Marching in the ravine along Stony Brook without a line of vision to the battlefield these forces must have heard the noise of the engagement and scaled the embankment (Figure 30). Realizing the seriousness of the situation, Mifflin ordered parts of his detachment to rush for the bridge across to Stony Brook while leading the rest of his forces into the battle. William McCracken of the Chester County militia in Mifflin's brigade testified in his pension application that as "they marched on heard the firing of the competing armies and was ordered to break down a bridge." McCracken was exactly where he was supposed to be, en route to carry out what Mifflin had been ordered to do. Unsure about the firing on his right, parts of his brigade scaled the embankment. Realizing the seriousness of the situation, Mifflin ordered those units still on the road along Stony

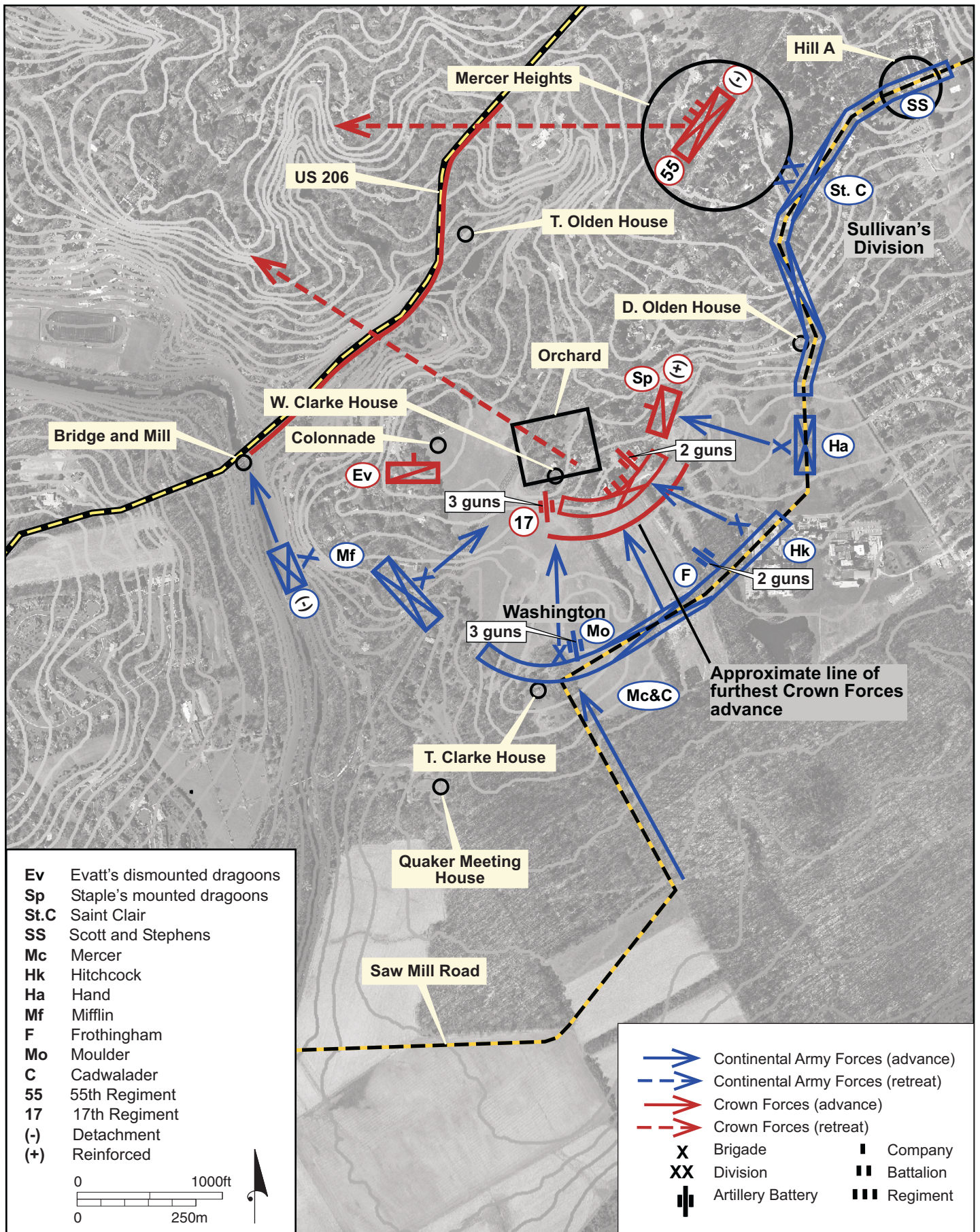


Figure 30. Movements of forces during the battle at Clarke's farm, (American counterattack and Crown Forces retreat), 0855-0915.

Brook to continue on to the bridge while he led the rest of his forces into the battle. McCracken with the Chester County militia "in part cut down & set fire to" the bridge, assisted by the Northumberland County militia (Espy), who was even "ordered back" from the battlefield "to cut down the bridge."⁴³

Ensign Hendy testified in 1832 that "From Trenton to Princeton there was what was called an 18 Mile Road and a 12 Mile Road. On the Night of the second our whole Corps took up the line of march for Princeton on the 18 mile Route the enemy having taken the other one - we reached Princeton early on the morning of the third and immediately prepared for Battle - In this engagement Gen. Mercer fell dangerously wounded and was conveyed directly by this deponent to a private house - this brave officer exclaimed as he was carried along "Cheer up my boys the day is ours".⁴⁴

Cornet Laurence Staples, in charge of the mounted detachment 16th Light Dragoons who had been stationed on the far left of Mawhood's forces, testified at the trial of Cornett Evatt that "the firing having ceased on the left, he went towards the right and then saw the Enemy fileing off to their right, that he went up to Lieut. Wilmot, who was nearly on the left, to inform him of this, and he then heard Cornet Warham ask Lieut. Wilmot if he had given an Order for their retreating, and he answered he had not; that looking round, he (the Witness) saw the three right hand Divisions had retreated, and the fourth was going off, and he does not recollect but thinks he mentioned to Cornett Evatt as he passed along, that there was a Column gaining their right flank." The four "right hand Divisions" were most likely the Light Infantry *cum* recruits, the bulk of the 17th, Captain Leslie's Grenadiers and the dismounted Light Dragoons under Wilmot and Evatt.⁴⁵

With Hand's forces closing in from the north-east and Hitchcock, Cadwalader and the remnants of Mercer's brigade pushing in their front, the arrival of Mifflin's forces on the British right flank created a real threat of encirclement. As Crown forces disintegrated the defeat threatened to turn into a rout. Wilkinson told that as "Colonel Hand endeavoured, by a rapid movement, to turn the enemy's left flank, and had nearly succeeded when they fled in disorder ... up the north side of Stony brook". The "fox chase" was on. "We then pushed forward towards the town spreading over the fields and through the woods to enclose the enemy and take prisoners." (Rodney, 1777) As it became clear to the three remaining brigades in Sullivan's division who had been watching

⁴³ Sergeant Thomas Sullivan of the 49th Regiment of Foot wrote that "When we came to the river that is near Princetown, a party of the Rebels were formed on one side of the bridge, and another party cutting it down. The 5th. Battalion, which marched in front of the Brigade with two 6 pounders, engaged them from the opposite side; and in a few minutes drove them from the bridge, which they had cut down, and retreated into the woods."

⁴⁴ Pension Application of Ensign John Hendy, Northhampton County Militia, No. S 13 381. His company was "attached to a Battalion under the Command of Major Benjamin Van Campen which Battalion was annexed to the Brigade under the Command of Gen. Mifflin." See also John Borrows, Philadelphia Militia, Pension Application No. S 22134. "The Philadelphia Militia were in front & broke and gave way, but were rallied & formed again by the exertions of Genls Cadwalader and Mifflin." The British "retreated towards the College, but were intercepted by the Massachusetts flying camp."

⁴⁵ Lieut. David Howell, of the 16th [dismounted] Dragoons testified that "Cornet Evatt's [16th dismounted] retreating, but soon after he had moved off, his (the Witness's) Division becoming then the right hand division; and ... after Cornet Evatt had retreated, and finding he had moved off, and seeing no Troops near them except a few Grenadiers and light Infantry, the 17th regiment of Foot having already retreated, he ordered the Division under his Command to make the best of their way to a hollow way."

the battle from afar - Sullivan, Stephen, St. Clair - that the tide of the battle had turned, they resumed their advance on Princeton.

How could Sullivan's brigades know how the battle was proceeding? The van of his column had advanced past Mercer Heights to "Hill A" when Washington realized the seriousness of the engagement near the Thomas Clarke Farm, galloped back to rally Mercer's and Cadwalader's forces, and ordered Hitchcock's and Hand's Brigades to come to the assistance of Mercer and Cadwalader as well. Forces under Sullivan's command, still 1,600 to 1,800 men strong, halted to await the outcome of the battle. Washington's aide-de-camp Apollos Morris wrote that "the firing [at the orchard] stoped Sullivans division and made him call back a battalion detached to post itself beyond the town and prevent the escape of any toward Brunswick." This statement supports Rodney's battle plan as well as Colonel Hausegger's claim that he had been ordered by Washington to march into the "back" of Princeton to complete the encirclement of the town. As one detachment of the 55th under Captain James Taylor Trevor occupied "Hill B" and another took up positions on Mercer Heights, both Trevor as well as Sullivan could watch the battle as it unfolded in the triangle formed by the Thomas Clarke House, the David Olden House and the height where Lieutenant Wilmot with the dismounted dragoons formed Mawhood's right flank.

This distribution of forces is confirmed in the account by Major Robert Beale of the 5th Virginia Regiment in Stephen's Brigade.⁴⁶ Beale wrote: "[T]he next morning we were at Princeton opposed only by about five hundred of the British. The enemy had formed themselves into five different positions about 1/4 of a mile apart - the party that was under the immediate command of Genl Washington led on by the brave and noble Mercer, the other party of the British were drawn up nearly opposite the College, to them we were opposed, the 4th, 5th and 6th Regts commanded by Col. Elias Scott to be supported by the Jersey Militia. A severe fire of Musketry commenced on our left clearly within sight. When we saw our men run, they were rallied and brought to the charge, and we saw them run the second time." Beale's account provides valuable information on the lay-out of the battlefield and the course of sawmill Road. Our visibility study shows that for Beale to be able to watch the battle around the Clarke farm he had to stand on "Hill A", the hill mentioned in various accounts that the road to Princeton led over (Figure 31). The five divisions that Beale saw from his vantage point on Hill A were most likely 1) the 40th Regiment at Nassau Hall,⁴⁷ 2) a detachment of the 55th under Captain Trevor on "Hill B", 3) a detachment of the 55th on Mercer Heights, 4) Crown Forces in front of/south the orchard and 5) Wilmot's dismounted Light Dragoons near the current Battle of Princeton Monument. If these were the five divisions Beale saw, they were indeed all roughly 1/4 mile apart.⁴⁸

As Crown forces and Continentals eyed each other, both Sullivan and Trevor found themselves unable to move. Trevor could not rush to Mawhood's aid because that would have left Princeton and the 40th Regiment at the mercy of Sullivan's forces yet he knew that he was not strong enough to attack Sullivan. Without knowing the strength of British forces Sullivan dared not continue onto Princeton nor could he rush to the aide of Mercer as long as had Crown forces on his right flank on Mercer Heights.

⁴⁶ Beale, Robert: "An Account of the services of Major Robert Beale of Westmoreland in the War of the Revolution, as written by himself." Mss 5:1 B3657:1 Virginia Historical Society, Richmond.

⁴⁷ Writing on 5 January 1777, Cadwalader recorded that "one division of their troops formed in front of a house on the south side of the college, and on the right hand of the road", i.e., along Sawmill Road.

⁴⁸ Beale can not be referring to the five divisions under Mawhood near the orchard: they would have appeared to him as a single division since testimony at Evatt's court martial shows that in some cases the interval between them was no more than 10 yards .

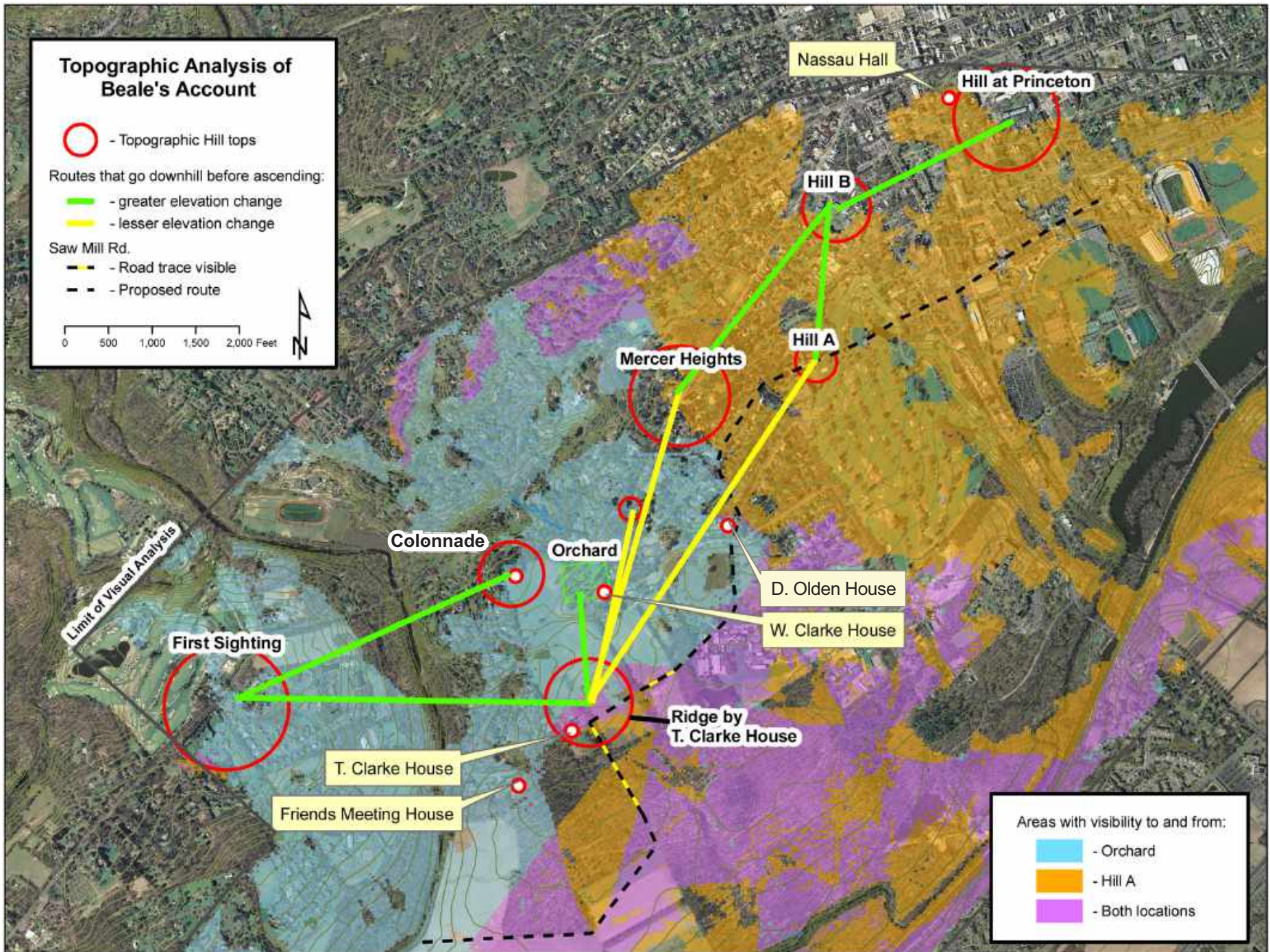


Figure 31. Topographic analysis of Beale's account.

When it became clear that the tide of the battle had turned, the Virginians decided to attack: "The Jersey Militia had not come up but Col. Scott observed: "Boys there are 250 red coats on yonder hill + about 250 of us, we can beat them - Huzza come on + down the hill we went but when we got to the top of the hill there was not one man to be seen." Beale and his men rushed from their position on "Hill A" to "Hill B", but when they got there Trevor's detachment of the 55th was already gone. Trevor, who had seen Mawhood retreat toward the north-west, had hurried off for Princeton, where Captain Robert Mostyn of the 40th assumed command of all Crown Forces. Next Beale's men saw "a small battery [...] to our left and the College to the right - 'twas said they were in the battery then up the battery we went + no one there, then they were in the College when passed the College we looked down the hill and saw them running". The battery to their left, clearly visible in Cadwalader's "Spy Map", had been thrown up along modern-day Route 206 to protect the road into Princeton; Beale could not have seen it from "Hill A".

As Beale rushed off to take the "Hill B" and the battery, Sullivan's and St. Clair's brigades continued along Saw Mill Road which led them across the northern edge of Frog Hollow (Figure 32). Here Captain Mostyn briefly tried to stop Sullivan's advancing columns with some members of the 40th Regiment that he had been able to collect. Apollos Morris wrote that "very soon after" Sullivan's column had stopped "some of the 40th appeared pouring out of the back gate of the college and taking possession of a dike which extended from thence down the hill."⁴⁹ Wilkinson is one of a number of participants who described the brief skirmish on Frog Hollow: "the 55th regiment ... returned and joined the 40th left in quarters at the college [... which] induced the American continental troops to display in ... the intermediate ravine, the head of which is crossed by the present turnpike, is somewhat deep and steep; two regiments were ordered to attack, and had crossed the ravine and were ascending the opposite side within sixty or 80 yards of the enemy, who were still concealed from our view by the acclivity, when they turned about and precipitated themselves into the college ... but before we got within a quarter of a mile, they rushed out at the front and ... made good their escape to Brunswick". St. Clair purportedly described this final phase of the battle thus:⁵⁰ "The Fifty-fifth British regiment did not reach the vicinity of Clarke's in time to participate in the action, and perceiving Mawhood and his Seventeenth in retreat followed closely by Washington, they returned to Princeton, and joined the Fortieth in quarters at the College. The two regiments afterward drew out and formed in line on the brow of a ravine. In this position they were attacked by General St. Clair, and after a sharp resistance were driven back to the College again. They took possession of the buildings and knocked out the windows, apparently for the purpose of defending themselves at all hazards; but being saluted in their quarters with artillery, thought better of it, rushed out in a disorderly manner and made good their escape to Brunswick. St. Clair had no cavalry to send in pursuit; indeed, the entire cavalry in the American army consisted of twenty-two gentlemen of Philadelphia, who had

⁴⁹ Sergeant Thomas Sullivan, "The Battle of Princeton." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 32 no. 1 (January 1908), pp. 54-57, p. 55: "The 40th. Regiment formed in the College Yard".

⁵⁰ This is at least claimed in William Henry Smith, *The St. Clair Papers. The Life and Public Services of Arthur St. Clair*. 2 vols. (Cincinnati, 1882), vol. 1, pp. 36-42, who prefaces this section with "In his own brief narrative, St. Clair says: ... ". It is unknown which "narrative Smith refers to, but this description is not in Arthur St. Clair, *A Narrative of the manner in which the Campaign against the Indians, in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-one, was Conducted, under the Command of Major General St. Clair, together with his Observations on the Statements of the Secretary of War and the Quarter Master General, relative thereto, and the Reports of the Committees appointed to inquire into the Causes of the Failure thereof: taken from the Files of the House of Representatives in Congress* (Philadelphia, 1812), where St. Clair writes about the Battle of Princeton on pp. 242-243.

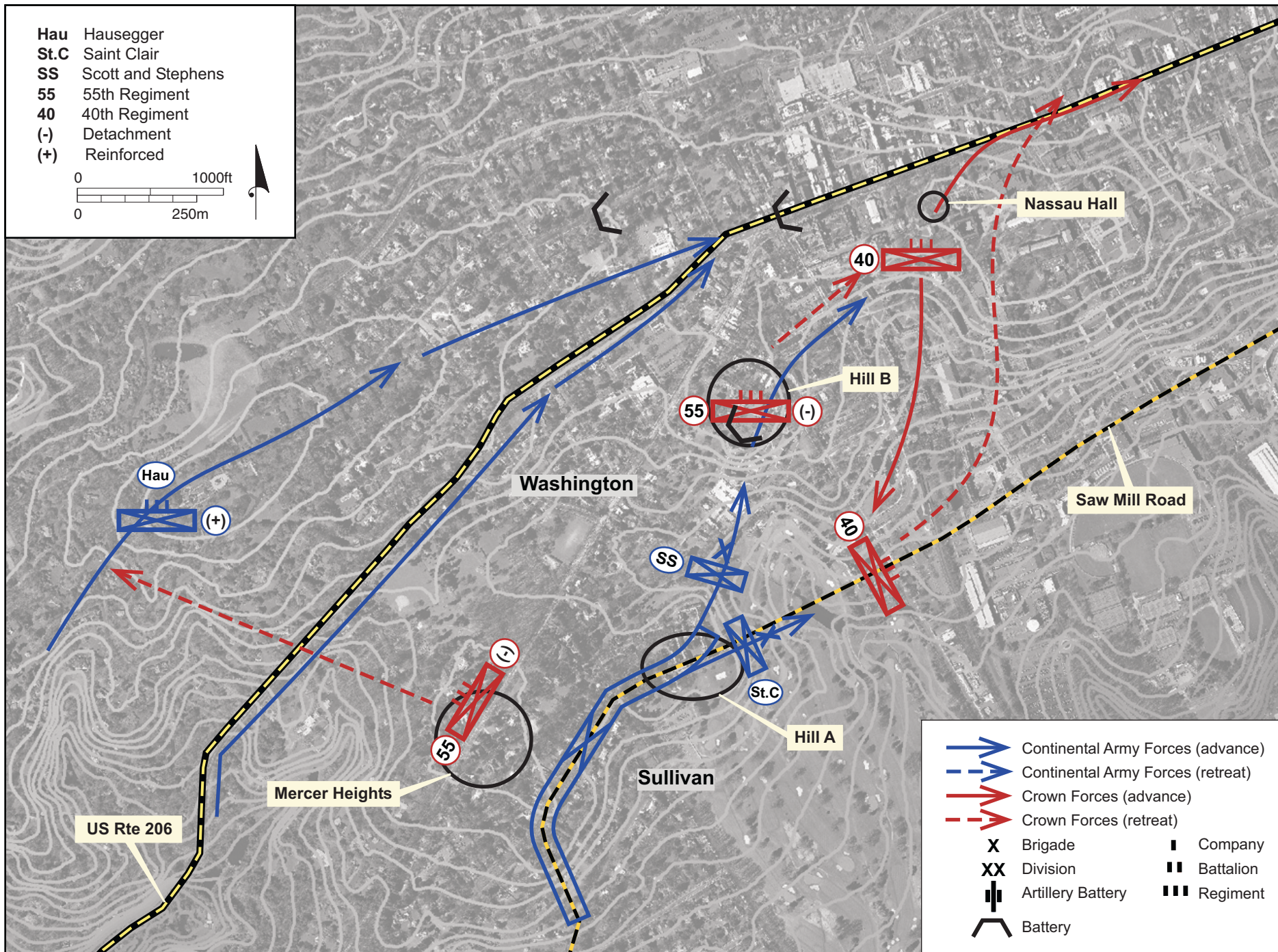


Figure 32. Final American assault on Princeton and American withdrawal, 0900-1100.

volunteered, and were then with Washington in another direction."⁵¹ Mostyn's small force was hopelessly outnumbered and, according to Morris, "soon removed by the fire of two field pieces." This noble but fruitless attempt at resistance had cost Mostyn his life.⁵² Most of his men escaped north along the King's Highway while others sought refuge in Nassau Hall.

Concurrently American forces under Washington were advancing on Princeton along Route 206: "We now advanced towards the town, and halted about a quarter of a mile distant, till the artillery came up, and our men collected in better order. On the artillery firing, a number that had formed near the bridge began to disperse, and immediately a flag was sent, and we huzza'd victory."⁵³ The time was a little after 09:00.⁵⁴

In a little more than two hours the Continental Army had struck another blow at the myth of British invincibility.⁵⁵ But their stay in Princeton would be short.⁵⁶ Soon after Crown forces in Nassau Hall had surrendered, Stephen Olney heard that "our cannon, which we had left at the bridge, west of Princeton, began to play at the enemy we had left at Trenton, who having lost sight of us last night, were in pursuit of us this morning." Whose cannon? Based on Washington's dispositions south of the Quaker Meeting House and the subsequent course of the battle, the only battery close to the bridge has to be one in Mifflin's Brigade and it was the two guns of Captain Forrest battery attached to Mifflin's brigade, who had opened fire at Crown forces to protect Northumberland County militia as it was cutting down the bridge across the Stony Brook from Crown forces approaching Princeton.⁵⁷ George Espy, who served in the Northumberland County militia in Colonel Potter's regiment in the brigade of General Mifflin, wrote in his pension application that once the combat activities had moved on and into Princeton, "our regiment was ordered *back* (emphasis added) to cut down the bridge across the creek near Princeton - we did so - Kelly who was a volunteer in our company cut the sleeper of the bridge - & when it fell he fell with it into the creek."

⁵¹ One of them was John Inskeep; see his pension application in Primary Sources: Continental Army.

⁵² "We have a number of officers prisoners. I am just called on to command the infantry at the funeral of Capt. Leslie a British-officer, killed at Princeton. We bury him with military honors. On the field I saw lying another Captain of the name of Mostyn said to be the next heir to an estate of twenty-five thousand pounds per annum in England." Extract of a letter from a gentleman in the army to his friend in this city, dated Pluckemin, Jan. 5, 1777. *The Pennsylvania Evening Post*, 7 January 1777. On the identity of the prisoners see the letter by Donop to Sir William Howe, 6 January 1777 in Primary Sources: Crown Forces.

⁵³ Horace Wells Sellers, "Charles Willson Peale, Artist-Soldier." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 38 (1914), pp. 257-286, his "Journal" begins on 4 December 1776 on p. 271; the quote is on p. 272.

⁵⁴ Lord Stirling wrote from Newtown on 4 January: "Gen'l Washington's army passed thro' Prince Town about nine o'clock A.M. and the Enemy's army arrived there about 2 o'clock P.M. from Trenton."

⁵⁵ "about Sun rise an Attack began at Princeton which lasted about 2 Hours." In: "Memorandum of Occurrences attending the Armies of the United States ..." Manuscript of Samuel Massey, Captain 7th Co. Philade militia, 4th Battalion in 1777 - The Property of Louis C. Massey, great grandson. John Reed Collection, Record Group 10, Valley Forge NHP.

⁵⁶ For an example on how a Continental soldier spent the time in Princeton see the account by Sergeant Joseph White in "The Good Soldier White." *American Heritage* 7 no. 4 (June 1956), pp. 73-79, p. 78.

⁵⁷ Rodney wrote that "As soon as the enemy's main army heard our cannon at Princeton (and not 'til then) they discovered our manoeuvre and pushed after us with all speed and we had not been above an hour in possession of the town before the enemy's light horse and advanced parties attacked our party at the bridge but our people by a very heavy fire kept the pass until our whole army left the town."

Writing from the British side, Sergeant Sullivan reported that "Lord Cornwallis finding the enemy had made this movement, and having also heard the reports of the enemy's cannon, and the firing occasioned by Colonel Mawhood's attacks, returned immediately from before Trenton. When we came to the river that is near Princetown, a party of the Rebels were formed on one side of the bridge, and another party cutting it down. The 5th. Batallion, which marched in front of the Brigade with two 6 pounders, engaged them from the opposite side; and in a few minutes drove them from the bridge, which they had cut down, and retreated into the woods. We crossed the river, wading it up to our waists, and formed upon the hill near Princetown. But the enemy's body being some hours march in front, and keeping this advantage by an immediate departure from the town, retreated by Kingstown, breaking down the bridge at that place behind them, and crossed the Millstone River at a bridge under Rocky Hill, to throw themselves into a strong country. Lieut. Colonel Mawhood taking a lower road to Maidenhead, missed our Brigade and passed by us unobserved in the morning, joined us in the afternoon, after we crossed the river near Princetown."⁵⁸

Ensign Thomas Glyn of the Brigade of Guards recorded the aftermath of the engagement and the evidence of the intensity of the combat. Cornwallis' pursuit column crossed Stony Brook and "came to the Ground where the action had commenced," he wrote, "none of the Enemy were to be found. Lord Cornwallis formed our [1st Guards] Battalion and detached Lt. Col. Sr. John Wrottesley's Company and Lt. Col. Coxe's then commanded by Captain Bayley into a Wood where from our finding several wounded Men of the 17th [Regiment of Foot,] a Battalion Gun and an Ammunition Waggon [sic] which we secured, the action had been warm, but we could not find any of the Enemy[']s parties." Glyn also noted the damages in the village writing that "The Magazines at Prince Town were burning."⁵⁹

By early afternoon the Crown was again in possession of Princeton.

⁵⁸ Sergeant Thomas Sullivan, "The Battle of Princeton." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 32 no. 1 (January 1908), pp. 56. See also the letter by Washington to Congress of 5 January 1777: "The rear of the Enemy's army laying at Maidenhead (not more than five or Six Miles from Princeton) were up with us before our pursuit was over, but as I had the precaution to destroy the Bridge over Stony Brooke (about half a Mile from the Field of Action) they were so long retarded there, as to give us time to move of in good order for this place." Watching from his farmstead along the road, Robert Lawrence recorded that: "as soon as the battle was over [Washington] Ordered some of his men to be placed near the Bridge over Stony brook on the Main Road to hinder the Regulars passing over and to pull up the bridge which was Scarcely done when the Regulars Apeared Which caused a Second fireing about three quarters of an hour appart from the first". Varnum Lansing Collins, ed., *A brief Narrative of the Ravages of the British and Hessians at Princeton in 1776-77. a Contemporary Account of the Battles of Trenton and Princeton* (Princeton, 1906), p. 35.

⁵⁹ Ensign Thomas Glyn, entry for January 3rd, "Ensign Glyn's Journal on the American Service with the Detachment of 1,000 Men of the Guards commanded by Brigadier General Mathew in 1776." Varnum Lansing Collins, *Revolutionary War Papers, 1913-1932*, Manuscript Department, Princeton University Library, Princeton, NJ.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

Historians generally consider the Battle of Princeton an American victory whose psychological implications for American morale were as important as its military consequences. A closer look produces a more differentiated image. During the night of 2/3 January 1777, Washington successfully disengaged from Cornwallis, thereby saving his army from almost certain destruction. As he approached Princeton, however, he followed up this brilliant maneuver with a risky battle-plan which was almost certain to fail. Just before daybreak he split up his tired forces into three attack columns of variable strength. One, his strongest column under Sullivan, was to approach Princeton from the south while sending at least one augmented battalion-sized unit around the city. Here it was to unite with his second task force, only slightly weaker than the first, under Mifflin and Hausegger who had been ordered to march into the British rear from the north. His third column under Mercer composed of a few hundred Continentals and the majority of the militia was to follow and re-enforce the attacking strike force led personally by Washington. Simple as this plan appears, carrying it out successfully proved beyond the capacities of his exhausted forces: even if everything had gone according to plan, Mifflin's and Hausegger's division could not, would not, have reached their destinations in time to cut off a British retreat to New Brunswick.

But in the morning of 3 January 1777 very little went according to plan. Within 30 minutes of their departure from the take-off point south of the Quaker Meeting House Washington's forces were discovered by Crown Forces on the march to Trenton. The response to this mutual discovery shows how much Washington still had to learn as a military leader. Trying to ascertain who the forces on his left flank were, Col. Mawhood conducted reconnaissance not once but three times. Focused on taking Princeton, Washington took a look through his telescope. Having virtually no knowledge of the strength or location of the enemy, Washington ordered Mercer to neutralize what he thought was a scouting party, "to detach a body of men, and go and attack the guard. Declarant was one of the detachment" and continued on his march to Princeton.⁶⁰ "Gen. Mercer with the Philada Militia desired & were permitted the honor to begin the attack,"⁶¹ but relying on equally insufficient information at best, Mercer split his forces even further: "Gen. Mercer with 100 Pennsylvania riflemen and 20 Virginians, were detached to the front to bring on the attack."⁶² Rather than encountering a "guard", Mercer's men, who advanced without a light infantry screen, ran head-long into the bulk of Mawhood's forces waiting for them behind the orchard at the William Clarke Farm. Hopelessly outnumbered they were quickly thrown back toward the Thomas Clarke farm where they ran into John Cadwalader's advancing Pennsylvania militia, throwing them into confusion as well. The strongest formation of Mawhood's forces had attacked Washington's weakest column and were on the verge of splitting American forces.⁶³ Despite the huge American numerical superiority the outcome of the battle hung in the balance. What saved the day were as much Washington's successful efforts in rallying his forces as the loss of

⁶⁰ Pension application of Cary Mc Clelland S 9006, PA Rifles, Capt. John Marshall's Company.

⁶¹ Franklin Bowditch Dexter, *The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles*, vol. 2: March 14, 1776 - December 31, 1781 (New York, 1901), pp. 118-120.

⁶² "Diary of Lieutenant James McMichael, Of The Pennsylvania Line, 1776 – 1778." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 16, (1892), pp. 129 – 159, and in *Pennsylvania Archives*, Second Series, vol. 15, pp. 195 – 218, the quote on p. 203.

⁶³ George Inman's "Narrative of the American Revolution." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 7 no. 3 (1883), pp. 237-248, p. 240: "we attacked their Centre Column and drove them to their main body".

command and control on the British side when the 55th Regiment did not join in the battle but retreated: "as soon as they saw such a slaughter among the first rank of the 17th, immediately run off, on their commanding officer saying it was all over with the others ... the 56th [sic] run off in the greatest confusion to Princetown."⁶⁴ It may be fruitless speculation but it stands to argue that if the 55th Regiment had joined the 17th in a determined bayonet attack on Cadwalader's militia, the outcome of the battle might well have been different. As it was it took Mercer's Brigade, Mifflin, Hand, Hitchcock and Cadwalader's militia "about three quarters of an hour from the beginning of the battle" until the heavily outnumbered "Regulars were put to flight with the loss of two brass field Pieces."⁶⁵

While this chronological narrative of the course of the battle from mutual discovery to the death of Mercer, the rallying of Continental Army forces under Washington and the eventual surrender of remaining Crown Forces at Nassau Hall may not be new, the interpretation of the course of the battle and the positioning of forces on the ground deviates considerably from commonly accepted interpretations. It was General Mifflin, not Mercer who marched to the bridge across the Stony Brook. It was Sullivan's column, not Mercer's, which was first discovered by mounted Light Dragoons on Cochran's Hill. "Mr. Hood" of the Third Battalion, Philadelphia Associators was in Colonel Hausegger's rarely if ever mentioned strike force to the northwest of Prince when he described the battle around the orchard. This relocation of American forces, which shifts the battle lines much closer to the city of Princeton, is due to three factors:

- the diligent compilation and thorough interpretation of previously known primary sources,
- the discovery of new accounts, primarily on the British side, which shed new light on the movements of Crown Forces, and
- the use of modern GIS technology such as geo-referencing and viewshed analyses which provides much more accurate lines of vision and placement of sites than heretofore possible.

The overall integrity of Princeton Battlefield varies depending on where the viewer stands. As Patrick Andrus notes, a basic test for battlefield integrity is whether a participant in the fight would recognize the field as it exists today (Andrus 1999). Battlefield integrity generally requires four of the seven aspects or qualities of integrity to be displayed; association, setting, location, and feeling. In the vicinity of Princeton Battlefield State Park the qualities of location, setting, feeling and association are intact, largely through the preservation efforts of the state. The state

⁶⁴ "Captain Hon. William Leslie (1751-77). His Life, Letters and Commemoration." Marianne M. Gilchrist, ed. *Military Miscellany II; Manuscripts from Marlborough's wars, the American War of Independence and the Boer War*. David G. Chandler, ed., Army Records Society 23 (Stroud, 2005), pp. 133-196, p. 172. Captain Hall wrote: "Had the 55th regiment acted at the same time, and with equal ardour – whose commanding officer either did not comprehend the order distinctly given, or thought it too dangerous to execute; and had the 40th regiment moved out to sustain the attack, as it ought to have done, and was expected – in all probability the enemy would have been foiled, and the day would have been ours: - unfortunate as it was, such was the shock the enemy received from this rude encounter, that they suffered the remains of this shattered battalion to retreat, near one half was left upon the field, intermixed with double the number of the enemy." An Officer of the Army, *The history of the Civil War in America* vol. 1 (London, 1780), pp. 249-250.

⁶⁵ Collins, ed., *A brief Narrative*, pp. 33.

park lands convey the sense of open farmland associated with the Thomas Clarke House. Missing from this area are the orchard, fences, and outbuildings that comprised the farm in January 1777. Also lacking from the current landscape is the location of the William Clarke farm complex. The GIS study suggests that this site, likely present archeologically, is situated north of the park property along Mercer Road.

The archeological evidence of the battle is still extant on the State Park and IAS properties. While not systematic the series of archeological surveys reported for the last 20 years clearly indicate the rising ground south of Mercer Road, east of the Mercer Oak enclosure, south of Stone House Drive, and west of Maxwell Lane contains evidence of the engagement. The presence of dropped and impacted shot, grapeshot, and the other detritus of battle is indicative of the fight.

Immediately east of the State Park lands the IAS lands retain the open appearance present at the time of the battle, although some portions of the property have been subdivided and now contain dwellings. Remarkably the former trace of Saw Mill Road appears to still be extant on the IAS property east of the state park lands, and also in the woods south of the park. Indeed the discovery of a portion of Saw Mill Road on state park lands adds significantly to our understanding of the battle. The further identification of sections of Saw Mill Road will add greater detail regarding the course of the battle and the movement of American formations can be obtained. The likelihood that other portions of the road are present and can be identified is strongest to the south of the state park lands and in the area where the former road met Quaker Road.

Further east, where the IAS facility is situated, the integrity of the setting is somewhat compromised and this level of integrity continues to decline as one moves towards Princeton and Princeton University. At Nassau Hall the feeling and setting of the battle are lacking, since later development of the campus makes it difficult to see the rural landscape which extended south of the college and mentioned by contemporaries.

Locations of British batteries on the outskirts of eighteenth century Princeton can be tentatively identified in the GIS study, and these sites are potentially still present archeologically. However, the setting for defenses is hampered by nearly two hundred years of development but the impact of these modern properties is somewhat lessened because these properties are located in a dispersed pattern and in wooded settings. Footprints of such resources may be present underground and if found would likely contribute to the overall integrity and significance of the battlefield.

The route of the Crown Forces along the former Post Road (US Route 206) is nearly identical to its eighteenth century trace and some period dwellings are still present. East of the road are a series of developed properties located where Crown Forces formations prepared their initial battleline and through which American soldiers advanced following the collapse of the 17th Regiment of Foot and its associated companies. The suburban lawns which characterize this portion of the battlefield mean that the integrity of this area is relatively low – it is difficult for a visitor or a former participant to get a feel for the battle. Once again, however, the impact of these modern properties is somewhat lessened because these properties are located in a dispersed pattern and in wooded settings in a gently undulating topography. It should be noted however that the alleged burial area for slain American and British troops is reputed to be on one of these properties, and we have included a point for this possible burial site, derived from one of the historic maps, in the GIS study. The archeological potential for such a resource is obvious, as is the significance to the overall study of the battle if such a burial site was found.

The stream of Stony Brook retains a sense of its wooded setting despite the new bridge and the traffic on Route 206; this sense of the stream is most apparent along the Quaker Road southeast of the bridge. Traveling up Route 206 to Cochran's Hill the integrity of the battlefield is low, primarily due to the lack of a good viewshed in which to see what Mawhood saw on the morning of 3 January.

South of the Quaker Meeting House along the American approach route the Quaker Road retains integrity with a strong sense of setting. The road passes through an agricultural landscape bordered by the wooded valley of Stony Brook.

Based on the results of this study the boundaries of the Core and Study areas as currently defined in the ABPP database need to be redefined. The Study Area needs to be expanded, particularly to the east to include the location of Saw Mill Road, and to the north to include the movement of Hausegger's strike force. Figure 33 presents the Core Area and the revised Study Area.

Future research for the battle could include a detailed cultural landscape study of the properties within the Core and Study areas. Such a study would examine deed records, probate documents, court records, manuscript land plats, tax assessments, and other primary sources in order to recreate the landscape at the time of the battle. While the present study did examine and record some deed records and the damage claims for the Princeton area, a detailed study of such sources was beyond the scope of the GIS study.

In addition to the cultural landscape study, a program of systematic archeological survey of the Core Area of the battlefield could provide more specific battle information that could confirm or revise the battle narrative presented here.

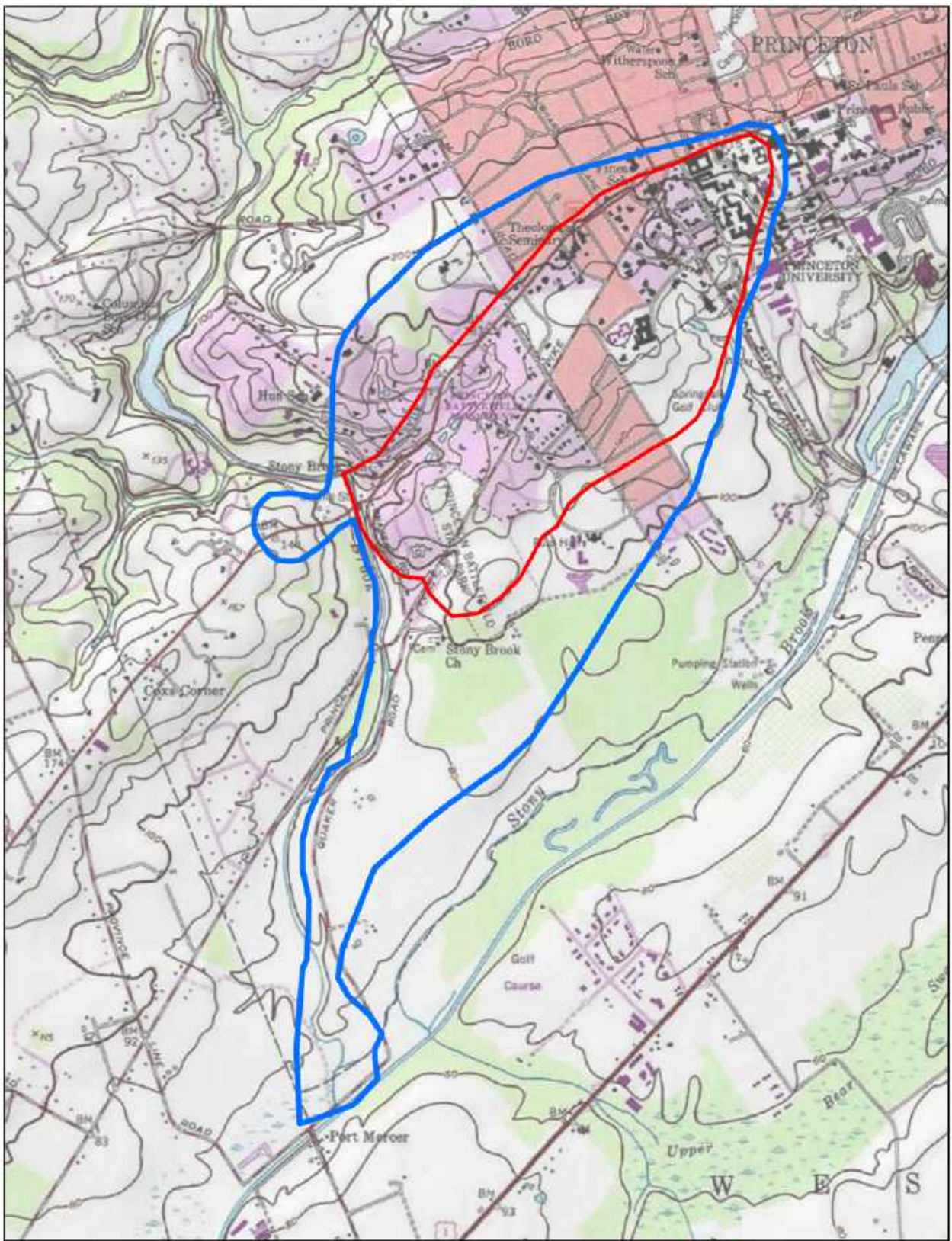


Figure 33. Location of Princeton Battlefield Core and Revised Study Areas, based on the current study (USGS *Princeton, New Jersey* quadrangle, 1954, photorevised 1981).

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Appendix I:
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- 147) **Yates/Yeates, Bartholomew**: Affidavit sworn to Princeton, January 9, 1777. in: William S. Stryker, *Documents relating to the Revolutionary history of the State of New Jersey* (Trenton, 1931), vol. 1: 1776-1777, p. 363.
- 148) **Young, William**: "Journal of Sergeant William Young." *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 8 (1884), pp. 255-278, p. 265.

The originals of the Pension and Bounty Land Application Files can be found in National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) M804, Revolutionary War Pensions. They are also available on-line at www.footnote.com . Microfilm copies are available at the David Library of the American Revolution, Washington Crossing, PA. Service statements of veterans who at some point during their careers served in the southern colonies are transcribed at <http://southerncampaign.org/pen/index.htm#pensions> All transcripts are used by permission.

If there is more than one primary source by an author the accounts are listed separately here but are combined into a single file under the individual's name in the report

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Unknown "A Gentleman in the Army"

The Pennsylvania Evening Post, 7 January 1777. Also in: *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 8 (1884), pp. 310-312.

Extract of a letter from a gentleman in the army to his friend in this city, dated Pluckemin, Jan. 5, 1777.

We have a number of officers prisoners. I am just called on to command the infantry at the funeral of Capt. Leslie¹ a British-officer, killed at Princeton. We bury him with military honors.¹ On the field I saw lying another Captain of the name of Mostyn³ said to be the next heir to an estate of twenty-five thousand pounds per annum in England.

NOTE: These are the footnotes in the original text

¹ William Leslie was a Captain in the Seventieth Regiment of the British Line. He was mortally wounded in the fight at Princeton, and taken care of by the eminent physician, *Dr.* Benjamin Rush, of Philadelphia. He was carried off by the American Army after the battle of Princeton, and died at Pluckemin on January 5th, 1777, where he was interred with military honors. A monument erected by Dr Rush is still standing in the graveyard.

² Robert Mostyn entered the British Army in 1768, in the Sixty-fifth Regiment of Foot; was made a Lieutenant in 1774, and a Captain in the Fortieth Regiment, May 6th, 1776. He received his death wound at the beginning of the fight at Princeton

¹ The expression "buried with military honors" in the sense here used means: "The funeral of a commander-in-chief - saluted with three rounds of 11 pieces of cannon, 4 battalions, and 6 squadrons; that of a lieutenant general with three rounds of 9 pieces of cannon, 3 battalions, and 4 squadrons; that of a major general with three rounds of 7 pieces of cannon, 1 battalion, and 2 squadrons; that of colonel by his own battalion (or an equal number by detachment), with three rounds of small-arms; that of a lieutenant colonel by 300 men and officers, with three rounds of small-arms; that of a major by 200 men and officers, with three rounds of small-arms; that of a captain by his own company, or 70 rank and file, with three rounds of small-arms; that of a lieutenant by a lieutenant, 1 sergeant, 1 drummer, 1 fifer, and 36 rank and file, with three rounds of small-arms; that of an ensign by 1 ensign, 1 sergeant, 1 drummer, and 27 rank and file, with three rounds of small-arms; that of a sergeant by 1 sergeant and 10 rank and file, with three rounds of small-arms; that of a corporal, musician, private man, drummer, or fifer by 1 sergeant and 13 rank and file, with three rounds of small-arms. The pall is supported by officers of the same rank as that of the deceased; if that number can not be had, officers next in seniority are to supply their place. Benson J. Lossing, *The Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution* 2 vols., (New York, 1860) vol. 2, p. 259.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Unknown "A Gentleman of Great Worth"

Charles Chauncy Haven, *Thirty Days in New Jersey Ninety Years ago, An Essay revealing new Facts in Connection with Washington and his Army in 1776 and 1777* (Trenton, 1867), pp. 40-43.

LETTER FROM A GENTLEMAN OF GREAT WORTH IN THE AMERICAN ARMY TO THE PRINTER OF THE MARYLAND JOURNAL, DATED NEAR PRINCETON, JAN. 7th, 1777.

On the 2d instant, intelligence was received by express that the enemy's army was advancing from Princeton towards Trenton, where the main body of our forces was then stationed. Two brigades, under Generals Stephens and Permoy, had been detached several hours before from the main body to Maidenhead, and were ordered to skirmish with the enemy during their march, and retreat to Trenton as occasion should require. A body of men under command of Colonel Hand were also ordered to meet the enemy, by which means their march was so much retarded as to give ample time for our forces to form and prepare to give them a warm reception upon their arrival. Two field pieces, planted upon a hill at a small distance from the town, were managed with great advantage, and did considerable execution for some time; after which they were ordered to retire to the station occupied by our forces on the south side of the bridge, over the little river (the Assunpink), which divides the town into two parts, and opens at right angles into the Delaware. In their way through the town the enemy suffered much by an incessant fire of musketry from behind the houses and barns. The army had now arrived at the northern side of the bridge, whilst our army was drawn up in order of battle on the southern side. Our cannon played very briskly from this eminence, and were returned as briskly by the enemy. In a few minutes after the cannonade began, a very heavy discharge of musketry ensued, and continued for ten or fifteen minutes; during this action a party of men were detached from our right wing to secure a part of the river which it was imagined, from the motions of the enemy, they intended to ford. This detachment arrived at the pass very opportunely, and effected their purpose. After this the enemy made a feeble and unsupported attempt to pass the bridge, but this likewise proved abortive. It was now near six o'clock in the evening, and night coming on, closed the engagement.

Our fires were built in due season, and were very numerous; and whilst the enemy were amused by these appearances, preparing for a general attack the next morning, our army marched at about one o'clock in the morning from Trenton, on the south side of the creek, to Princeton. When they arrived near the hill, about one mile from Princeton, they found a body of the enemy formed upon it and ready to receive them; upon which a spirited attack was made upon them, both with field pieces and musketry, and after an obstinate resistance and loss of a considerable number of

their men upon the field, those of them who could not make their escape, surrendered prisoners of war. We immediately marched on to the centre of the town, and there took another part of the enemy near the College. After tarrying a very short time in town, General Washington marched his army from thence towards Rooky Hill, and they are now near Morristown. in high spirits, and in expectation of a junction with the rest of our forces, sufficiently seasonable to make a general attack upon the enemy and prevent at least a considerable part of them from reaching their asylum in New York.

It is difficult to precisely ascertain the loss we have sustained in the two engagements, but as near as I can judge I think we have lost about forty men killed, and had near double the number wounded. In the list of the former are the brave Colonel Hazlett, Captain Shippen and Captain Neal, who fell in the engagement upon the hill near Princeton. Among the latter was Brigadier General Mercer, who received seven wounds in his body and two on his head, and was much bruised by the breach of a musket. His life was yesterday almost despaired of, but this morning T found him much relieved, and some of the most dangerous complaints removed, so that I still have hopes of his recovery, and of his being again restored to the arms of his grateful country. He is now a prisoner upon parole.

The loss sustained by the enemy was much greater than ours, as was easily discovered by viewing the dead upon the field after the action. We have now one hundred of their wounded prisoners in the town, which, together with those who surrendered and were taken in small parties endeavoring to make their escape, I think must amount to the number of four hundred, chiefly British troops. Six brass cannon have fallen into our hands, a quantity of ammunition and several wagons of baggage. A Captain Leslie was found among the dead of the enemy, and was this day buried with the honors of war. A number of other officers were found on the field, but they were not known and were buried with the other dead. According to the information from the inhabitants of Princeton, the number which marched out of it to attack our army amounted to thirteen thousand men, under command of General Cornwallis. As soon as they discovered they were outgeneraled by the march of General Washington, being much chagrined at their disappointment (as it seems Cornwallis intended to have cut our army to pieces, crossed the Delaware and marched without any further delay to Philadelphia), rushed with the greatest precipitation towards Princeton, where they arrived about an hour after General Washington had left, and imagining he would endeavor to take Brunswick in the same manner, proceeded briskly for that place. Our soldiers were much fatigued, the greater part of them having been deprived of their rest the two preceding nights, otherwise we might perhaps have possessed ourselves of Brunswick.

Note: Samuel Stelle Smith, *The Battle of Princeton* (Monmouth Beach, 1967), p. 39, suggests Dr. Benjamin Rush as possible author of the letter.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton
Unit: Pennsylvania Flying Camp
John Adlum

Howard H. Peckham, ed., *Memoirs of the Life of John Adlum in the Revolutionary War* (Chicago, 1968), pp. 117-124.

"One evening after dark I was standing in the street door. There came two persons, one of whom was an officer and asked if Col. Miles and Col. Atlee lived there. I replied they did, when he told me to tell them that Col. Housacker was at the door. Knowing it to be the name of the Colonel that commanded the German regiment in our service raised in Pennsylvania and Maryland, I told him to walk in and I ushered him into the midst of our gentlemen officers who were listening to some [stories] of the famous Col. Ethan Allen, who was always a very welcome guest at our lodgings. But I was much astonished to see Housacker's appearance operate on our officers as suddenly as an electric shock would. As he was known to all of them except Col. Allen, who had just returned from Europe, and from a pleasant hilarity it was turned into a dead silence and all were waiting in anxious silence to know the cause of his being here. One of the gentlemen asked him if there was another battle fought. He replied, "No. I went to reconnoiter at Princeton and I was with ten men taken by the Hessians."

When I was taking him to the officers' room he turned round and said, "Housman, go to the kitchen."

As that was the name of the man who supplied my father's family with meat, as soon as I heard that there was no battle fought I went to the kitchen to see who this Housman was, and I found him to be the younger brother of the butcher abovementioned. After asking him a few questions I went to the officer's room and whispered to Col. Magaw and Col. Miles to come into the entry as I wished to speak with them. They immediately left the room, when I informed them that Col. Housacker's waiter was from York Town [PA] and whom I knew. They told me to take him into their room and order him some refreshment and to make him a nip of warm toddy and to make particular inquiry how Col. Housacker was captured.

I accordingly got him the refreshment and made him the toddy and after some time Col. Miles came up, and Housman gave us the following particulars. The regiment was marched towards Princeton and not meeting with any enemy they continued marching until they came within about half a mile of Princeton. Major Weltner rode up to Col. Housacker and immediately a smart altercation took place between them. The Major ordered the regiment to halt. Housacker ordered them to march, when the Major said, "The enemy are in the town."

Housacker said they were not. The regiment halted during the altercation and most of the officers of the regiment came to where the Colonel and Major were disputing at the head of the regiment. The Major said, "They shall not march until the town is reconnoitered and then we can act according to circumstances."

The Colonel replied he would go and reconnoiter the town himself. He ordered out ten men and Lieutenant Barnard Hubly to go with him. The Major ordered the Lieutenant to stand by his platoon. Housacker said it was mutiny and that he would have him punished. The Major replied that prudence was not mutiny and that he knew the enemy were in town and that the Colonel also knew it, and that it was highly improper to go into a place occupied by the enemy. Housacker said there was no enemy there and he set out for Princeton taking ten men with him and went direct to the Hessian general's quarters, who came to the door and took him by the hand and asked him where his regiment was. The Colonel replied that the Major mutinied and usurped the command and had even ordered an officer back to his place who he intended to have brought with him, and these ten men was all he could bring with him.

"Well," says the General, "I am sorry you did not bring in your regiment. I had ordered all the troops to keep close in their quarters. You see, I have not even a sentinel at my own door and if they had come in we could have taken them with little or no bloodshed."

And then pulled out his purse and poured some gold into his own hand and told Housacker to take what he wanted of it. The general then ordered a guard to take the men into their care. The Colonel told the General he wished to have one of the men as a waiter. The General told him to call out one, and he called up Houseman, and then the General and Colonel went into the house together and the next day they set out for N. York and called at our quarters as abovementioned. The Colonel stayed at our quarters all night and in the morning Mrs. C. was requested to give him notice that there was no room for him in that house.

I afterwards became acquainted with Colonel Weltner and Captain Hubly. They were both promoted and they both corroborated and confirmed Housman's account so far as to Colonel Weltner, when Major, of usurping the command, and Captain Hubly informed me that it prevent him from being taken prisoner. When Cols. Magaw and Miles came into the room at bedtime, I asked them what news Col. H. brought. They both said there was not doubt of his being a great scoundrel and ought to be punished as a deserter or traitor. He told the gentlemen that the whole country was submitting to the British and that it was all over with us, that the country was as much as conquered, and that the whole of the Jerseys was coming and taking the Oath of Allegiance to the King.

Col. Allen who had dined at our quarters that day and had drank pretty freely of punch was somewhat elevated. [He] told Col. H. that no true American would submit to the enemy . . . Having drank freely of punch and other good things he increased in ardor as he went along, saying . . . it was cowardly and pusillanimous in the highest degree to utter such sentiments and that the were not true, and there was the beatels of morality to

beat anyone to mummy (at the same time showing a great pair of fists) anyone who dared to say our country was conquered or would submit to the enemy.

I have mentioned that there was no room in that house for him. He got quarters somewhere else, but he called at our lodgings two or three times, but as the gentlemen looked upon him as a sort of spy on their conduct they received him very coldly and as his situation could not be very pleasant he got a parole to go home, which was at Lebanon in Pennsylvania. Colonel Weltner afterwards informed me that on his way home he, Housacker, called at General Washington's quarters at Morristown in New Jersey. When he announced himself General Washington ordered that he should not be admitted and the sentinel was ordered not to permit him to go into the house. He H[aussegger] instead of going home immediately returned to N. York, and accepted of a captaincy in the new levies in the British service, where he died."

NOTE: Adlum testified in his pension application that after being captured on 16 November 1776, he was placed on parole sometime in February 1777. John C. Dann, ed., *The Revolution Remembered: Eyewitness Accounts of the War for Independence* (Chicago, 1980), p. 117: "sometime in the month of February 1777 I got a parole to go home."

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 6th Virginia Regiment, Captain Towles' Coy
Benjamin Alsop

Pension Application of Benjamin Alsop, No. S 9269

After remaining in Camp a day or two, they were marched to Trenton [30 Dec], and there encamped for a few days. from Trenton they marched to a small village called Maidenhead, where they understood that the enemy was approaching. they then retreated to Trenton, and crossed the Bridge [at Assunpink Creek], the enemy following. The enemy encamped for the night in Trenton and the American Army in sight. About twilight [?] the American Army having kindled Camp fires took up their encampment and [illegible word] and silently marched to Princeton leaving the enemy in possession of Trenton. He was in the engagement at Princeton [3 Jan 1777] and was immediately under the command of Gen'l Chas Scott of Virginia, who held the command of the Virginia line. He was afterwards at the battle of Brandywine [11 Sep 1777] in Gen'l [George] Weedons Brigade in Gen'l [John] Green's Division, where he was struck with three balls, only one however wounding him, that in the left shoulder, whilst in the act of reloading his Musket. The blanket slung along to his back had 16 bullet holes through it.

NOTE: Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris at <http://southerncampaign.org/pen/s9269.pdf>

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Delaware Regiment, Captain Joseph Stedam's Coy, Colonel John Haslett's Regiment
Thomas Anderson

Pension application of Thomas Anderson No. S 39941.

Personally appeared before me Jacob Rush, President of the first Judicial District in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, composed of the City and County of Philadelphia; Thomas Anderson, now a Resident in the City of Philadelphia, but late of the State of Delaware, and being duly sworn upon the holy Evangelist of God, doth depose and say, that he entered as a private in the month of January 1776 and Captain Joseph Stedam's Company under the command of Colonel John Haslett, who commanded the Delaware Regiment of the State of Delaware, that he continued under the command of the said Colonel Haslett, until he was killed at the Battle of Princeton;

NOTE: Transcribed by Will Graves at <http://southerncampaign.org/pen/s39941.pdf>

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 7th Pennsylvania Regt, Captain Matthew Henderson's Coy, Lt.-Col. Thomas Hartley
Anonymous Lieutenant

Pension Application by unknown officer detailing his service from Trenton to Monmouth, n.d., MG-8, Pennsylvania Collection (misc.), Box 40, No. 1110. Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg.

The officer enlisted in November 1776

after which I went to Bindentown New Jersey lay there about one Week – General Mifflin commanded – from thence to Trentown Cannonade – next morning to Princetown action from thence to Morristown where we lay the remainder part of the winter.

NOTE:

The officer claims to have served at Princeton in Capt. Henderson's Company, Col. Irvine's/Hartley's 6th PA Batt./7th PA Regt after 1 January 1777, then 9th PA Regt., but the unit was not at Princeton.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Head-Quarters
Lieutenant John Armstrong. ADC to BG Mercer

Time	Location
07:22	civil sunrise
07:35	As the day broke upon us, we discovered troops ...
07:40	
07:45	Finding soon after that they had become stationary ...
07:50	Gen. Washington joined ... ordered to march rapidly to the left and take a position between the Corps we had seen and Princeton
07:55	
08:00	It is about 450 yards from the road to the orchard the way a crow flies. A quick walking speed is about 3.3 mph or 17.500 feet p/h. To cover the 1.300 or so feet would have taken Mercer's (tired) men (going uphill) a good five minutes
08:05	
08:10	
08:15	The engagement soon followed ... for about fifteen minutes
08:20	
08:25	
08:30	
08:35	
08:40	
08:45	
08:50	
08:55	
09:00	

Source:

Undated "Memorandum of Gen. H. Mercer's ... services and character" by Lieutenant John Armstrong, enclosed in a letter to William B. Reed (1806-1876) of Philadelphia dated 13 September 1839, in response to an inquiry of 8 July 1839 concerning the death of Mercer at Princeton.

Photocopy of the original ms (location unknown) in the manuscript collections at Clark House in Princeton Battlefield State Park. It begins with a brief account of his education and his services in the Seven Years' War/French and Indian War. The quoted text begins in the middle of page 2:

In 1776, the second year of the war of the revolution, he was appointed by Congress a General of Brigades - repaired to the North and was selected by Washington, to take command of the Militias on the Jersey side of the Hudson - until the American army began to retreat through that province, and crossed the Delaware.

A brigade composed of the remains of Smallwood's, Hazlett's, Miles, Atties and Durfay's Regiments with Neil's company of Artillery was formed and placed under his command (i.e., Mercer's) on the western side of the Delaware, while on the eastern side the British General stationed a few outposts - waiting as was feared the freezing of the river, to begin a march on Philadelphia. Of these out-posts that of Trenton was one - the British force in it all armes, about fifteen hundred ... [now follows an account of the Battle of Trenton. The account of the Battle of Princeton begins in the middle of p. 3].

During the evening a Council was held at Mercer's quarters (Richard's Tavern) by which the following questions were discussed - Shall a battle be risked in our present position and if not on what point a retreat be made? The first question was rejected unanimously with the qualification - Unless it be found that we cannot do better. - Such, after a good deal of discussion appeared to become the general opinion - when Mercer remarked - that one course not yet suggested might be usefully explored and this was to order up the Philadelphia Militia make a night march to Princeton - attack the two British regiments said to be there under Leclay (?) & continue our march to Brunswick carry that post, and destroy the British magazines formed there. - And when then, was Washington's question - can we safely remain at Brunswic? My knowledge of the (two words illeg) enables me to say: It was at this moment that Sinclair gave a full and clear discription of the hilly region between Brunswick and Morristown - upon which the night march as suggested by Mercer was adopted and executed in part as is sufficiently known.

Gen. Mercer's share in the work was the most signal. As the day broke upon us, we discovered troops apparently on the march on the road from Princeton to Trenton. Finding soon after that they had become stationary it was at once concluded by Gen. Mercer, that they had seen us, and would not fail to give the alarm to whatever British troops might remain at Princeton - the Brigade was accordingly halted until Gen. Washington joined it - when it was ordered to march rapidly to the left and take a position between the Corps we had seen and Princeton. The march was rapidly made

and without seeing an enemy till gaining a position between Clarke's house and barn, a British Regiment already in line and greatly outflanking us presented itself. The engagement soon followed vigorously made on both sides for about fifteen minutes when Col. Hazlett received a wound in his thigh and was assisted in falling back to have his wound examined – an unfortunate circumstance, as several platoons forming the right of the line, mistook it for the beginning of an authorized retreat. The effect of this was to leave the General [i.e., Mercer] alone and dismounted his horse and (illeg.) being both wounded. – Under these circumstances untoward as they were his sang-froid was truly military – when he remarked “we have but one chance of holding our position - our line must be shortened – order the left to fall back to the barn and the right to rouse itself by the dwelling house – if this be not done we shall soon be turned on both our flanks. On reaching the left of the line it was found in as bad a condition as the right. Capt. Neil who commanded our artillery having unfortunately been killed. Seeing our confusion the enemy made a bayonet charge in which the General who ordered to histuation fell wounded as I formerly stated to you.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Connecticut State Troops Philemon Baldwin

Pension Application of Philemon Baldwin No. S 18 305, available at www.footnote.com .

"That on the first day of January 1776 at Danbury in the County of Fairfield in the State of Connecticut, he enlisted voluntarily as a private for Four months service in the Connecticut State Troops in Capt. Jones' Company Lieutenants Gray and Jones in Colonel Waterbury's Regiment". [He marched to New York and] "in the same year to wit 1776 he voluntarily enlisted as a private soldier for six months service in the Connecticut State troops in Capt. Noble Benedict's Company, Lieutenants Benedict and Barnum Ensign Holby of Horseneck in Colonel Philip Burr Bradley's Regiment ... "

He marched to New York with the regiment, is taken prisoner at Ft. Washington 16 November 1776, escaped and re-joined Washington's army.

"That the time of his enlistment for six months aforesaid expired on Christmas Day Decr 25 1776 and on that day General Mercer called for Volunteers for fifteen days and offered as Bounty to each who would volunteer three Dollars in money and a pair of Shoes - that he and one other private of sd Capt. Benedict's company volunteered (the rest of said Col. Bradley's Regiment (now reduced to about sixty men) discharged at Robinson's Ferry about 8 miles above Trenton and returned home) that he the sd Philemon Baldwin joined a company commanded by Lieutenant Benedict (the Capt of sd Company was a prisoner of war) in Genl Mercer's Brigade & crossed the Delaware with the part of Army commanded by Genl. Washington & marched to Trenton in the night & hailstorm and was at the Battle at Trenton the following morning early with the Hessians who were defeated and taken prisoners by the Americans, - that he was one of the Guards of the prisoners taken and crossed the Delaware with them at Currell's Ferry - that he recrossed the Delaware in sd Company in Gen Mercers Brigade at Robinson's Ferry that he was serving in sd Company when the fires were lighted by the Americans in the night on the Hill, about the 3d January 1777, that in the early part of the night the roads were muddy the weather being moderate, that the weather suddenly became extremely cold the surface of the earth was frozen & became hard as a pavement, that he marched with sd company in the army commanded by Genl Washington the sd Brigade commanded by Genl Mercer from the sd Hill situated near Trenton to Princeton State of New Jersey & was in the action or Battle at Princeton in which the enemy were defeated, that 300 British Prisoners were made. that the General of sd Brigade (Mercer) was killed in the action - thence he marched in sd company to Morristown."

Concerning the strength of the 20th Regiment Richard Patterson of the Old Barracks Museum in Trenton wrote in an e-mail:

By about the time of the Battle of Trenton on 25/26 December 1776, Mercer's Brigade included Colonel John Durkee's 20th Continental Regt. (raised in Connecticut) 30 officers, 283 men present and Colonel Philip Burr Bradley's battalion of Connecticut State troops (under Capt. Benjamin Mills) 18 officers and 124 men present. How many men from these units remained as long as the Battle of Princeton is conjectural.

According to Baldwin's deposition, Bradley's Regiment had been reduced to about 60 men after the first battle of Trenton. Of those sixty, a number of officers and all of two enlisted men, Baldwin being one of them, volunteered for an extra fifteen days service. That would give the Connecticut State troops a strength of maybe 10 to 12 officers and enlisted men.

In a separate e-mail concerning the deployment of Mercer's brigade on the battlefield Mr. Patterson referred to a "letter from Mercer to Durkee detailing their orders for the attack on Trenton dated Dec. 25th (printed in Stryker, pg. 359-360). At Trenton Mercer's Brigade was formed from right to left: Durkee, Bradley, Rawlings, and Stone, formerly Smallwood's Maryland regiment which contained several rifle companies. Almost in anticipation of how Morgan and Dearborn were paired at Saratoga, the right grand division of the little brigade was musket men, the left grand division was largely riflemen. The rifles were apparently not detached but fighting in the line of battle, perhaps somewhat protected by the bayonets of the right grand division. Considering it suffered little if any casualties on the 26th, it likely had the same order of battle at Princeton, only with the right grand division further weakened by the many returning home. That may have contributed to Mercer's being overrun early at Princeton with too few bayonets to protect all the rifles.

Further misunderstanding may be due to Hand being so famous as a rifle commander later in the war that many less knowledgeable probably figured all the riflemen were under Hand. On the 26th, fully one fourth of all Washington's infantry was rifle armed, and the rifles were generally not detached except in small pockets.

See also the pension application of Sergeant Nathaniel Root of the 20th Continental Regiment.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 5th Virginia Regiment
Major Robert Beale

Time	Location
07:22	civil sunrise
07:35	a little after sunrise the next morning we were at Princeton
07:40	
07:45	? The enemy had formed themselves into five different positions about 1/4 of a mile apart
07:50	? The enemy had formed themselves into five different positions about 1/4 of a mile apart
07:55	the other party of the British were drawn up nearly opposite the College, to them we were opposed, the 4 th , 5 th and 6 th Regts commanded by Col. Elias Scott to be supported by the Jersey Militia.
08:00	? A severe fire of Musketry commenced on our left clearly within sight.
08:05	? When we saw our men run, they were rallied and brought to the charge,
08:10	
08:15	? and we saw them run the second time.
08:20	
08:25	
08:30	
08:35	
08:40	
08:45	
08:50	
08:55	
09:00	

Source:

Beale, Robert: "An Account of the services of Major Robert Beale of Westmoreland in the War of the Revolution, as written by himself." Mss 5:1 B3657:1 Virginia Historical Society, Richmond.

Every endeavor was made to convince the enemy we occupied our ground by making an immense number of fires and throwing ourselves before first one and the other to make them believe we were very numerous, but about 12 o'clk when every thing was lulled into the most profound silence we were ordered to move with all the secrecy and stillness imaginable, and by a little after sunrise the next morning we were at Princeton opposed only by about five hundred of the British. The enemy had formed themselves into five different positions about 1/4 of a mile apart - the party that was under the immediate command of Genl Washington led on by the brave and noble Mercer, the other party of the British were drawn up nearly opposite the College, to them we were opposed, the 4th, 5th and 6th Regts commanded by Col. Elias Scott to be supported by the Jersey Militia. A severe fire of Musketry commenced on our left clearly within sight. When we saw our men run, they were rallied and brought to the charge, and we saw them run the second time. The Jersey Militia had not come up but Col. Scott observed: "Boys there are 250 red coats on yonder hill + about 250 of us, we can beat them - Huzza come on + down the hill we went but when we got to the top of the hill there was not one man to be seen, a small battery stood to our left and the College to the right - 'twas said they were in the battery then up the battery we went + no one there, then they were in the College when passed the College we looked down the hill and saw them running in confusion, we broke directly and every man ran with all speed in pursuit. Lieut. Eggleston, Ensign Smith + myself out ran all and came up with a party that had halted and formed near a wood as if to make battle, but seeing us followed by all our men they grounded their arms and surrendered. There were 7 officers + 30 men, we marched up to the main street where the other prisoners were collected they were put immediately [blank] and marched off and we directly followed for the British by this time were nearly on our rear - of a party who had lain for three nights at Maidenhead with but little sleep marching all night - the fourth - we escaped the enemy by taking the road which led to Morristown - In this action at Princeton the gallant mercer fell upon the second charge. 'twas said in the second retreat. His horse was killed under him, and he unable to extricate himself, they pushed forward and bayoneted him - the third charge was headed by Washington who carried the men to charge bayonet - this was done while we were marching down the hill and the party that we were opposed to seeing that, ran without firing a gun - After getting to Morristown ...

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: German Regiment, Capt. George Keepert's Company
Conrad Beam

Pension application of Conrad Beam, No. W 25323.

Beam's pension application of 27 May 1833 records:

.... When we were attached to what was called the dutch Batallion under the command of Col. N Hosacker from Philadelphia we remained until the night of the 25 of December 1776 when we marched to Trentown thru hail rain & sleet out cloaths now frozen to our back. He was in the battle of Trenton and took a large number of prisoners & arms & six field pieces - in this action Col. N Hosicker deserted - we were then placed under the command of Col. Stricker.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 20th Connecticut Regiment, Col. John Durkee's Regt
Isaiah Beaumont

Time	Location
07:22	civil sunrise
07:35	"just at the dawn of day we found ourselves in the environs of Princeton"
07:40	
07:45	
07:50	
07:55	
08:00	
08:05	
08:10	
08:15	
08:20	
08:25	
08:30	
08:35	
08:40	
08:45	
08:50	
08:55	
09:00	

Source:

Pension Application Isaiah Beaumont No. S 9099. Beaumont, of Lebanon, CT, was 17 years old when he enlisted on 1 December 1775. Available at www.footnote.com.

he was at the battle at Red Bank Bridge where the British made a desperate effort with the German troops to cross the Bridge but were repulsed and forced to take shelter in the town. In the night following we left our camp fires burning & marched about the middle of the night we know not whether winter just at the dawn of day we found ourselves in the environs of Princeton where lay the rear of the British army that he the declarant was wounded in the arm at the battle of Princeton, which took place that morning by a musket ball for which wound a pension was granted him which he has received for more than forty years as he believes is shown by the records of the War Department and of the claim office &c

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: German Regiment, Capt. William Heyser's Coy.
Jacob Bishop

Pension application of Mary, widow of Jacob, Bishop No. W 3381.

Mary Bishop's petition of 30 Jan 1839 makes the following declaration regarding her husband's service:

... of the taking of the Hessians - of Princeton - of Germantown, of Brandywine of the battle of Monmouth - having been wounded on one of his feet, the scars of which she has seen many times seen. She also recollects distinctly of his talking of the hardships, which he, with others, endured during his services of their marching barefoot over the frozen grounds and of the blood dropping from their feet - and of their wrapping cloths round their feet for their protection - and their suffering much from want of clothing ...

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 6th Virginia Regiment, Col. Mordecai Buckner
George Blakey

Pension application of George Blakey No. W8367

On this 8th day of August 1832 personally appeared before the County Court of said County [Logan] George Blakey a resident of said County in the State [Kentucky] aforesaid aged Eighty one years who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by & of Congress passed June 7th 1832. That he enlisted in the army of the United States in the year 1776 in the month of February, in Thomas Patterson's Company for two years & served in the 6th Regiment of the Virginia Line commanded by Colonel Bucker. He enlisted under the said Captain Patterson in the County of Buckingham & State of Virginia & aided the said officer promising he would give him for doing so the office of orderly sergeant or first sergeant. That as soon as the said company was raised & the said captain appointed him sergeant as aforesaid, they were marched to Williamsburgh & there entered into the aforesaid Regiment. The Regiment remained at said place until the fall, when they marched to the North & joined Washington on his retreat from New York. Continuing with Washington's army, he was, on the 24th of December marched in the night to Trenton through rain, Hail & Snow & reached that place on the morning of the 25th & they then killed & took 1,100 or 1200 of the Hessians.

From this, they marched back to their camp at the Schuylkill near Philadelphia & remaining there a few days, they returned again to Trentown & while there had a small engagement with the British, from which Genl. Washington's army retreated over the Creek that there runs into the Delaware River upon the Bridge & encamped near the Bridge, the British encamped on the Battleground near the bridge on the opposite side, so that the sentinels of the one army were posted at one end of the bridge & of the other at the other end. During the night the American army were ordered to make up the fires & make a silent parade & was marched to Prince Town, leaving the fires burning. At which place attacked the British and defeated them. From Princeton the army was marched to Morristown where it took up its winter quarters.

NOTE: Transcribed by Will Graves at <http://southerncampaign.org/pen/w8367.pdf> .

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Bucks County Militia, Capt. John Wood's Coy, Col. Joseph Kirkbride's Regt.
John Borrows

Time	Location
07:22	civil sunrise
07:35	"After crossing Stoney brook a little after sun rise"
07:40	
07:45	we ascended a hill within one mile of Princeton: going n-n-w toward Wm Clark House
07:50	
07:55	
08:00	
08:05	
08:10	
08:15	
08:20	
08:25	
08:30	
08:35	
08:40	
08:45	
08:50	
08:55	
09:00	

Source:

John Borrows Pension Application No. S 22134, available at www.footnote.com . Borrows was born 16 May 1760.

Captain Woods company being most convenient to the ferries in the neighborhood of Trenton, we were again called out and divided into small parties to guard the different ferries and the boats on the Pennsylvania shore. General Washington having lain a short time with the shattered remnant of his army near the River, removed with less than 3000 effective men to Newtown (then in the County Town of Bucks) from thence he march'd early on Christmas Morning (1776) to McKonkey's ferry about 8 or 9 miles above Trenton & crossed the Troops to the Jersey side before midnight. There were no Militia at that time with the army but a number of our company as well as others hearing of the movement & anticipating its object determined to participate in the engagement. We accordingly crossed the river that night & fell in with the American army on the Jersey side as well as a number of others without any regular command. About day light the morning after Christmas we arrived at general Dickinson's house, about one mile above Trenton & surprised the Hessian piquet, several of them were killed by active young men who had joined the regular army on their approach to Town. The army came in from the West & North & marched round rapidly to the East & surrounded & completely surprised the Hessians; the left wing arriving at the Bridge over the Assanpink just in time to take six brass six pounders that were limbered & the horses hitched for flight. Those Hessians who were quartered on the South side of the Creek (said to be about 300) made their escape & fled to Bordentown, many of them ran off half naked, through a bitter storm of hail rain & snow so great was their fright. In the engagement seventeen Hessians were killed and twenty six wounded, the killed were all buried in one grave at the Eastern end of the Town. - Our loss was two killed & five wounded, among the latter the late venerable President Monroe, then an Officer in the Virginia troops.

Just one week after the taking of the Hessians, Genl Washington with his whole force met the British army about six miles out of Trenton, he commenced a retrograde march through Trenton and halted on the Millhill (south of the Assanpink Creek) Captain Woods company not being there with the army, I joined the Philadelphia militia in Captain Worfell's company, having a number of relatives & friends among them. We threw up a strong breastwork at the Bridge to prevent the British from crossing & put some thirty two pounders on it. during the evening there was a considerable cannonading principally by the British. After supper we gathered fences & made large fires, we marched a little before midnight towards Princeton by the back road. After crossing Stoney brook a little after sun rise, we ascended the hill within one mile of Princeton and were attacked by about 500 of the enemy who had secreted themselves behind a thick thornhedge, when within a few paces they rose and gave us a warm reception. The Philadelphia Militia were in front & broke & gave way but were rallied & formed again by the exertions of Genl Cadwallader and Mifflin. Our army moved forward again under very disadvantageous circumstances, as the hedge prevented them from extending their lines, a rush was made through the only gate in that quarter. General Mercer led the van & he and twelve others were bayoneted by the British before they were put to flight, they retreated towards the College, but were intercepted by the Massachusetts flying camp who had got ahead of them, they surrendered & the army and prisoners proceeded towards New Brunswick.

In a different section of his application he wrote

After supper [on 2 January 1777] we gathered fences & made large fires & leaving some of our troops to keep up the fires we marched a little before midnight towards Princeton by the back road. After crossing Stoney brook a little after sun rise, we ascended a hill within one mile of Princeton, and were attacked by about 500, of the enemy, who had secreted themselves behind a thick thorn hedge, when within a few paces they rose and gave us a warm reception. The Philadelphia Militia were in front & broke and gave way, but were rallied & formed again by the exertions of Gen^{ls} Cadwallader and Mifflin. Our army moved forward again under very disadvantageous circumstances, as the hedge prevented them from extending their lines, a rush was made through the only gate in that quarter, General Mercer led the van & he and twelve others were bayoneted by the British before they were put to flight, they retreated towards the College, but were intercepted by the Massachusetts flying camp - who had got ahead of them, they surrendered & the army and prisoners proceeded towards New Brunswick. The British advancing from Trenton, overtook the rear of our Army at Kingston (three miles from Princeton) while we were cutting down a bridge to prevent the advance of the enemy. Genl. Washington lost no time in pushing ahead through Rocky hill till he came to where the road turned to the left in the direction of Pluckemin. The British proceeded straight forward to Brunswick ...

This pension application goes with this letter by Washington to COLONEL JOSEPH KIRKBRIDE (County lieutenant of Bucks County, Pa., and colonel of militia.

Head Quarters, December 19, 1776.

Sir: The Honble. the Council of Safety of the State of Pennsylvania having, by a Resolve passed the 17th. day of this instt. December, Authorized me to call forth the Militia of the County of Bucks, to the Assistance of the Continental Army under my Command, I hereby require you, immediately to issue Orders to the Captains of your Regiment, to summon the Officers and Privates of their Companies to meet on the 28th. day of this instant, at the usual place for their joining in Battalion, with their Arms and Accoutrements in good Order, and when so met, march immediately to the City of Philadelphia and there put yourself under the Command of Major Genl. Putnam. And you are further required to make me an exact return of the names and places of abode of such Officers and privates, as refuse to appear with their Arms and Accoutrements, at the time and place appointed, that they may be dealt with as the resolve, above refered to, directs."

This letter was also sent to Cols Joseph Hart, Arthur Erwin (Irwin), and Joseph Sabitts, all of Bucks County, and Andrew Kechlein of Northampton County. This explains why there are pension applications from militiamen from these counties in this report.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 7th Connecticut Regiment, Col. Charles Webb
Elisha Bostwick

William S. Powell, "A Connecticut Soldier Under Washington: Elisha Bostwick's Memoirs of the First Years of the Revolution." *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, vol. 6 no. 1 (January 1949), pp. 94-107, pp. 104-105.

On 2 January [n]n alarm was made [and] our army cross'd the bridge & form'd on the South side of the Creek South of the town where in the evening & through the night fires were kept continually burning while at the same time our army by a circuitous night march arrived at sun rise the next morning at Princeton attacked those of the enemy who were left there kill'd about one hundred & took about three hundred prisoners (the talk was that his excellency had been too much exposed to the fire of the enemy) N.B. the body of a British Capt by the name of Leslie⁴⁵ was found among the dead which was taken along with us in a waggon & the next morning was buried with the honers of War he was said to be a Nobleman. I did not See the Corps & was not at the funeral for my feet were so sore I was glad to be still and only heard the firing.¹ Genl. Mercer⁴⁶ was kill'd in this Battle and some highlanders with their Scotch plaid dress were Conducted to Peekshill under a guard which

⁴⁵ William Leslie, son of the Earl of Levin, was discovered by Washington lying wounded on the battlefield and placed under the care of Dr. Benjamin Rush, a friend of the wounded captain's father. He was carried with the American army on its northward march, but died the next morning, January 4, and was buried with military honors the following day in the village cemetery at Pluckemin. Dr. Rush later erected a monument over Leslie's grave. Stryker, 457-458.

¹ The firing was the salute rendered to Leslie as he was buried with the honors of war. The expression "buried with military honors" in the sense here used means: "The funeral of a commander-in-chief - saluted with three rounds of 11 pieces of cannon, 4 battalions, and 6 squadrons; that of a lieutenant general with three rounds of 9 pieces of cannon, 3 battalions, and 4 squadrons; that of a major general with three rounds of 7 pieces of cannon, 1 battalion, and 2 squadrons; that of colonel by his own battalion (or an equal number by detachment), with three rounds of small-arms; that of a lieutenant colonel by 300 men and officers, with three rounds of small-arms; that of a major by 200 men and officers, with three rounds of small-arms; that of a captain by his own company, or 70 rank and file, with three rounds of small-arms; that of a lieutenant by a lieutenant, 1 sergeant, 1 drummer, 1 fifer, and 36 rank and file, with three rounds of small-arms; that of an ensign by 1 ensign, 1 sergeant, 1 drummer, and 27 rank and file, with three rounds of small-arms; that of a sergeant by 1 sergeant and 10 rank and file, with three rounds of small-arms; that of a corporal, musician, private man, drummer, or fifer by 1 sergeant and 13 rank and file, with three rounds of small-arms. The pall is supported by officers of the same rank as that of the deceased; if that number can not be had, officers next in seniority are to supply their place. Benson J. Lossing, *The Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution* 2 vols., (New York, 1860) vol. 2, p. 259.

⁴⁶ General Hugh Mercer was wounded at Princeton on January 3 and died on the 12th. Born in Scotland, he had been a medical officer at the battle of Culloden and in America had been in engagements against the Indians; more recently he had practiced medicine at Fredericksburg, Virginia. Stryker, 459-460. For another con-temporary account of Gen. Mercer's death see A Brief Narrative of the Ravages of the British and Hessians at Princeton in 1776-77, edited by Varnum L. Collins (Princeton, 1906), 38, 42-43.

was composed of those of us who belong'd to Col. Webbs Regt. and here Col Webb discharged the Supernumerary officers of his Regt. & they went home[.] [H]e gave me that command together with Lt. Ball & Ensn. Hulbert⁴⁷ whereupon we immediately recrossed the Hudson March'd back to head quarters at Morristown-Before I go further I will mention one Simple Circumstance while on our March with the prisoners a part of whom while under my immediate care were Spreading their blankets upon the floor for the nights lodging [when] I saw a women or two with them. I enquired into it & was told that it was sometimes allow'd a Sergt. to have his wife with him who drew rations the Same as a Soldier[,] were very Serviceable & Supported virtuous characters & about Midnight when all was Still one of the Prisoners arose up & Sung what he Call'd the Gypsie laddy, Some of the lines I always retain'd in memory among which were these.

Will you leave your houses, will you leave your lands,
 And will you leave your little children a-a-h
 Will you leave your true wedded Lord & lying with a Gypisa Lady a-a-h
 Will you leave your true wedded lord & lying with a Gypsie Lady a-a-h
 Yes I will leave my houses I will leave my lands
 And I will leave my little children a-a-h
 I will leave for you my true wedded Lord & lying with a Gypsie Lady a-a-h
 I will leave for you my true wedded Lord & lying with a Gupsie Lady a-a-h
 Last night I slept on a Silken bed of down
 Alongside my lawful & true wedded Lord
 But now I sleep in an ashy corner happy with my Gypsie Laddy a-a-h
 But now I sleep in an ashy corner happy with my Gypsie Laddy a-a-h

And then lay down again. The tune was of a Plaintive Cast & I always retain'd it & Sung it to my Children but that must die with me.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Lt. John Ball of Branford, Conn., and Ens. George Hurlbut of New London, Conn. Record, 104. Hurlbut died of wounds on May 8, 1783. Heitman, 236.

⁴⁸ Actually this is one of the best known and most widely sung of the Scotch ballads that crossed the ocean and took root in America.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 20th Connecticut Regiment
Thomas Bradford

Time	Location
07:30	
07:35	
07:40	
07:45	
07:50	
07:55	
08:00	we got third a Bout 8 c'Clock
08:05	
08:10	
08:15	
08:20	
08:25	
08:30	
08:35	
08:40	
08:45	
08:50	
08:55	
09:00	

Source:

JOURNAL AND ACCOUNT BOOK OF THOMAS BRADFORD (20th CT Regt) in: Pension Application No. W 17351, (15 p., Feb. 1776 - Apr. 1786; roll 315, frames 585-594). Available at www.footnote.com .

the 2 Day [2 January 1777] We had a Battel with the
 Enemy and they Drove our men out of town
 and we mad a Stan til two of a Clock then
 We Set of for prince town and we got third a
 Bout 8 c'Clock and We a ingagment With
 the 17 Regt and the 55 regt and we Drove them
 and Cilled a good passal and they Cilled Gen
 Marcey and Sevel mor of our Brigade and then
 marched in to town and took the 40 Regt all
 of them and Several pieces of Cannon and
 the prisners and all the Bagage went to
 Kingstown and Crosed the that Runes in
 to Brumzick We left the arme at Milston creak
 and went to Sourland and put up thir that Nigt.
 The 4 Day We Left Sourland and marched

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Second Battalion, Philadelphia Associators, Col. John Bayard's Regiment
Major William Bradford

John William Wallace, *An old Philadelphian, Colonel William Bradford: the patriot printer of 1776* (Philadelphia, 1884), pp. 127-128.

Bradford, it is said by Mr. Thomas, was "in the battle of Trenton," as Major of Militia.* If he was not, he was with Cadwalader at Burlington and Bristol, upon the shifting and unsteady ice upon the Delaware, amidst perils greater than those of the enemy's cannon at Trenton, seeking the enemy. Without much doubt he was in what proved the final repulse given to Lord Cornwallis and his overwhelming forces on Thursday, January 2d, 1777, and without any doubt at all fought at Princeton Friday, January 3d, — the memorable battle of Princeton, — and was there severely wounded. Whether at Trenton and Princeton both, or at Princeton only, — among the bloodiest battles of the Revo -

* History of Printing, vol. ii, p. 50, Philadelphia, 1810. In this day when we speak of the battle of Trenton, we mean the surprise, short battle, and capture at Trenton on the 26th of December, 1776. But between that battle and the one fought in Princeton on the 3d of January, 1777, there were repeated skirmishes, counterchecks, and a final repulse of Cornwallis, followed by the night-march to Princeton; the whole ending with the victory over Colonel Mawhood's three British regiments on the 3d of January, now called the Battle of Princeton. ...

lutionary war, — he went through the whole campaign of the winter of 1776-7, and returned after Princeton colonel of his regiment.

We have already quoted the expressions of brave men called forth by the services of Philadelphia militia on the fields of Trenton and of Princeton. In a letter written by General Reed from Headquarters at Morristown, January the 24th, 1777, to Thomas, the oldest son of Colonel Bradford, he says:

"General Cadwalader has conducted his command with great honor to himself and the Province. All the field officers supported their characters. Their example was followed by the inferior officers and men; so that they have returned with the thanks and praises of every officer in the army. It might appear invidious to mention names where all have behaved so well; but Colonel Morgan, Colonel Nixon, Colonel Cox, and your old gentleman, and Majors Knox and Cowperthwaite, certainly ought not to pass unnoticed for their behavior at Princeton."

This "old gentleman" was Colonel Bradford.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 2nd Massachusetts Regiment Cap. Warner's Coy., Lt-Col. Brooks
Major John Burnham

John Burnham, *Personal Recollections of the Revolutionary War* (Gloucester, 1881), p. 11.

Major Burnham wrote his recollections in response to a request by James Tham of Derry, NH of 7 January 1842.

Jan. 11th, [sic, he means 1st] Lieutenant-Colonel Brooks appointed me a captain in a regiment to be raised, and gave me orders to go on the recruiting service. The next morning, leaving the army at Trenton and the British at Princeton, I set off on my business. Having travelled seven or eight miles, I heard firing; supposing the armies had come together, I returned, and found the advance of the armies skirmishing. The colonel gave me the command I had before. I went out on the advance party. We fought on a retreat till we came into Trenton. We crossed over the Creek (the Assampink) night came on and fires were kindled. We expected to remain there all night. About midnight we were ordered to get the troops paraded with as little noise as possible. This was a hard task as we had been marching the night before. We marched to Princeton, took the Enemy there, and then proceeded to a place called Mile Stone. Next morning I started for Gloucester [MA]

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Head-Quarters
BG John Cadwalader

Time	Location
07:30	
07:35	
07:40	? "They saw our army about a mile and a half distance": this is almost twice the actual distance between opposing forces
07:45	They returned to the town, and made ready to receive us;
07:50	one division of their troops formed in front of a house on the south side of the college, and on the right hand of the road.
07:55	
08:00	Gen. Mercer's brigade filed off to the right, and was attacked by the other division.
08:05	Our brigade advanced through the skirts of a wood in front of the enemy, posted on an eminence with two field pieces.
08:10	Gen. Green ordered me to form as soon as we arrived on a hill about two or three hundred yards distance.
08:15	About half the first battalion was formed when they broke, fell back upon the column, threw the whole into confusion. I immediately rode round the left and formed a division, joined one man after the other to it; but the fire was so hot that they again broke.
08:20	Gen. Washington came down and exposed himself very much - I just then saw a considerable party of horse moving off to our right,
08:25	[I re-] form[ed] about an hundred yards in the rear ... collected some of the brigade and some New Englandmen, and advanced obliquely to the right, passed a fence, and marched up to the left of the enemy
08:30	The enemy then left their station and inclined to the left, and gave us several heavy fires ... I pressed my party forward, huzzaed, and cried out, ' They fly, the day is our own,' and it passed from right to left.
08:35	I fancy the enemy found it impossible to escape, as our troops all began to rally and join in the pursuit.
08:40	

In this scenario as described by Cadwalader the "hot" phase of the Battle of Princeton lasted at most 30 minutes and was over around 8:30 a.m., just about the same time frame given by John Armstrong.

Sources:

"An Account of the Battle of Princeton." *The Pennsylvania Evening Post*, 16 January 1777. Also published in William S. Stryker, *The Battles of Trenton and Princeton* (Boston, 1898), p. 446-448.

Extract of a letter from an officer of distinction in General Washington's Army, dated Pluckemin, Jan. 5, 1777.

I have been so much engaged with marches and counter-marches, that I have not had a moment to write. We left Crosswicks the first inst., about ten o'clock in the morning, and arrived a little after sunset at Trenton, through the worst roads that were ever seen. About eleven o'clock we were alarmed by the approach of the enemy. We only sent out a brigade to amuse them, while we took post on the lower side of the creek, and back in the woods. There was a pretty smart cannonade till dark, when both sides ceased firing. The men ordered to keep their posts, and lie on their arms. A council of war was held, and it was determined to file off to the right, through the woods, and by bye roads, leaving the enemy on the left, and attack Princeton by daylight; about five hundred men, and two pieces of iron cannon, were left to amuse the enemy.

Our whole army, with a great train of artillery, marched about one, and you may suppose that we must form a very long line of march. We arrived one hour too late. About seven hundred British troops were prepared to march, to join their main body, part of which lay at Maidenhead. They saw our army about a mile and a half distance, which made a very formidable appearance. They returned to the town, and made ready to receive us; one division of their troops formed in front of a house on the south side of the college, and on the right hand of the road. Gen. Mercer's brigade filed off to the right, and was attacked by the other division. The brigade did not fire till they advanced within forty yards. The enemy received this brigade with charged bayonets. Gen. Mercer was wounded (it is said by a ball fired) but it is a fact he was afterwards wounded in the belly by a bayonet. Our brigade advanced through the skirts of a wood in front of the enemy, posted on an eminence with two field pieces. Gen. Green ordered me to form as soon as we arrived on a hill about two or three hundred yards distance. Our column was formed from the right by divisions. About fifty light infantry of the enemy posted themselves behind the fence, about an hundred yards distance. And, on our left flank, I despatched Captain Henry, with a body of light infantry, about an hundred, to flank that party. But the first discharge from our field pieces on the left, drove them up to the main body. I immediately rode in front to the column, and ordered the second divisions to double up to the right; the third to the left, and so on alternately. This was done in the face of the enemy, and under a shower of grape shot. About half the first battalion was formed when they broke, fell back upon the column, threw the whole into confusion. I immediately rode round the left and formed a division, joined one man after the other to it; but the fire was so hot that they again broke. Some of the officers behaved very bravely, and exerted themselves to the utmost. Gen. Washington came down and exposed himself very much, but expostulated to no purpose. I just then saw a considerable party of horse

19 and 20)

moving off to our right, to take advantage of the confusion, but a discharge or two from the cannon immediately dispersed them. I asked the General if it would not be proper to form about an hundred yards in the rear. He desired me to try, which succeeded beyond my expectation. I collected some of the brigade and some New Englandmen, and advanced obliquely to the right, passed a fence, and marched up to the left of the enemy. Two small parties were formed on the left, and advanced at the same time, and bravely pushed up in the face of a heavy fire. The enemy then left their station and inclined to the left, and gave us several heavy fires, in which two were killed and several wounded. I pressed my party forward, huzzaed, and cried out, 'They fly, the day is our own,' and it passed from right to left.

I fancy the enemy found it impossible to escape, as our troops all began to rally and join in the pursuit. They all dropped their packs and flew with the utmost precipitation, and we pursued with great eagerness. The men were much fatigued for want of rest, provisions, and with marching. We followed about two miles, and then gave over. Many parties are yet out, and have taken several prisoners. The town surrendered, and about sixty including fourteen officers surrendered. We have taken in the whole about three hundred, about thirty killed and fifty wounded. I have no doubt but others will be brought in. We lost about thirty killed, and thirty wounded. We took three pieces of brass artillery. The troops that lay at Maidenhead returned about the same time we returned from the pursuit. Horses could not be secured to carry off the artillery. Major Proctor made an exchange; he left an iron three-pounder, and brought a brass six-pounder. The enemy proceeded towards Brunswick with the utmost expedition; the British arrived there at about daylight, and the Hessians at twelve yesterday. All was in the greatest confusion, and the British troops left town last evening, and the whole this morning. We marched immediately to Morristown, where we shall be ready to fall down on Elizabethtown, Newark, or Amboy. Gen. M'Dougal is back of Newark, where three Continental regiments, and Jersey militia, altogether two thousand. Gen. Heath has crossed the North River with three brigades. General Putnam is to come up with all the troops he can muster."

Note: The identification of John Cadwalader as the author of this letter is taken from Samuel Stelle Smith, *The Battle of Princeton* (Monmouth Beach, 1967), p. 38.

John Cadwalader to Council of Safety. *Pennsylvania Archives* 1st series vol. 5, (1853), p. 161; also quoted in William S. Stryker, *The Battles of Trenton and Princeton* (Boston, 1898), p. 446.

Pluckimin 5th Jan'y, 1777

Gentlemen :—

Our Militia are in great Distress: Let me beg of you, again, to forward the shoes and stock'gs I sent for when at Crosswix—about 600 Pr of Shoes & Stock'gs, 200 Blankets—200 Shirts—200 short or long Jackets, if to be had—These articles are not to be had here & the Militia must return unless immediatly supplied—I have not time to inform you of our Successes—300 prisoners were taken at Prince Town by the different Parties who pursued & those taken in the Town—The Enemy have all left Brunswic &, I have no doubt, will leave this State in a few days—I beg you will send a careful! person with the above articles to Morris Town, with the utmost Dispatch—but do not direct it to any Qr. Master or we shall be disappointed—Be pleased to direct to me.

I am Gent, with great Respect
Your most ob^t. Serv^t.

JOHN CADWALADER.
Brig. Gen.

Directed,
To The Hon^{ble} the Council of Safety, Philad^a.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 4th Pennsylvania Regiment
Col. Lambert Cadwalader

"Selections from the Military Papers of General John Cadwalader." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 32 (1908), pp. 149-174, pp. 157-159. Also published (without the introductory paragraph) in William S. Stryker, *The Battles of Trenton and Princeton* (Boston and New York, 1898), pp. 448-449.

The original letter is in Cadwalader Papers, Box 3 Folder 1. Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

Lambert Cadwalader to Mrs. [Peggy] Meredith

My Dear Peggy

I had the Pleasure of yours yesterday Evening without a Date and am glad to hear you are all well — I had a Letter last Night by Phil from Maryland — they are all in good Health at Shrewsbury — Phil has been there twice within these ten Days having paid a Visit to his Brothers who is in Kent County —

Our little victorious Army under G: Washington after having performed that signal Service at Trenton wh you have heard of ret'd to this Side of the River but having rec: Intelligence of Johnnys crossing near Bristol the Genl, ret again to Trenton & was there join'd by Johnnys & Mifflins Brigades at that Place — G: Washington having rec. Intelligence that the Enemy were marching towards him from Trenton sent off about 700 Men to meet them & endeavour to drive them back — but the Enemy proving too numerous our Division retired to Trenton and over the Bridge to the Mill-Hill where the Genl, in the mean Time had posted our Troops — The Enemy took Possesion of Trenton and the Genl, keeping up his Fires decamp'd suddenly in the Night & taking his Rout by a back Road got into the Princeton Road & pursued his March towards that Place — on his Way thither he met with a Body of British Troops which soon gave Way — he then advanced to Princeton & took a considerable Number of Prisoners — Our loss is Genl Mercer wounded Col. Haslet killed & a Capt of Marines with a few Privates— The Genl. then march'd off for Somerset Court House wh. is 8 miles out of the Road to Brunswick in order to join Genl. Heath's Army from N England & there is a Report that this has been affected & that our Army is gone forward to Brunsk. Genl. Howe cannot raise a large force anywhere to make Head against us —so that

we expect very great Events in our Town — Our Army in the Jerseys all together must amount to near 12,000 — I forgot to tell you we have taken 5 P'. brass Cannon more in the last affairs — I'm in great Hope the Jerseys will be cleared of the Enemy entirely —

A Son of Warwick Coates is come to Town who saw Johnny, Meredith & Nixon well at Princeton after the action.

I went to see Mrs. Nixon yesterday afternoon and such an Object of Distress I scarcely ever beheld — her Fears have made a perfect Conquest over her Reason & she trembles like an aspen Leaf whenever a Person enters her House — I think it is one of the greatest Misfortunes that can befall any Person to indulge imaginary Fears & apprehensions & like the self-Tormentor in Terence be evermore raising up unnecessary Terrors to make oneself miserable & unhappy — Whoever expects to find this "World a fairy Land of Pleasure & Peace of Mind must be very unk[n]owing in the Science of human Nature & the affairs of human Life — Fortitude of Mind must be exer[torn] in Order to procure a tolerable Share of Happiness & I sincerely pity the Weak [torn] of those who do not so far make Use of their Reasons as not to be totally subdued by their Fears & apprehensions — You will hear a thousand-Rumors & Reports wh if you give the least Credit to you will be laying up a constant Store of Uneaseness & Disquiet — Depend upon it if any thing extraordinary happens I [torn] be the Messenger — credit no [torn] News of any Kind — it [torn] Lying had become the Re [torn] the World & I am sure the [torn] are very minutely perform'd

Adieu
in Haste
Yours af [torn]
Philad 7 Jany 1777 L [Cadwalader]

Phils Love to you

NOTE: Peggy was Lambert's sister and married to Samuel Meredith.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 22nd Continental Regiment
Henry Cato

Pension Application of Henry Cato No. R 1815

On this 29 day of April 1834 th personally appeared before me Robt. S Campbell a Justice of the Peace in and for the County aforesaid personally appeared Henry Cato a resident in said County and State, aged 77 or 78 the 25th of last March, who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on his oath make the following declaration, in order to obtain the benefit of the Act of Congress, passed June 7th 1832.

That he enlisted in the Army of the United States (in what year he cannot say) but he enlisted at the beginning of the Revolution, 4 weeks before the British came into Long Island Sound [Aug 1776], with Capt. Joseph Dark and served in the 22d. Regiment of the Continental Line of troops of the Jersey Line, under the following named officers —

Before he proceeds with his services, he will state that he is a free man of colour (having been free born) his Father was a Catawba Indian, and his mother a Mustein [possibly “Mestee,” meaning “mixed,” with less than one-eighth Black ancestry] He farther states that he enlisted in the service of the United States, for “during the War” as it was called and served from the commencement till the close. For fear that his name may not be found upon the Rolls, he will make out his Statement as particularly as if he had been a Militia Soldier.

Ques. 1. Where and in what year were you born?

He was born within 5 miles of Newark in the State of New Jersey on the 25th day of March 1756 or 7.

..... During this winter quarter he was with General Washington, where he took 500 Hessians on Christmas day without firing a gun [sic: Battle of Trenton, 26 Dec 1776]. He thinks the Hessians were taken on Staten Island. They were in a Drunken frolic when taken. At this time, which he thinks was in December 1776, all New Jersey was overrun by the British. He was present at the battle of Trenton and there fought, under General Washington.

After the battle at Princeton, a detachment was ordered by Washington consisting he thinks of 700 – to guard Springfield then invaded by the British. [See note below.] In this detachment this applicant marched. When they arrived at Springfield, the houses were on fire. The British fled – we pursued to Elizabeth Town Point firing on them as long as they could reach them. The British then crossed over to Long Island. 20 or 30 of the

British were killed & wounded. 10 or 12 were taken prisoners. The army then came together. after this he was at the Battle of Monmouth. This applicant farther states that he acted as a waiting servant on General Washington for 3 years during the term for which he enlisted. He was present in his capacity of waiting servant on Washington at the Battle of York Town. He farther states that he bore arms in actual military service, Four years, and acted a waiting man on General Washington Three years. making the term Seven years.

NOTES:

[Leon Harris] could find no other mention of Henry Cato in muster rolls or other records, nor any reference to the following in New Jersey: Capt. or Lt. Joseph or William Dark or Darke, Col. Hanley or Henley, Quarter-Master Swales. Matthias Ogden was colonel of the 1st Jersey Regiment. At the Battle of White Plains NY on 28 Oct 1776 the British and Hessians under Gen. Howe defeated the Americans, who were commanded by Gen. Washington, not Gen. Nathanael Greene or Gen. John Sullivan.

Washington never led an invasion of Quebec.

The action at Springfield NJ resembles the battle on 23 Jun 1780, but it is out of chronological order and not correctly described.

Daniel Morgan was captured at Quebec City on 1 Jan 1776 and was neither paroled nor escaped, but was exchanged after about eight months. He was inactive from Jul 1779 until Oct 1780, when he was given the rank of General. He went to the South in Dec 1780 and served until Feb 1781, when he retired because of rheumatism.

On 31 Jan 1853 William Cato and William Cato, Jr. of Fairfield in Rockbridge County, heirs of Henry Cato, assigned power of attorney to try to obtain a pension for their father's service.

NOTE: This transcript is taken from the Southern Campaigns of the American Revolution website <http://southerncampaign.org/pen/r1815.pdf> where it was transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: New Jersey Militia, Gloucester County
Jonas Cattell

Pension Application of Jonas Cattell, No. S 2421.

... That in the spring of the Year 1776 he entered as a soldier in the Militia of New Jersey in the Company Commanded by Captain Jonathan Williams, for one Month, ... next went out in a Company Commanded by Capt. Cheesman they were stationed at James Davis's about two Miles East of Woodbury, where they remained one Month. He then went out in the Company of Artillery commanded by Capt. Samuel Hugg, they started from Haddonfield and Marched through Moorestown Mount Holly and thence to Trenton, where they arrived several days before the Battle of Trenton which Battle, as well as the Battle of Princeton this declarant was in. We were out at this tour about six weeks, and arrived home about the first of the month of January 1777.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 3rd Virginia Regiment
John Chilton

Diary of John Chilton, 3rd VA Regiment, Virginia Historical Society Mss10: no. 106. Diary, 1777 January 3-September 8.

Also published as "The old Virginia Line in the Middle States during the American Revolution. The Diary of Captain John Chilton, 3d Virginia Regt." *Tyler's Quarterly Magazine* 12 (1931), pp. 283-289, p. 283.

1777. Jan. 3d at 4 in the Mornng.

The whole Army Marched from Trenton to Princeton, engaged a party of the enemy commanded by Major Leslie, defeated them. Leslie was Slain in this battle with other of his officers. As we were obliged to retreat at the beginning of the Battle the much lamented Genl. [Hugh] Mercer had his horse shot under him as he staid too much behind to conduct our retreat and was inhumanly murdered with Bayonets, &c. Majr. Fleming was killed in the engagement – Lieut. Yates had got a slight wound in the thigh which threw him into the hands of the enemy who immediately butchered him with the greatest Barbarity, we lost 12 or 14 in this engagement, 7 or 8 wounded slightly. The enemy had 30 or 40 killed and about as many more wounded. We took about 300 Prisoners, and should have had it in our power to take more but, as we had stolen our march from Trenton expected Gen. Grant on our backs from that place with 5 or 6000 Men. Our whole force did not amount to 2500, Pennsylvania Militia included, therefore were obliged to stop pursuit & gather our Men and march with expedition towards the Mountains, got to Somerset Courthouse that night, from Trenton 26 Miles

Next mornng. early marched got to a small Town called Pluckimin where we got plenty of Beef Pork &c. which We had been starving for a day or two, not having time to draw and dress Victuals.

NOTE: The account by Chilton was written retrospectively on 15 April 1777, since he records that day that he had lost his journal and is starting a new journal. After 15 April we have day-by-day accounts again -- "Jan. 3d at 4 in the Mornng." are the very first lines in the journal.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 1st Battalion, Philadelphia County Militia
Lt.-Col. William Coats

Pennsylvania Archives 1st series vol. 5, (1853), pp. 159-160.

Col. Coats to Council of Safety, Bristol, 4 January 1777.

Sir,

I have just heard from Burlington that General Washington is in possession of Princetown, and has taken seven hundred prisoners, with Six pieces of Cannon, there is a Flying report that General Howe is taken, the above Account Comes from Col. Penrose, who is at Burlington. Mr. Crispin has been in town several Days, & is much wanted here, shall be much oblided to you to send him on. The Philadelphia Militia Behav'd Like Heroes, and press the Enemy so Close that they where at Bayonets Points, it is said General Stevens is amongst the Slain.

I remain, Sir,

Your Humble Servant,

WM. COATS, Lieut. Col. 1st Batt.

Pennsylvania Archives 1st series vol. 5 (1853), p. 162.

Col. Wm. Coats To Brig. Gen. Irwine, 5 January 1777.

Sunday Evening, Bristol, January 5th, 1777.

Sir,

By Order of General Putman you will find three Letters One Directed to Mr. John Murray One to Mr. Wm. Logan and one to Mr. AV m. Cole they where under the Care of a Young Man by the Name of Gordon, be comes from an Iron works in New Jersey where General Lee was Rob'd of his Horses, these Circumstances and his having a Commission in his Pocket as an officer in the Jearsey Militia, and now not takeing an active part with us, and the Letters to Persons not' well affected I believe was what Induced the General to Stop him, and Ordered me to send him under guard to you, which accordingly, I have Done by Mr. Barnhill to be further Examined by you, the General thinks he ought to be Confined as a Suspected person, but Leaves him to you, The Accounts to Day from Our Army is Six Hundred taken Prisoners 500 Killed Eight pieces of Canon and a great Quantity of Baggage. Last Night General Washington with the whole Army was at Summerset Court House expecting to be Join'd by General Heath with seven thousand Men and this Morning was to have proceeded on to Brunswick, an Express that had Cross'd Caret's Ferry says he heard a smart Cannonade that way the Rout of our Armey, I got from Commodore Nichol's who had been to General Steven's on purpose for Intelligence, the foregoing part from an Express who had been to Lord Sterling from General Washington after the Ingagement at Stoney Brook.

I remain Sir
Your Humble Servant.

WM. COATS,
Lieut. Col. 1st Batt

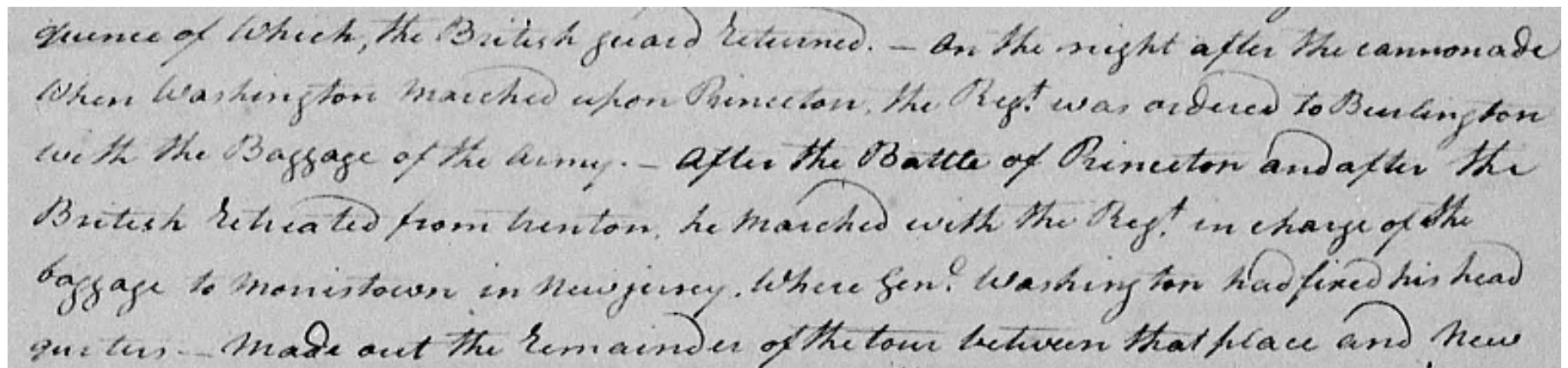
Directed,
To Brigadier General Irwine at Philadelphia. If not in Town to the President of the Counsel of Safety Mr. Barnhill.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Chester County Militia, Col. William Montgomery's Regt
John Cochran

Pension Application of John Cochran No. 22105, quoted from www.footnote.com. It is included here as an example of a unit detached to escort the baggage to Burlington.

On the night after the cannonade when Washington marched upon Princeton, the Regt was ordered to Burlington with the Baggage of the Army.
- After the Battle of Princeton and after the British retreated from Trenton he marched with the Regt in charge of the baggage to Morristown in Newjersey. Where Genl Washington had fixed his head quarters.



quince of which, the British guard returned. - On the night after the cannonade when Washington marched upon Princeton, the Regt was ordered to Burlington with the Baggage of the Army. - After the Battle of Princeton and after the British retreated from Trenton, he marched with the Regt in charge of the baggage to Morristown in Newjersey, where Genl Washington had fixed his head quarters. - Made out the remainder of the tour between that place and New

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Civilian
Committee of Secret Correspondence

Committee of Secret Correspondence to the Commissioners at Paris, Baltimore 9 January 1777. *Letters of Delegates to Congress, 1774-1789*, vol. 6, 1 January 1777 - 30 April 1777. Quoted from the online-edition available at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwdg.html> .

Gentlemen

Captain Hammond having been detained longer than we expected, furnishes us with an opportunity of giving you the information we have since our last received from the Army, thro a Committee of Congress left at Philadelphia; for we have yet had no regular accounts from General Washington.

On the 2d instant, General Washington having received information that the enemy were on their march to attack him at Trenton, ordered two brigades of militia to advance and annoy them on the road leading from Princeton to Trenton, who falling in with the enemy about 3 miles from the latter place, engaged them, but being overpower'd by numbers, made a retreating fight until they joined the main body who were drawn up on the heights west of a bridge that divides the village of Trenton nearly in two parts. The enemy attempting to force the bridge were repulsed with loss by a body of men with artillery placed there to receive them. In the mean time some batteries being opened on the heights soon drove the enemy from that part of the Town possessed by them. Thus the affair ended for that evening. But General Washington having received intelligence that Gen. Howe was in person coming up to join his army with a strong reenforcement, directing fires to be made on the heights to deceive the enemy, decamp't at midnight and made a forced march in order to meet Mr. Howe and give him battle before he joined his main body. About 3 miles short of Prince Town, the van of our army fell in with 600 British Infantry strongly posted behind a fence, and upon a hill, with artillery. They were attacked, & after a smart engagement, routed, having lost 280 killed and taken prisoners; among whom, one Colonel, one Major, several Captains and subalterns were slain, and about 20 Officers made prisoner. The fugitives were pursued thro Princeton where our Army halted a while. In this affair 6 pieces of artillery with abundance of baggage fell into our hands. At Princeton, it was learnt that Gen. Howe was not with this party, but that he remained at Brunswick with 3 or 4 thousand men. There being a considerable force in the rear, and our Men greatly fatigued with their march, and their baggage chiefly behind (it having been sent to Burlington) the General proceeded to Sommerset Court house that evening, a little to the Westward of the road leading to Brunswick, and about 7 or 9 miles from that place. Here we understand he expected to be joined by a body of 1500

or 2000 fresh troops, and that his intention was to attack Mr. Howe in Brunswick. On Friday morning, when the enemy at Trenton missed our army, they returned towards Princeton, but it seems, they left 3000 Hessians behind them, who following afterwards, were so fatigued with travel, and want of food, that numbers were left on the road, and were straggling about the country in threes and fours. Many were taken by the Country people and brought in prisoners, many came to Trenton and surrendered themselves. The militia of Jersey are rising generally, and it was thought few of these Hessians would get back again. This is the present state of our information, and we hourly expect a well authenticated account of the whole, and of much greater successes. We shall endeavor to give you the speediest account of what shall further come to our knowledge from good authority. The above relation is taken from a Gentleman who was in the action, and who the Committee write us, is a person of sense and honor. The General has been too much engaged to write, & we suppose waits the final issue.

We most earnestly wish you success in your negotiation, and are with perfect esteem, honorable Gentlemen, your most obedient and very humble servants,

Benja Harrison

Richard Henry Lee

P.S. In the engagement near Princeton we lost 15 privates, one Colonel, and Brigadier Gen Mercer, a very good officer & a worthy Gentleman.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Congressional News

William S. Stryker, *The Battles of Trenton and Princeton* (Boston, 1898), p. 444.

Congressional News

... At twelve o'clock, after renewing our fires and leaving guards at the bridge in Trenton, and other passes on the same stream above, we marched by a round about road to Princeton. We found Princeton, about sunrise, with only three regiments, and three troops of lighthorse in it, two of which were on their march to Trenton. – These three regiments, especially the two first made a gallant resistance; and in killed, wounded, and prisoners, must have lost 500 men. Upwards of one hundred of them were left dead on the field, and with those carried on by the army, and such as were taken in the pursuit, and carried across the Delaware, there are near three hundred prisoners, fourteen of whom are officers – all British.

Colonels Haselet and Potter, Capt. Neal of the artillery, Capt. Flemming, who commanded the first Virginia regiment and four or five other valuable officers, with about twenty-five or thirty privates, were slain in the field. Our whole loss cannot be ascertained as many who were in pursuit of the enemy, whom they chased three or four miles are not yet come in. We burnt the enemy's hay and destroyed such other things as the occasion would admit.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Connecticut State Troops, Col. John Chester's Regt
Rowland Cotton

Pension Application Rowland Cotton, No. S 11170 available at www.footnote.com .

That his enlistment expired on the first day of January 1777. that General Washington then issued a proclamation that any of the troops whose terms had expired might volunteer for the Month of January and that for so doing they should have ten dollars born by and their monthly pay. That this deponent with about 100 (?) men of Colonel Chester's Regiment volunteered to serve out the month of January. - That on the Second day of January the British Army Came down and the American Army retreated across the Sampink Creek when they encamped and remained until dark. That Colonel Chester's Regiment was then attached to General Mercer's Brigade. that at dark the Army took up their line of March, and marched to Princeton, New Jersey, where about seven (?) o'cl in the morning of the third of January an action took place in which General Mercer was killed, and the Enemy were defeated. And many of them taken prisoners. That the Army then Marched into Morris County, New Jersey ...

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Continental (Proctor's) Artillery
Captain Isaac Craig

Register of Pennsylvania vol. 2 (1828), p. 304.

[From the Pittsburg Gazette, 1826.]

Died, on the 14th ult. at his seat on Montour's Island, Major ISAAC CRAIG, formerly a field officer of the Pennsylvania line, in the Revolutionary Army.

The career of this distinguished citizen might be cited as an example, were others wanting, of the advantage afforded by our free institutions in fostering talent, alike regardless of the profession, nation, or pursuit of the individual who possesses it. The subject of our notice was born near Hillsborough, in the county of Down, in the kingdom of Ireland, in August, 1742. He emigrated to Philadelphia in 1768, where he pursued the occupation of a carpenter until 1775. It was then that, stimulated by the oppressive conduct of Britain towards his adopted country, he enrolled himself under the banners of struggling freedom, and devoted courage and genius to the service of America. From the Council or Safety of Pennsylvania, he received the appointment of a Lieutenant of Marines, and aided in the capture of several vessels laden with ammunition and military stores, thereby rendering an important service to the interest of the country, for whose armies such stores were then in great demand.

In the winter of 1775-76, he held the commission of Captain of Marines, on board the *Andrew Doria*, then commanded by the gallant and adventurous Captain Nicholas Riddle. This vessel formed part of a small squadron, which, under the command of Commodore Hopkins, in March 1776, took possession of the Island of New Providence, where the American force seized and brought away a large quantity of military stores, artillery, &c. Here ended his connexion with the navy.— Another scene was now presented to him, and one better adapted to his peculiar talent. In December, 1776, Mr. Craig was appointed a captain in the regiment of artillery, under the command of Col. Thomas Proctor. This was the most gloomy period of the war but it was his good fortune to be an actor in that scene which gave a new coloring to our revolutionary prospects. We allude to the capture of the Hessian troops at Trenton. Captain Craig bore a distinguished part in the battle of Princeton; and on the fields of Germantown and Brandywine performed his duty with unabated vigor and courage.

The Indiana and Tories having assembled in the Genesee country, in very considerable force, under the command of the Butlers and the Brandts, it was thought expedient, in 1779, to detach a force against them, under the command of General Sullivan. The services of Captain Craig were thought necessary to the success of the expedition. They were promptly afforded, and usefully displayed in the battles of Newton and Chemung. The celebrated George Rogers Clark, a name so intimately connected with the early history of western adventure and valor, having planned an expedition against Detroit, Captain Craig, in 1780, descended the Ohio river, and joined him, having under his command two companies of artillery. The expedition failed of execution, on account of some disappointment not now recollected, and Captain Craig returned with his command to Fort Pitt. In March, 1782, his active services were rewarded with the commission of Major in Proctor's artillery regiment, which was conferred upon him by Congress, and which gave him rank from the 7th of October, 1781.

With the Revolutionary War closed the military career of Major Craig. he married in 1785, and became permanently resident at Pittsburg. An attempt was made in 1793 and 1794, to draw him again into public life by an offer of the station of Quarter Master General to Wayne's army. This offer he declined, choosing to enjoy that freedom he had aided in acquiring, in retiring and domestic felicity. As he was one of the earliest settlers, so he was one of the most useful and intelligent of our citizens. Carrying that industry and talent with him into private life, which had rendered his career so distinguished in public, he was amongst those who gave an impetus to the prosperity of the western country, which increased with his increasing years. He was one of the few remaining patriarchs of our land; one whose venerable form and silvered locks marked him as the pioneer of civilization and improvement to the rising generation. Strange as it may appear to those who know nothing of our gigantic growth, on the day of Major Craig's funeral, an engineer and his attendants were employed in finishing the location of an extensive canal at the very point which, on the day of his assuming the command at Pittsburg, resounded with the war-whoop of a savage enemy. It is to such men as he that we owe all we have of liberty. It is to such men that we are indebted for the wide spread of civilization and manners, of virtue and religion.

He has sunk to his grave in a ripe old age, leaving to his family that best of all inheritances, an honorable name; not to be traced on monumental marble, or depending on a parchment record, but inscribed by the pen of valor, on the fields of American glory, and us immortal as the freedom of his country.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Continental (Moulder's) Artillery
Lieutenant A. Cuthbert

Charles Chauncy Haven, *Thirty Days in New Jersey Ninety Years ago, An Essay revealing new Facts in Connection with Washington and his Army in 1776 and 1777* (Trenton, 1867), pp. 44-47.

My sixth testimonial of the bloody attack and repulse of Cornwallis and his army at the Assunpink bridge is contained in a letter lately received from A. Cuthbert Esq., alluded to in a previous page as the son of Captain Cuthbert, who succeeded Captain Moulder, whose battery was famous for its great service in the above fight and at Princeton. His letter is so graphic and interesting, I publish a large part of it, as he assures me its details have never been printed before and can be relied on. His own testimony as well as that of his brave and distinguished father being unquestionable:

In 1776 the company was ordered to join in two weeks the army in Jersey. 'Moulder's boys,' consisting of eighty-two lads, from 17 to 23, were detailed at the crossing of the Delaware by Washington for boatmen's duty, my father then 2d Lieutenant, having in charge the boat in which Washington himself crossed,* while Captain Moulder and the 1st Lieutenant crossed with the two guns of the Company. Moulder's age was 60, my father 25 or 26, while all the rank and file were 23 and under, all 'along-shoremen! Ship Carpenters, Mast, Block and Sail-makers, Riggers, &c., a hardy set of youths belonging to the water service and amply equal to any boating duty.

* The writer received this account of his father's taking charge of Washington's boat from Mr. Linnard, but it may not be correct.

At the battle of the Assunpink the British in solid column charged down the main street to force the passage at the bridge, at this point the guns, long 4-pounders, of Moulder and others were stationed and did great damage to the enemy, being well placed and skillfully manned by as hardy, fearless and energetic set of youths as the army could produce. At each report a lane was opened through the British ranks and so rapid and destructive was the firing that the British troops could only be kept up to their work by the constant use of the flat of the sword by the British officers. So determined and successful was the resistance at this point that the enemy was held in check until too late in the afternoon to hope for success that day and was withdrawn to await reinforcements expected in the morning. How they were baffled and the 'tide turned' is familiar to all. At Princeton the guns of Moulder were again active, and while the British fired too high (over his men) he mowed them down in rows as if they had lain down to rest. I think the College may still bear the ball marks of his guns used to drive out some five hundred British who had there sought shelter.

While pushing his guns up toward the College the wounded begged quarter; Moulder's men replied, 'you are safe enough, we are after live men?' handed over their canteens of whiskey and received a blessing from the wounded enemy. Moulder was here ordered to cover the retreat of our army towards Morristown by holding the enemy in check as long as safe to his men, then spike and leave his guns, and save his men by following with all speed after the main body of the army. The men refused to earn the name of 'grass-combers' by running away from their guns and with the aid of ropes and forty men to each ran them up the road after the army, pursued by a Company of British horse. Captain Samuel Morris, of First City Troop ' Quaker Sam,' held his Company back for the protection of Moulder's boys, and seeing their danger galloped to their rear and formed across the road to await the British horse, who finding their game blocked, wheeled and returned to Princeton.- Thus Moulder's guns were saved and taken into camp at Morristown, when Moulder was called before a Court for disobedience of orders in risking the loss of his men. On receipt of the order to appear before Court, the Company formed and marched in silence to headquarters, where after a formal reprimand Moulder received his sword, and the boys after three hearty cheers, struck up 'Yankee Doodle,' and returned to their quarters in high glee. Soon 'after this the waiter of the Company, lost at Princeton, drove into camp with a cart-load of poultry, &c., duly frozen, and very acceptable.

While in camp here the time of the Company's enlistment expired; and as they could not be spared for very important reasons, Washington sent to ask of them three weeks longer service until they could be replaced by other troops. The Company was mustered, and the request made known and they left to consider it. Soon after the officers in Moulder's tent heard three hearty cheers from the men, and supposed they were glad to go and would go home, but were soon pleasantly disappointed by receiving for an answer: 'With our compliments to his Excellency, please say that "whether he says three weeks, three months, or three years, we are under his command and at his service"' After a low bow, the officers sent returned to Washington's quarters with the gratifying answer, the General receiving it with the reply —' that is all I can ask of them.'

Subsequently 2d Lieutenant Cuthbert was promoted to 1st Lieutenant for an act of daring under the British guns at Amboy, and the 1st Lieutenant dismissed for a contrary action at the time. Captain Moulder retired at the age of 65, in 1780, when my father received the Commission as Captain of the Company as shown to you. Higher grade in the army was offered but declined — he being a man of war in war only — at other times a man of peace. His property and that of his mother-in-law was destroyed by the enemy while here. His expenditures for his Company and losses in various ways footed up about \$44,000, but was never claimed; nor would our mother receive some \$ 6.000 or more, due her under the law of 1838, as widow's pension.

A. Cuthbert.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Connecticut State Troops
Samuel DeForest

Samuel DeForest Pension Application No. W 16559 available at www.footnote.com Also in John C. Dann, ed., *The Revolution Remembered. Eyewitness Accounts of the War for Independence* (Chicago, 1980), pp. 40-47, p. 46-47.

While Lord Cornwallis was in pursuit of Washington and his little army the British army halted on a hill and pitched there in encampment at night Washington halted on a hill in sight and pitched his encampment and began to set fires at dark and left men enough to recreate them with rails through the night and commenced his march with his little army of less than two thousand in twenty miles reached Princetown College in a dark foggy morning where there were three Regiments of British regulars encamped and then he made prisoners and the fifth day after at night were marched to Old Fairfield under a guard of Major Joseph Hoyt the next morning ...

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 4th Massachusetts Regiment (3rd Continental) Col. Ebenezer Learned
John Dewey

Life Of George Dewey, Rear Admiral, U. S. N., And Dewey Family History, Adelbert M. Dewey, ed., (Westfield, MA, 1898), pages 278 - 281.
The diary goes from April 1776 to February 1777.

3d – in the morning at 1 o'clock we were ordered to swing our packs and march off; the most profound silence was to be observed on the march to Princeton; we steered our course, and about 8 o'clock we attacked the town; the enemy sallied out and gave as battle with a great deal of spirit and insolence; a large number were killed and 380 taken prisoners; the rest made their escape. Our loss was 30 or 40 killed and a number wounded; the enemy we left fighting the lines at Trenton had then taken alarm and was pursuing us with a great fury. We plundered the town and pursued our march this night. We arrived at Summerset, 26 miles from Trenton, where we lay out in the open air.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Private, Burlington County Militia, Capt. Nesbitt's Coy
Alexander Douglass

Alexander Douglass Pension Application S 994, available at www.footnote.com .

... lived in the house where General Washington held his council of War the night previous to the battle of Princeton and piloted the American Army from Trenton to Princeton on the morning of the battle of Princeton

NOTE:

The story of the Douglass House began in 1766 when George Bright constructed a two-story wood house in the New Town of Kingsbury, now the site of the German Evangelical Lutheran Church on South Broad Street, across from Livingston Street. The house was sold to Alexander Douglass on May 12, 1769 and remained in his possession until his death in 1836. Alexander Douglass was the Quartermaster for George Washington during the war for independence, and, following the First Battle of Trenton, Douglass offered the house to Brig. General Arthur St. Clair for use as his headquarters.

At Alexander Douglass' death, the house passed to his nephew, Joseph Douglass. Joseph owned the house until his death in 1847, when it was conveyed to Ann Douglass, who lived in it until 1852. It is believed that Ann Douglass, who died at an age of 90 in 1893, was the last of the Douglass family.

The Douglass House, also known as the "House of Decision," is now [since 1972] located at the corner of Front and Montgomery Streets near the edge of Mill Hill Park.

Adapted from: Louis Sancinito, "The Douglass House" available at <http://www.trentonmillhill.org/history> .

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Delaware Regiment of Militia
Colonel Thomas Duff, Sr.

The Pennsylvania Packet, 4 February 1777:

Major Thomas Duff's detachment of Delaware Militia, having served the term of their enlistment with much honour and reputation in New-Jersey, under my command, are hereby discharged.

THOMAS MIFFLIN Brigadier-General.

Duff Papers, Folder III – Western Lands, 1790-1801, Delaware Historical Society

June 22, 1800:

Thomas Duff, Sr., Newport (DE) to Thomas Duff, Jr., [Chilicothe, Northwest Territory]

“You must give my respects to Major Longum and Colonel Worthington although I have not the pleasure of their acquaintance, --?—or my Deceased son’s acquaintance, I would be happy in serving them in this Country in anything that lays in my power – Especially as old soldiers of ’76, and very possible we might have Fought together at Trenton, Princeton, & Brandywine, where I commanded the Delaware Regt. of Militia at each of those Battles....”

July 12, 1800:

Thomas Duff, Jr., to Thomas Duff, Sr.

“Major Longum tells me to inform you that he was a soldier in ’76 but not in the Battles you mention, but would have thought it an honor to have been there & survived – His principal scenes were to the Norrid[?] was in skirmishing, tho’ he tells me he saw trouble enough in the Southern campaigns.”

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: First Pennsylvania Regiment, Captain Samuel Craig's Coy
Colonel Edward Hand

Pension application of John Duke, No. W 9841.

On this 16th day of November in the year 1824 personally appeared ... John Duke aged 69 years on the 25th January next ... That he the said Duke enlisted as a Soldier in the Spring of the Year '76 for two years under Capt. Charles Craig attached to the 1st Regiment Pennsylvania line ... Commanded by Colo Edward hand, that he joined the said regiment at Long Island, was in the Battle at White Plains at the battle at Trenton at the battle of Princeton ... was discharged in the month of June 78 at Valley Forge, honorable & regularly that he was made a corporal by Capt. Charles Craig in which situation he continued untill the battle at Princeton when he was made a Sergeant by Captain Samuel Craig in which situation he continued untill regularly discharged in June '78.

Samuel Craig was commissioned a captain in Col. Chambers (later Hand's) 1st Pennsylvania Regiment on 1 October 1776 and is still listed there as a Captain on 16 January 1777. By 5 January 1777, however, he is also listed as one of the Commander-in-Chief's Guards.

See Pension application W348.

The above of my name of ...
 the 15th of May 1820. That he the said Duke
 enlisted as a Soldier in the year '76 for two
 years under Capt. Charles Craig, attached to
 the 1st Regiment Pennsylvania Line, Commanded
 by Colo. Edward Hand, that he joined the said
 Regiment at Long Island, was in the battle
 at White Plains at the battle at Trenton,
 at the battle at Princeton - that he was
 in the battles of Brandywine & Germantown
 that he continued in that said Regiment for
 two years, was discharged in the month of
 June 78 at Valley Forge, honorably & regularly.
 That he was made a corporal by Capt.
 Charles Craig in which situation he continued
 untill the battle at Princeton when he was
 made a sergeant by Capt. Samuel Craig
 in which situation he continued untill regu-
 larly discharged in June 78. at discharge

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Capt Brant's Coy, Col. Robert Lawson 4th VA Regiment
Daniel Easley

Pension Application of Daniel Easley No. S 6810.

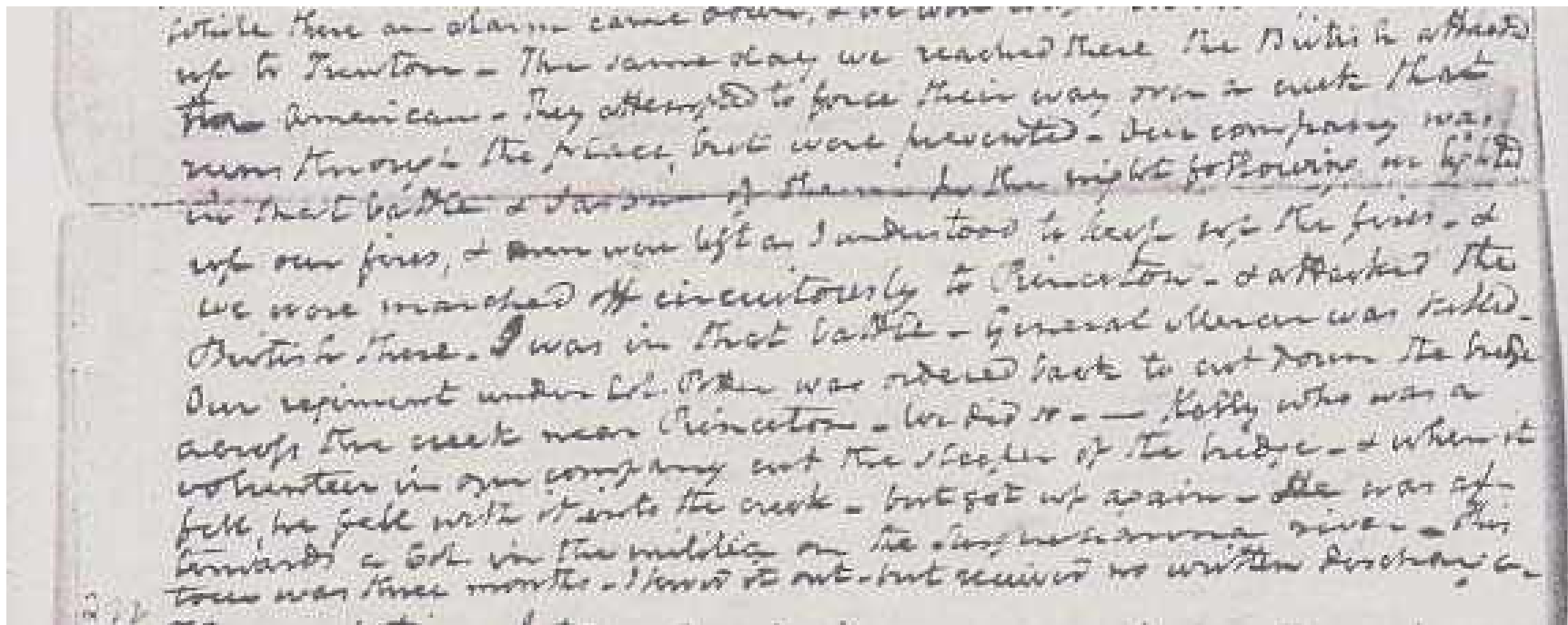
That he enlisted in the Army of the United States in Charlotte County state of Virginia in the month of February 1776 a Soldier in the Rifle Service for the Term of two years in the Company of Capt Brant in the 4th Regiment commanded by Col. [Robert] Lawson in the Brigade commanded by Genl [Charles] Scott – Genl. [Adam] Stephen's Division. Marched from Virginia to the North joined the Grand Army under Genl Washington and was in the following hard fought battles (to wit) Trenton [26 Dec 1776] Princeton [3 Jan 1777] and German Town [4 Oct 1777] – and served out the full Term of two years for which he enlisted and was discharged in the month of February 1778 by Genl Scott at the Valley forge State of Pennsylvania.

NOTE: Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris at <http://southerncampaign.org/pen/s6810.pdf>

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Northumberland County Militia, Colonel Potter's Regiment
George Espy

Pension Application of George Espy No. S 23621.



James Potter was made a colonel of a battalion of Associators in 1776 and commanded the Northumberland militia at Trenton, Princeton, Brandywine and Germantown. A number of sources, including Washington, initially reported him killed at Princeton.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Cumberland County (PA) Militia
James Fergus (rifleman)

Pension application of James Fergus No. W 2557, enrolled in Volunteer Rifle Company in Frederick Watt's Militia Regiment, Cumberland County Militia in June 1776.

every Officer in the Battalion inrolled themselves as privates, & then we elected by vote our Officers to command us the present tour. Our uniform was a dark purple coulored Hunting shirt and pantaloons" plus rifle, powderhorn etc,

we arrived in Philadelphia between Christmas and New years day, the Hessian Prisoners taken at Trenton was yet in the City but shortly after they were sent on to Lancaster. The weather severe, we rested a day or two & then moved on to Trenton. The Battle of Princeton was over, Trenton was evacuated and partly desolate, I think it was Genl Green we met here, we lay all night in the Town & next day we were ordered on to a little Village or Hamlet called Crosswicks where we lay in the snow for a few days, perhaps a week, with some troops, & then moved to Princeton & lay under the command of the brave old veteran Genl Putnam until near spring.

NOTE: Transcribed and annotated by Will Graves at <http://southerncampaign.org/pen/w25573.pdf>

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Civilian
Mary Peale Field

Field, Mary Peale, "A Recently Discovered Letter of the American Revolution," ed. Carl Van Doren, *Princeton University Library Chronicle* 4 (June 1943), pp. 113-122.

Whitehill. Janry. 12, 1777

My Dear Sister

...

In Justice to Count Doonop I must tell you he was not Commanding Officer at Bordentown when the Light Horse & Light Infantry Came so often. A Capt. McCan who Commanded two days before the Count Came; and then was order'd to Brunswick Since Which Capt. Gamble Assures me he has been very uneasy & Intended waiting on me himself to make his own appology. In the mean time Capt. Gamble Promis'd to do it for him. Capt. Gamble is Uncle to that Puppy my Neighbour but determin'd never to see him. He was Quarter Master General for this Department when the troops where here & a Mr. McCullough was Commisary, two very Clever Fellows, and the only English Officers in Bordentown. They are both Taken Prisoners at Princetown and had been when they were taken but fourtecn days Exchang'd. Capt. G. is very Ill there Now. So is Capt. Doonop who is also Prisoner, the Gentleman I mention'd as the Counts Nephew and Aidcamp. Mr. McCullough Lodg here two Nights this week. Came upon his Parole on Purpose to see us & scems in good Spirits. He gives but

an Indifferent Acct. of the Conduct of the British army or at Least Some of the Regiments. He is Really a Sham'd to talk of them, and Speaks highly of General Washington & his troops. In short he is one of them people that appears happy in giving Merrit its Due. They Say Coll: Nixon has gain'd Imortal Honr. in the Princetown Engagement. General Mercer who Behev'd Bravelly was Wounded and is taken Prisoner has By a Flag Sent in Yesterday from G. H. Liberty to go to any Part of the world he Pleases. This flag was send in answer to one he Sent to Request to go to Philada. so you find his wounds Cannot be very bad tho' they say he has many.

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On "Captain Donop" see the letter by Donop to Howe in Primary Sources, Crown Forces.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Head-Quarters
Colonel John Fitzgerald

George Washington Park Custis, *Recollections and private memoirs of Washington* (Philadelphia, 1861), pp. 191-192. See, however, the discussion about the authenticity of this account in David Hackett Fischer, *Washington's Crossing*, (New York, 2004) p. 463.

Washington, after several ineffectual efforts to restore the fortunes of the fight, is seen to rein up his horse, with his head to the enemy, and in that position to become immovable. It was a last appeal to his soldiers, and seemed to say, Will you give up your general to the foe? Such an appeal was not made -in vain. The discomfitted Americans rally on the instant, and form into line; the enemy halt, and dress their line; the American chief is between the adverse posts, as though he had been placed there, a target for both. The arms of both lines are levelled. Can escape from death be possible? Fitzgerald, horror-struck at the danger of his beloved commander, dropped the reins upon his horse's neck, and drew his hat over his face, that he might not see him die. A roar of musketry succeeds, and then a shout. It is the shout of victory. The aid-de-camp ventures to raise his eyes, and O, glorious sight! the enemy are broken and flying, while dimly amidst the glimpses of the smoke is seen the chief, " alive, unharmed, and without a wound," waving his hat, and cheering his comrades to the pursuit.

Colonel Fitzgerald, celebrated as one of the finest horsemen in the American army, now dashed his rowels in his charger's flanks, and, heedless of the dead and dying in his way, flew to the side of his chief, exclaiming, "Thank God! your excellency is safe!" The favorite aid, a gallant and warm-hearted son of Erin, a man of thews and sinews, and "albeit unused to the melting mood," now gave loose rein to his feelings, and wept like a child, for joy. Washington, ever calm amid scenes of the greatest excitement, affectionately grasped the hand of his aid and friend, and then ordered—" Away, my dear colonel, and bring up the troops—the day is our own !"*

* Mawhood and his regiment pressed forward in vigorous pursuit of the scattered Americans, and it was while endeavoring to rally them that Mercer fell. The British were soon checked by Washington, who was advancing over a hill at the head of a column of regulars and Pennsylvania militia. Perceiving at a glance the desperate state of affairs, Washington ordered Captain Moulder to form his field-battery for immediate action, while the chief, in person, should attempt to rally the Americans. His stately form was seen by Mawhood, as he rode backward and forward, and by word and action called upon the panic-stricken troops to turn upon the foe. He ordered a halt, in battle line, and drew up his artillery with the intention of charging upon Moulder to capture his battery. This was the movement alluded to in the text.

Colonel James E. McGee, *Sketches of Irish Soldiers in every Land*, (New York, 1873), pp. 189-192.

COLONEL [John] FITZGERALD.
THE BATTLE OF PRINCETON, N. J.

But little is known of this officer except that, like Lafayette, Colonel Stephen Moylan of Cork (afterwards in command of Moylan's Dragoons), and other distinguished foreigners, he served on Washington's staff and made one of his military family, enjoying not only the confidence and respect, but the friendship of the "Father of his country." The adopted son of Washington thus pleasantly alludes to an incident in Fitzgerald's military career: "Colonel Fitzgerald was an Irish officer in the old 'Blue and Buffs,' the first volunteer company raised in the South in the dawn of the Revolution, and commanded by Washington. In the campaign of 1778, and retreat through the Jerseys, Fitzgerald was appointed aide-de-camp to Washington. At the battle of Princeton occurred that touching scene, consecrated by history to everlasting remembrance. The American troops, worn down by hardship, exhausting marches, and want of food, on the fall of their leader, that brave old Scotchman, General Mercer, recoiled before the bayonets of the veteran foe. Washington spurred his horse into the interval between the hostile lines, reining up with the charger's head to the foe, and calling to his soldiers 'Will you give up your general to the enemy?' The appeal was not made in vain. The Americans faced about, and the arms were levelled on both sides—Washington between them—even as though he had been placed there as a target for both. It was at this moment that Fitzgerald returned from carrying an order to the rear; and here let us use the gallant veteran's own words. He said: 'On my return, I perceived the general immediately between our line and that of the enemy, both lines levelling for a decisive fire that was to decide the fortune of the day. Instantly there was a roar of musketry followed by a shout. It was the shout of victory. On raising my eyes I discovered the enemy broken and flying, while, dimly, amid the glimpses of the smoke, was seen Washington alive and unharmed, waving his hat and cheering his comrades to the pursuit. I dashed my rowels into my charger's flanks and flew to his side, exclaiming, "Thank God! your Excellency is safe." I wept like a child for joy.'

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Fourth Virginia Regiment
John Fleece

Pension Application of John Fleece, No. S 35945

John Fleece formerly a soldier in the revolutionary war with G. Britain being advanced in years in humble circumstances & unable to labour in consequence of several severe & desperate Wounds which he recd. during his service is desirous of obtaining the benefit of the act of Congress of the united states made for the relief of the surviving soldiers & officers of the Revolutionary War, states that in the month of September as well as he recollects in the year 1775 he being then only 17 years of age enlisted into united states service at Winchester Frederick County Virginia as a private in the Company of Capt. Isaac Bell in the fourth Virginia Regiment which with the twelfth formed the brigade commanded by Genl. Scott – the fourth Regt. was commanded by Col. [blank] Stevens. That soon after his enlistment he marched to Trenton & there joined Genl. Washington. That he was in the battle of Trenton at the taking of the Hessians; the Battles of Princeton, Brandywine, Germantown, the battle of Monmouth.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: German Regiment, Capt. George Keepport's Coy
Lieutenant Samuel Gerock

Pension Application of Samuel Gerock, No. S 6884.

The 20 Dec 1828 petition to the House of Representatives of Samuel Gerock of Newbern, NC, aged 73, 1st Lieutenant in, German Battalion under Col. Nicholas Haussegger records:

... That he (Gerock) commanded said company in the then absence of Capt. Keepport, at the attack, and cannonade at Trenton New Jersey, on the afternoon of the 2nd January 1777 and by sunrise next morning at the battle of Princeton, the army under the immediate command of his Excellency General Washington.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Virginia Riflemen
Jonathan Grant

Pension Application of Jonathan Grant, S 42,758

Wayne County Ohio, 21 April 1821

... he enlisted in Pittsburgh under Capt. Croghan upon the fifteenth day of February in 1776 7 further states that as soon as they recruits were come in we marched to Winchester in Virginia & there we drew our clothing & rifles but not remembering whether all the regiment were riflemen & further & with that they marched from Winchester to Williamsburgh in sd state & then it was about the first of June Colonel Mullenburgh's (sic) Regiment when we arrive there was gone to Carolina they then detached Captain Croghan & Company to the first rifle regiment / which company had formerly belonged to the Eighth Regiment/ which first regiment commanded by Colonel Scott and Major Green - & farther saith that they did duty in that first regt. until some time after Independence was declared but as soon as practible (sic) afterwards the aforesaid regt. was ordered to march to Alexandria & there we took vessels & sailed up to Georgetown & from thence we marched to Baltimore & from thence went by water to the head of Elk from thence marched to Cristeen & from thence by water to Trenttown thence marched to Jersey state to fort Lee on the North River thence crossed the river to Fort Washington. They enemy at that time was in New York in a few days two of the British Vessels come up the river got past our sheveudfrees (sic) at some time several of the enemy vessels was discovered in the East river(.) immediately our regiment /first regiment/ some others was ordered to march to the White Plains – some few days after the enemy landed these troops we attacked them in the fight this engagement Major Green was wounded & did not command the sd. Regiment while we remained in it Major Fleming commanded in his place in a short time after this engagement we had a nother in sd Plains. & Further ths Deponent saith that from there they marched & crossed the North river & crossed at Brunswick & from there the British drove and pushed us to Trenton & there crossed the river & kept on that side til recrossed about Christmas & took Prisoners about Nine hundred Hessians & in a short time after at some place we had a scrimish with the enemy and then crossed the creek the next morning before daylight we was orded to march our regiment was the advance guard & that day commanded by Colonel Hazlet & Major Fleming which regiment was attacked & was forced to retreat in that time Both Colonel & Major & many other officers was Killed in said Battle/ Lieutenant Kirkpatrick was wounded & I the deponent carried him off the field or ground/ & when the body of our troops come up the British

retreated to the College & there we took them prisoners in a few hours after the enemy came from Princetown we immediately marched to Morristown we stayed there the winter, the next spring of 1777 Captain Croghan joined his own Regiment then in Philadelphia & there continued until the deponent was discharged & further that he was discharged at Valley Forge in the winter of 1778 by Brigadier Genl. Scott who was formerly Colonel of the first regiment....”

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 1st Pennsylvania Regiment
Thomas Grear

Pension application of Thomas Grear No. S 8553.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein after stated, to wit, that he volunteered in Pennsylvania Lancaster County in the company of Captain Scott, Commanded by Colonel Lowry ... that his company joined the regular Army under the command of General Washington at Trenton – that he was engaged in the battle of Trenton-- that night put an end to the battle – that there ran a Creek through Trenton – that General Washington continued on one side and the British on the other – that he marched off for in the night in General Washington's Army – that he marched all the latter part of the night and arrived at Princeton at daylight – that before leaving Trenton he assisted in building large fires to deceive the enemy – that shortly after their arrival the Americans were engaged in battle at Princeton with a part of the British Army coming to join Lord Cornwallis – that the enemy was defeated – that in this battle General Mercer was killed – that he was marched thence to Somerset Court House and thence to Morristown where [paper torn] Army took up winter quarters

NOTE: Transcribed by Will Graves at <http://southerncampaign.org/pen/s8553.pdf>

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Head-Quarters
MG Nathanael Greene

Nathanael Greene to Thomas Paine, 9 January 1777. Richard K. Showman et al., eds. *The Papers of General Nathanael Greene* vol. 2: 1 January 1777-16 October 1778 (Chapel Hill, 1980), pp. 3-4.

[Morristown] 9 January 1777

... the two late actions at Trenton and Princeton have put a very different face upon affairs. ... Great credit is due to the Philadelphia militia; their behaviour at Trenton in the cannonade, and at Princeton was brave, firm and manly; they were broken in the first action at Princeton, but soon formed in the face of grapeshot, and pushed on with a spirit that would do honor to veterans, besides which they have borne a winter's campaign with a soldier like patience. General Cadwallader is a brave and gallant officer.

This letter was also printed in *The Pennsylvania Evening Post*, 14 January 1777

Extract of a letter from Major General G. -- to a gentleman in this city, dated Morristown, Jan. 9.

Not a line have I received from you since you left us at Newtown — I am much obliged to you for the attention — Were I not fully persuaded that you are anxious to know the success of our late manoeuvres, I would not have wrote you a syllable this fortnight. I almost think the author of the Crisis a prophet where he says the Tories will curse the day that Howe arrived upon the Delaware. I verily believe the observation is coming true. The two late actions at Trenton and Princeton have put a very different face upon affairs. Within a fortnight past we have taken and killed of Howe's army between two and three thousand men — Our loss is trifling — we are daily picking up their parties — yesterday we took seventy prisoners and thirty loads of baggage.

Great credit is due to the Philadelphia militia; their behaviour at Trenton in the cannonade, and at Princeton was brave, firm and manly; they were broken at first in the action at Princeton, but soon formed in the face of grapeshot, and pushed on with a spirit that would do honor to veterans, besides which they have borne a winter's campaign with a soldier like patience. General Cadwallader is a brave and gallant officer.

Nathanael Greene to Governor Nicholas Cooke of Rhode Island, 10 January 1777. Richard K. Showman et al., eds. *The Papers of General Nathanael Greene* vol. 2: 1 January 1777-16 October 1778 (Chapel Hill, 1980), pp. 4-5.

Morristown Jan. 10, 1777

Dear sir,

... on the 3d of this instant the enemy advanced from Princeton towards Trenton 12 miles distant. There is a little river called the Mill Creek that runs through Trenton. We drew up on one side of it and the enemy on the other. Some skirmishing and a severe cannonade ensued, and lasted untill night. We stole a march that night and attacked Princeton next morning. We left all our sentries standing and marched off as silently as possible. The guards had orders to decamp in three hours after our march began. No person knew where we were going except the Gel Officers. There was about 1200 men at Princeton. They made an obstinate resistance. The killed, wounded and prisoners of the enemy amounted to upwards of 600. we immediately quitted Princeton. Our loss was not great. Genl Mercer was badly wounded and two field officers killed. We brought off a large number of arms and 2 field pieces and a great quantity of ammunition. We made a move towards Brunswick. The enemy marched from Trenton to Brunswick in the greatest confusion imaginable. Had we had 1000 fresh troops that night we could have destroyed all their baggage at that place but our troops were so fatigued that it was impossible to attempt any thing further.

Nathanael Greene to Catherine Greene dated 20 January 1777. Richard K. Showman et al., eds. *The Papers of General Nathanael Greene* vol. 2: 1 January 1777-16 October 1778 (Chapel Hill, 1980), pp. 6-7.

My dear

... Poor General Mercer is also dead of the wounds he received in the Princeton action. He was a fine companion, a sincere friend, a true patriot and a brave General. May Heaven bless his spirit with Eternal peace several more brave officers fell that day. Particularly one Capt Neale of the Artillery. The Enemy refused him [quarter] after he was wounded. He has left a poor widow [overwhelmed] with grief.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 5th Massachusetts Regiment, Captain Joseph Butler's Coy, Col. Thomas Nixon's Regt.
Primas Hall

Pension Application of Primas Hall (Trask) No. W 751.

On this thirteenth day of October in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and thirty five personally appeared in open Court before the Then Judge, Peter O. Thacher, Justice of the Municipal Court holden within and for the City of Boston Primas Hall sometimes called Primas Trask a man of colour and a resident in said City now aged seventy nine years and upwards who being first duly sworn accordi[ng: edge of page worn] to law doth on his oath make the following declaration for the purpose of obtaining the benefit of the act of Congress passed the 7th of Ju[ne] AD. 1832.

That he the said Primas was born in the City of Boston on the twenty ninth day of February Anno Domini 1756 in the family of David Walker in Beacon Street in said Boston, and at the a[ge] of one month old was given to Mr Ezra Trask of Beverly in the Cou[n]ty of Essex who subsequently removed to the town of Danvers in said County in whose family he continued to live until the commencement of the revolutionary War, and that forepart of the month of January in [the] year one thousand seven hundred and seventy six he the said Pri[mas] enlisted in the town of Cambridge in the county of Middlesex as a soldier in the army of the Revolution for the term of one year in a company commanded by Capt Joseph Butler of Concord in said County, of the fifth Massachusetts Regiment commanded by Colo Thomas Nixon. ...

... crossed the Hudson River at Kings Ferry, and marched into New Jersey, and was under General [Charles] Lee at the time that General was surprised at Basking Ridge and taken prisoner [13 Dec 1776]. Then General [John] Sullivan took command, and marched the troops to Pennsylvania, to a place called Bristol and after remaining at Bristol a few days recrossed the Delaware, and attacked the Hessians at Trenton & Burlington and took them prisoners [26 Dec 1776], the Regiment to which said Primas belonged being station at the former place when his term of service of one year expired, but [a]t the earnest request of General Washington he volunteered for the further term of six weeks, and during said service he was at the taking of Princetown [Battle of Princeton, 3 Jan 1777], and soon thereafter marched to Morristown in New Jersey and there received an honorable discharge from the Army signed by General Washington and returned home to Danvers in the Spring of 1777.

NOTE: Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris at <http://southerncampaign.org/pen/w751.pdf>

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 3rd Virginia Regiment, Captain Chilton's Coy
Benjamin Hamrick

Pension Application Benjamin Hamrick No. S 5472.

At the time he enlisted he resided in Fauquier county Virginia. The company to which he belonged rendezvoused at the Court House of said county and the regiment at Williamsburg Virginia from when they marched to Alexandria and from whence they were ordered to New York island in the state of New York where they joined the regular army. He was present at the battle of Trenton and the taking of nine hundred Hessians as it was said. He was then at the battle of Princeton where he aided in taking (as it was said) 300 prisoners. He was at the memorable battle of Brandywine and also at the battle of Germantown.

NOTE: Transcribed by Will Graves at <http://southerncampaign.org/pen/s5472.pdf>

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: German Regiment
Colonel Nicholas Hausegger

Nicholas Hausegger to George Washington, 16 January 1777. *The Papers of George Washington: Revolutionary War Series, 8 January-March 1777* Philander D. Chase, ed., (Charlottesville, 1998), pp. 83-85.

Philadelphia, January the 16th 1777

Sir!

Last Night I arrived here from New York much indisposed with the Rheumatism and pains in my Limbs, occassioned by great Colds I caught, which deprives me of the Pleasure of waiting personally on your Excellency, and therefore take the Liberty, by the first Oppertunity vizt by Capn Keepots to inform your Excelly of my Safe Arrival here. Immediately after I come to Town I was credibly informed, that some malicious Persons have injured my Reputation, by misrepresenting Facts relating to the late Affair at Princetown.

I have taken the Liberty to inform your Excellency of the Manner of my Proceedings and of what happened to me from the 3d of this Instant to the Time of my Arrival here.

On the 3d of this Instant—one of your Excellency's Aid de Camps ordered me to advance and cut off the Enemeys Retreat to Brunswick, and in order to proceed the swifter ordered my Battalion to lay down their Bagage and put a Guard over it, this being done I proceeded and met Capn Craig who informed me, that it was your Excellency's Orders for me to march towards Millstone and to cut off the Enemeys Retreat, which said Orders I complied with, and not discovering any of the Enemy there returned towards Princetown and coming up to the Place where I had ordered the sd Bagage to be left I sent my Battn under Lieut. Colonel Streiker over the Fence to take up their Bagage with Directions to follow me immediately, so I proceeded, with Capn Craig, on the Road towards Princetown, and within half a Mile of Princetown I met one of my Soldiers, who informed me, that the Enemy was at Princetown, upon which I sent Captn Craig back to Lieut: Colonel Streiker with Orders to keep the Battallion together and to march with all the Haste he could up to me through a Swamp and immediately after that I seen my Battallion crossing the Swamp towards Princetown, then I pushed forwards along the Road in Order to Head the Battallion, And as I come to the Plains of Princetown I heard a Fireing, thinking that my Battallion was engaged with the Enemy whom I was persuing, thereupon I rode towards the Battallion into the Woods, and to my great Surprize was stoped by a Party of the Enemy's, who took me Prisoner and brought me to their Commander, whose Name I do not recollect

who sent me to Lord Cornwallis near Princetown where I met with Generals Grant and Lesle. General Grant, then let me go, on my Parole, about Princetown, here I stayed till about Evening when the Enemy's Army marched through Princetown I was delivered to Colonel Dunop of the Hessians, who on the 4th of this Instant took me to Brunswick, where we stayed two Days, And on the 6th I was sent with General Heisters Son to New-York, where I arrived the 7th by whoes Interest and Colonel Donap's Recommendation to General Heister's I obtained Liberty to return home on my Parole, And on the 12th of January I left New-York in Company with several Officers who also returned on their Parole, And four Shallops with about 400 Prisoners who all returned to their respective Homes on their Parole.

Having stated Matters as they, in Fact, are I leave it to the Judgment of your Excellency whether or no I acted as a Gentleman Officer ought to do.

I am your Excellency's most obedient humble Servant

Nichls Haussegger

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Second Pennsylvania Battalion/Third Pennsylvania Regiment, Captain Smith's Company
Jacob Hefflebower

Pension application of Jacob Hefflebower No. S5501

When deponent was then about 19 years of age – he returning & enlisted for the term of three years, in a company of U. States Grenadiers, commanded by Captain Smith, attached, or deponent believes to the Third Regiment of the army of the United States – deponent was marched thru Jersey, for a considerable time he was some time on a island, which he thinks was Long Island ...

He was at one time under the command of Col Houssecker who deserted to the English from the island referred to by deponent. Deponent served in the army, without interruption, for upwards of one year & eleven months, previous to the battle of Princeton he was with his company in the right wing of the army, in that battle, where he received a severe wound in his forehead, from a bullet – at the time of receiving the wound, deponent had upon him his grenadiers cap, in the front of which was a brass plate. Upon this the bullet struck & he thus escaped with his life – deponent fell to the ground immediately & after the battle was carried from the field by John Gundrum, now living in Lebanon County in this state, whose statement is certified By Squire Wise of Lebanon County & is hereto attached – Gundrum is now blind – The division of the army, to which deponent is attached, separated from Genl Washington about 10 oclock of the 1st January & marched toward Princeton, when the command of General Mercer & reached Princeton about one and a half hours after sunrise, on the morning of the 3d day of January 1777, or deponent distinctly recollects – as soon as we reached the rising ground near to Princeton, the British soldiers (no Hessian being amongst them) fired upon us – having the advantage of the ground, we kept it, being protected from the aim of the enemy. By the smoke of our own guns, that the wind blew towards them – being above the enemy, their fire generally fell short of us we continued engaged a considerable time, neither party advancing, till some field pieces were brought up behind us & being fired upon the enemy, they surrendered – by raising a white flag – General Mercer was engaged about the middle of our division. The portion under his immediate command, was attacked by the enemy with the bayonet. Deponent was within 50 or 60 yards away when he fell near to the American standard, pierced by the bayonets of the enemy, often he had, as was called aloud at the time, cut down two of the enemy, with his own sword.

The afternoon previous to the battle, some snow or sleet fell, but the weather cleared off towards evening – the night was pretty cold – but the morning of the battle, was good weather – The wound which deponent received at the said battle, it still visible in his forehead – he was carried to a hospital, in the neighborhood of Trenton, where he remained till the spring – when he went to Philadelphia. ...

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Northhampton County (PA) Militia, Capt Alexander Patterson's Coy, Genl Mifflin's Brigade
Ensign John Hendy

Pension Application of Ensign John Hendy No. S 13381

That from the 20th of November 1776 to the 20th of February 1777 inclusive he served in the field three months as an Ensign, that in this tour he was under the command and authority of Capt. Alexander Patterson, Lieutenant John [or James ?] Gaston, Major Benjamin Van Campen and Gen. Mifflin who received their Orders from the Commander in Chief aforesaid. ...

That he turned as a Volunteer for no definite period under Captain John Mac in the latter part of the month of August in the year 1776 - The Company was composed partly of Volunteers and partly of drafted Militia all intended for active operations in the State of New Jersey - Soon after he enlisted he was march'd to Perth Amboy where the Troops were stationed for some weeks waiting the movements of the enemy - nothing, however, extraordinary occurred, and we were march'd home about the first of November having performed Three months service as a Private in this Campaign. We then immediately organized a full Company of Volunteers for the Service and choose Alexander Patterson for Captain - John Gaston Lieutenant and John Hendy Ensign at this period and while Gen. Washington was on his march through New Jersey our Newly enlisted Company started on their march from North hampton to Philadelphia at which latter place this deponent received his Commission as Ensign of the said Company and the other officers of the Company also received their commissions - Gen. Washington recrossed the River and took nearly one thousand Hessians - on the receipt of this Intelligence our Company had orders forthwith to Join the Main Army before Trenton which we reached on the second of January and were attached to a Battalion under the Command of Major Benjamin Van Campen which Battalion was annexed to the Brigade under the Command of Gen. Mifflin - From Trenton to Princeton there was what was called an 18 Mile Road and a 12 Mile Road. On the Night of the second our whole Corps took up the line of march for Princeton on the 18 mile Route the enemy having taken the other one - we reached Princeton early on the morning of the third and immediately prepared for Battle - In this engagement Gen. Mercer fell dangerously wounded and was conveyed directly by this deponent to a private house - this brave officer exclaimed as he was carried along "Cheer up my boys the day is ours" - After the battle we took up our line of March for Morristown where Gen Washington had his head quarters, and reached Sommerset Court house the next day which was on Saturday we arrived at the village of Plaquemmin and halted there till the Monday following; while at this village we buried a British officer Captain Lashly with the honors of war - he had been mortally wounded at Princeton and brought on in a waggon - on Monday we joined the main Army at Morristown.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 3rd Battalion Pennsylvania Associators
Mr. Hood

Time	Location
07:22	Civil sunrise
07:35	continued this rout till day light when they saw Princetown
07:40	and came through the Woods & field on the Back of the town
07:45	perceived the Enemy abt 700 on the rise of a Hill abt 3/4 of a Mile from the town: the Olden House stood about 3/4 of a mile from the center of Princeton
07:50	
07:55	
08:00	? a firing began by the Virginia Brigade,
08:05	it was supported by Genl Cadwaladers brigade which was at first put in a little confusion,
08:10	but rallied under the Hill immediately
08:15	in the meantime a New England Brigade advanced and the Riffle Men flanked the Enemy,
08:20	they broke & run immediately,
08:25	upon wch our people pursued them, advanced to the Town
08:30	they fired one Shot into the College,
08:35	a flag was sent out & they surrendered
08:40	
08:45	
08:50	
08:55	
09:00	

Sources:

"Engagements at Trenton and Princeton, January 2 and 3, 1777." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 10 (1886), pp. 263-265.

It is also printed in William S. Stryker, *The Battles of Trenton and Princeton* (Boston and New York, 1898), pp. 469-471. Stryker wrongly identifies it as a "Letter from the British Army."

The following document is printed from a contemporaneous writing in the collection of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and is endorsed: "Relation of the Engagement at Trenton and Princetown on Thursday and Friday the 2nd & 3rd of Jany 1777 by Mr. Hood 3rd Batta."

abt 12 oClock at Night [2/3 January 1777] they were ordered under Arms — they were then ordered to lay down their arms & return to their fires. — a little after One ordered to Arms again, they united the several Brigades together & the Artillery advanced before them & the army followed, this was all done with greatest Silence — they continued their March round the head of the Mill Creek dam, & pass'd a Bridge and so continued their rout to the Princetown Road, & then Cross'd it & pass'd into a bye road & proceeded about 1 mile to the northward [sic!] of Princetown — and continued this rout till day light when they saw Princetown — and came through the Woods & field on the Back of the town and perceived the Enemy abt 700 on the rise of a Hill abt 3/4 of a Mile from the town, — a firing began by the Virginia Brigade, and then it was supported by Genl Cadwaladers brigade which was at first put in a little confusion, but rallied under the Hill immediately. — in the meantime a New England Brigade advanced and the Riffle Men flanked the Enemy, and they broke & run immediately upon wch our people pursued them, advanced to the Town, they fired one Shot into the College, when a man waved his Hat, another Shot was fired & a flag was sent out & they surrendered, to the number of 86 — afterwards a number more was brought in to the ammo' of 200 — in this action abt 100 of the Enemy was killed & abt 14 of ours. (We drove off 100 head of Cattle with the Army.) Genl Mercer advanced at the Head of his Brigade between a Barn & a house near where the Engagement began — his horse was shot under him & fell, when the Genl was recovering from the fall the Enemy thrust a Bayonet in his head, it is said he died of his wounds, and Captain Shippen shot through the head — this party of the Enemy were entirely scattered & numbers of them were taken in small parties. — at Princetown 5 Field ps taken one of wch spiked up, several Baggage Waggons, and some ammunition & Stores — they then halted at Princetown abt 1 hour when they heard a platoon firing on the Princetown Road, they were order[d] under arms & to form, — Genl Miflin came to them & told them the Enemy was a coming, to prepare for a Brush — they then march'd to Kingston took to the left went up Mill Stone Creek abt 3 Mile, the head of the Army halted there for the Rear — that the informant went to a farmers to get some refreshments, fell asleep and waked in the morning, the Army was gone — he heard they were at Sommerset Court house on Saturday morning and that he intended to proceed to join Genl Heath; that [here ends the ms].

A slightly different version of this “Relation of the Engagement at Trenton and Princeton on Thursday and Friday the 2nd & 3d of Jany. 1777 by Mr. Hood 3 Batt.” It is preserved in the David Library of the American Revolution No. 1907.

In the evening of 2 January 1777, the battalion was “order’d to form a square around the woods and to make up their fires & to lay on their Arms – abt 12 oClock at Night they were order’d under Arms – they were then ordered to lay down their arms & return to their fires – a little after one Order’d to form again – they [illeg.] before them & the army followed this was all done with greatest Silence. – they continued their march round the head of the Mill Creek dam & pass’d a Bridge and so continued their rout to Prince Town Road & then cross’d it and pass’d onto a bye Road & proceeded about 1 Mile to the northward of Princetown – and came through the woods & field on the Back of the town & perceived the Enemy abt 700 on the rise of a Hill abt $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from the town – a firing began by the Virginia Brigade, & then it was supported by Genl Cadwalader’s brigade which was at first put in a little confusion, but rallied under the Hill immediately – in the Mean time a New England Brigade advanced and the Riffle Men flanked the Enemy, and they broke and run immediately upon which our people advanced pursued them to the Town, they fired one shot into the College, when a man waved his hat, another shot was fired & a flag was sent out & they surrendered to the number of 86 – afterwards a number more was brought in to the ammo’t of 200. in this action abt 100 of the Enemy was killed & abt 14 of ours. – Genl. Mercer advanced at the Head of his Brigade between a Barn and a House near where the Engagement began – his horse was shot under him & fell, when the Genl was recovering from the fall the Enemy thrust a Bayonet in his head it is said he died of his wounds and Captain Shippen shot through the head. – This party of the Enemy was interely shattered & number of them were taken in small parties. – At Princetown 5 Field p[iece]s taken one of a spiked up several Baggage wagons and some ammuniton and stores. They then halted at Princetown abt 1 hour when they heard a platoon fireing on the Princetown Road, they were order[d] under arms & to form, — Genl Miflin came to them & told them the Enemy was a coming, to prepare for a Brush — they then march’d to Kingston took to the left went up Mill Stone Creek abt 3 Mile, the head of the Army halted there for the Rear — that the informant went to a farmers to get some refreshments, fell asleep and waked in the morning, the Army was gone — he heard they were at Sommerset Court house on Saturday morning and that he intended to proceed to join Genl Heath; that [here ends the ms].

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 4th Regiment, North Carolina Line
George Hooke

Pension Application of George Hooke No. 29735.

“1st tour-In 1776 or thereabout is his best impression, he cannot be positive, at what season of the year he has forgotten, in the County of Guilford, North Carolina (he having gone there on a visit from Augusta, Virginia where he had till then resided) he enlisted as a regular soldier in a company of infantry in the 4th regiment of the North Carolina line. He cannot recollect the name of a single officer. He continued in the army until perhaps near the end of the time for which he enlisted, being one year. He rendezvoused in Guilford aforesaid, the name of the place he has forgotten, and was marched to Charleston and arrived there after the Battle of Sullivan’s Island. He was marched through Virginia, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. He was in the Battle of Princeton.”

“2nd tour-Before the expiration of the one year which by this enlistment he was engaged to serve, he enlisted again to serve during the war, by the consent and approbation of his officers. At what place he enlisted this second time he cannot state. He thinks it was either at New Jersey or at Winter Quarters Valley Forge [*the winter of 1777-1778*].

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Amwell Battalion, 2nd Regt (Somerset Coy) New Jersey Militia
Captain William Churchill Houston

William Churchill Houston, "The Campaign Journal of a Militiaman." *Princeton Standard*, May 1,8,15, 1863.

Author uncertain, but believed to be William Churchill Houston (1746-1788), a teacher at the College of New Jersey (Princeton University) from 1768 to 1783. A member of the Provincial Congress (1776), Council of Safety (1778), and Continental Congress (1779-1781)

Reprinted in Larry R. Gerlach, ed., *New Jersey in the American Revolution. A Documentary History*, (Trenton, 1975), pp. 332-336, the Princeton quote is on p. 334.

[November 29, 1776-June 30, 1777]

On the 29th of November, 1776 New Jersey College long the peaceful seat of science and haunt of the Muses was visited with the melancholy tidings of the approach of the enemy.

This alarmed our fears and gave us reason to believe we must soon bid adieu to our peaceful Departments and break off in the midst of our delightful studies; nor were we long held in suspense, our worthy President deeply affected at this solemn scene entered the Hall where the students were collected, and in a very affecting manner informed us of the improbability of continuing there longer in peace; and after giving us several suitable instructions and much good advice very affectionately bade us farewell. Solemnity and distress appeared almost in every countenance. Several students that had come 5 and 600 miles, and just got settled in College, were now obliged under every disadvantage to return with their effects or leave them behind, which several through the impossibility of getting a carriage at so confused a time were obliged to do, and lost their all....

Wednesday Dec[ember] 18th I went over the River to join Longstreets Company, found the Company and came back over the River with them the next Day, though I had not joined. The sun set just as we marched from the River after crossing, I marched with them till some time after dark, then took the road to Johnsons, missed my way some miles, got home next day about ten in the morning. Next day went to near Princeton within 1/2 a mile of the Enemy got a Gun and Accoutrements. As it was bad traveling, I sprained my ankle this day.

Next day Sunday [December 22], I came back to Amwell, intending on Monday to go over the River. But as the Amwell Militia were at this time coming back over River, I through persuasion staid and enlisted in the Amwell Battallion. Dec. 24th Went off immediately with the scouting Party Capt. Houston's. Took our Lodgings in the neighborhood. My ankle was very painful and the bottoms of my feet blistered so as some times while walking to make me cry out....

Next morning [January 1, 1777] we marched to Penny Town drew Rations and marched some miles further towards Trenton, and took Lodgings that night. Set out early next morning, towards Trenton, till sun 1/2 an hour high when we heard the Engagement begin towards Princeton, {actually, on January 3rd, 1777} we then immediately marched back to Penny Town waiting some time for Intelligence. Made two or three movements and lay in wait some time in the woods, for the Enemy; but they having got intelligence of us by some Tory, returned another road, and so escaped us, we then came to Levy Hart's took Lodgings, and cooked provisions. I laid about 3 hours with my blankets on cords. At 3 o'clock, set out for Penny Town, after a round about march we came to the field where the Battle was fought. I had a most dismal prospect of a number of pale mangled corpses, lying in the mud and blood. I felt gloomy at the awful scene. Returned in a rough tedious march to Hopewell. Such unpleasant marching occasioned my ankle again to swell and grow painfull....

Staid here in peace till Monday morning [January 20] we then received an Alarm and were ordered to march to Boundbrook, we arrived there between 11 and 12, then hearing that the Enemy was plundering at Millstone, we immediately marched for that place, being joined by a considerable body at Boundbrook we marched on till we passed Raritan Bridge, hearing several Cannon fired, while on the way. After crossing the Bridge, the Battallion I was in was taken off for the left wing, I crossed Millstone, some distance below the Bridge, wading through the water, more than knee deep. We immediately marched towards the road, and fired upon the Baggage Guard, who were retreated that way. They immediately left horses wagons and plunder, and returned with the greatest precipitation. The main body of the Enemy lay just over south of the Bridge. Before we crossed the River below, our main Body began the Attack at the Bridge with one Field piece and made the Enemy give way. They continued their fire upon the Enemy some time. Our wing, after driving the Baggage Guard, pursued on and flanked the Enemy. After a short engagement, finding ourselves greatly overpowered with numbers, we received General Orders to retreat, having had 1 man killed and 2 wounded. and we had taken 2 of the Enemy prisoners. We then retreated back to the River, lest our retreat should be cut off. But finding the Enemy did not pursue, we rallied again, with as many of our men as we could collect, and marched on towards the Enemy the second time; but when we came in sight of them, they got possession of an eminence in the End of a clear Field, with one or more Field pieces and poured down their Grape shot upon us briskly. Then finding it in vain to attack them with our little Body, under so great a disadvantage, we immediately retreated back and most of our men went over the River up into a clear field, to where our main Body had by this time collected.

Sunday, Jan. 26th in the afternoon, we were alarmed and marched down to Raritan Bridge, then hearing the Alarm was false, we marched back again to Quarters. The cause of this Alarm was that some of our out Guard had fired upon a small party of Hessians, who had come ('tis thought) to disturb them. After this Alarm we remained quiet in our Quarters till Wednesday Feb. 5th, having no other duty to attend but the General's and the Ammunition Guard. This night we were ordered to march at 11 o'clock with the rest of Gen. Dikson's Brigade and went within 1/2 mile of the Enemy's Quarters. The roads were now excessively muddy, so that we were over Shoes in mud and water; but towards morning it grew very cold and froze very hard. The design of this march was to take off the horses, wagons, fat Cattle and Sheep from the inhabitants to prevent the Enemy from getting any advantage of them. We got off a quantity of these Articles, and marched back (the road being now frozen hard) to Head Quarters. When we got home most of us were wearied and stiff, and our feet sore. We took some refreshments and rested about 2 hours, I being very weary and drowsy, had lain down and got in a sound sleep, when we were again alarmed to go and meet the Enemy, who were advancing towards Raritan. We immediately marched down to Raritan Bridge and there waited till our light horse came in, who brought us word that the Enemy had been up as far as Covenhoven's, had taken and destroyed a great quantity of grain and hay, drove off a great number of Cattle and were gone back. We then all came back to Quarters, and rested in peace that night....

This day June 19th we received Orders to march down to the lines. We marched at Sunrise, and took Quarters this night, below Morristown; Next day, came in to Bullion's Tavern, where we took Quarters, waiting for Orders. The Enemy had, some days before this, removed from Brunswick to Millstone, near the Court house, and it was thought would make an attempt for Philadelphia; This roused the Militia of all the neighbouring counties, and they turned out, with such spirit as will do them honor to the latest ages. Never did the Jerseys appear more universally unanimous to oppose the Enemy; they turned out Old and young, great and small. Rich and poor; Scarcely a man that could carry a musket was left at home. This soon struck a panic into the Enemy, for they could scarcely stir from their Camp, but they were cut off. They then fled with the greatest haste to Brunswick; but the Militia pursued them so closely and so warmly, that they made no stay here. On Sunday morning June 22nd they were driven out of the Town, and chased near to Amboy by the spirited Militia in conjunction with a small party of the English Troops. The Enemy, when they left Millstone and Brunswick, burnt several houses, strangled almost to death 2 or 3 women, and behaved in the most cruel, barbarous manner After the Enemy were driven from Brunswick, our Army took possession of the Town, and such of the Militia as were called out upon this Alarm, were discharged. Wednesday, June 25th part of Militia at Bullion's Tavern were discharged and part ordered to march next day for Pompton, which they did. Thursday, June 26th, the Enemy came out with their whole Body from Amboy and proceeded to Westfield, where they plundered and destroyed every thing before them, and distressed the Inhabitants in a manner before unheard of, but before they returned to Amboy numbers of them were cut off by part of our Army, and some Militia. They returned to Amboy, and on Monday Evening June the 30th 1777, they all left Amboy and went to Staten Island.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 2nd Rhode Island Regiment, Col. Lippitt's Regt.
John Howland

Edwin M. Stone, *The Life and Recollections of John Howland* (Providence, 1857), pp. 75-77.

Our march that night from Trenton to Princeton is well known. It was not by a direct road. A considerable part of it was by a new passage, which appeared to have been cut through the woods, as the stubs were left from two to five inches high. We moved slowly on account of the artillery, frequently coming to a halt, and when ordered forward again, one, two or three men in each platoon would stand, with their arms supported, fast asleep. A platoon next in rear advancing on them, they, in walking or attempting to move, would strike a stub and fall.

Cornwallis had left two or three regiments with a [p. 76] number of baggage wagons at Princeton, when he marched his main body the day before to Trenton. These troops, not knowing the approach of Washington, were on the march towards Trenton. We met them a mile or two west of Princeton college. They were first encountered by general Mercer, with his advanced body of Pennsylvania volunteers; but he being mortally wounded, fell from his horse and his party retreated. We, of the main body, continued to advance, when the British line, was soon broken. They ran in different directions, but a body of them retreated to the college yard behind a breastwork, and when we had approached within fifty or sixty feet, an officer came through a sally port, with a white handkerchief on the point of his sword. General Sullivan rode up to him, and we were ordered to halt. There were about two hundred and fifty in this party which surrendered, and as many as fifty more brought in by detachments, so that we left Princeton with over three hundred prisoners, and a string of British baggage wagons loaded with their camp equipage. Our proceedings at Princeton are matters of history, except one circumstance, and that is, that the commander-in-chief took the commander of our brigade by the hand, after the action, expressing his high approbation of his conduct and that of the troops he commanded, and wished him to communicate his thanks to his officers and men.

We left Princeton about noon, and we afterwards understood that the advanced guard of Cornwallis from Trenton, arrived at Princeton about half an hour after our rear left it. Our course was eastward, and Cornwallis naturally supposing we were bound to Brunswick, where was general Howe's head quarters, pushed on the same road after us till we arrived at a cross road bearing north towards Somerset, which we pursued. He did not choose to follow us, but kept on his way to Brunswick. We continued our march till 11 o'clock at night, when we arrived [p. 77] at Somerset court house, in which our prisoners were lodged. It will be remembered that this was our third successive night of marching; first from Crosswick to Trenton; second from Trenton to Princeton; third to Somerset court house; and under arms or marching the whole of the two preceding days. There were

barely houses sufficient for the quarters of the generals and their attendants. The troops bivouaced for the rest of the night on the frozen ground. All the fences and every thing that would burn, were piled in different heaps and burnt, and he was the most fortunate who could get nigh enough to smell the fire or smoke.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 1st Virginia Regiment
Thomas Hubbard

Pension Application of Thomas Hubbard No. S 17227.

that I enlisted in the first Regiment of Virginia in the state line in the month of July or August 1775 under Capt. John Fleming, Leiut Wm. Lewis, and Ser John Pettis the Ensign not remembered. the regt was Commanded by Col. Partrick Henry I was a resident of the County of Goochland state of virgi'a when I inlisted in said reg't. for one year, was marched to Norfolk and return to williamsburg in June 1776 where I inlisted as a sergeant for the term of three years in the continental line under the same company officers [illegible word] Col. Isaac Read [or Reid] I believe comman'd the reg't. was march'd to new york on the march Col. James Hendrick came to the command had some fighting on the island the reg't was join'd to Lord starlins brigade. the army march'd over Kingsbridge to the white plains some fighting here [Battle of White Plains NY, 28 Oct 1776] passed through Philadelphia then to Brandywine a battle here and at a place near the schulkill where the rain put a stop to the contest I was aiding in the capture of the Hessians at trentown some time after at the same place in an evenings fight this day General Mercer took command of the Brigade in the night march to princeton in the battle next morning Gen'l Mercer, Capt. Fleming & Lieut. Yates fell at the head of the brigade myself wounded.

NOTE: Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris at <http://southerncampaign.org/pen/s17227.pdf>

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 10th Pennsylvania Regiment
Major Adam Hubley Jr.

Pennsylvania Archives 1st Series vol. 5, (1853) page 159; also in New Jersey. Revolutionary War Miscellaneous Bound Books, 1776-1783, Book 43 B, Number 98, David Library of the American Revolution.

Bordentown, Jan'y 4th, 1777.

My Dear Brother [Fredrick],

I am just arrived with Major Mifflin from an Expedition in the lower parts of the Jerseys, a place call'd Monmouth Court House. We arrived there Thursday evening, we were informed of a party of men consisting about 200, under the command of Col. Morris. We then had our party (120 in number) formed in proper order, and intended to attack them in town, about half an hour before night, Col. Morris, it seems, got accounts of our arrival, had his men drawn up and baggage loaded in order to move off for Middleton, a town about 18 miles below the Court House, they pushed off from town, and got off about half a mile, within sight of us. We immediately push'd after them, when they made a halt, we came up, about a Quarter of an hour before night, when we engaged them, and they stood us about 8 minutes, a very heavy fire was kept up on both sides during that time. The enemy at last gave way, and retreated very precipitately. At this time it was quite dark, and we could not see what loss the enemy sustain'd, on our side we had none killed. We marched from the field to the town and lodged there that night, the next morning we sent a party out to the field we had engag'd in, they brought four dead bodies in, which we had buried. We took during the engagement 23 prisoners, wh we brought to this place. We also took from the enemy 7 waggon loads of stores, &c.. and 12 horses. I shall set off for Burlington this day to meet Col. Penrose, who commanded there.

Various will be the accounts of the movements of our Army, this you may dispend on is as nearly the state of it as possible. After our people engag'd the British troops at Trenton, after a very severe engagement we retreated from Trenton and took round towards Princetown. This retreat was ordered on purpose, which has since proved to be good Generalship, where our people took between 5 and 600 prisoners, they had a severe engagement there, and made the English Army retreat very precipitately. They have taken all their stores, &c., to a very great Amount. Our Army has now removed from thence to Brunswick, where the English have a very great store of every thing, which before now is in our hands. General Howe with his main Body is now between us, and in all probability must fall into our hands. The enemy had a vast number killed at Princetown.

Our Philadelphia Associators behav'd like brave soldiers on this occasion, they fought the enemy for some considerable time, regular in platoon fires, and repulsed them twice. I think I shall have the pleasure of giving you a very good Account of our Army in a few days.

A number of our Philadelphia Associators fell on this occasion.

I am, in haste,

Yrs Affectionately,
ADAM HUBLEY, Junr.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Deputy Adjutant General under Major-General Heath
Captain Ebenezer Huntington

Ebenezer Huntington, *Letters written by Ebenezer Huntington during the American Revolution* (New York, 1914), p. 57.

Ebenezer Huntington to Andrew Huntington, 5 January 1777.

Peeks Kill 5th Jan'y 1777

Dear Brother

I have the pleasure to acquaint you that on the first Instant, Gen'l Putnam took a large quantity of Provision, Bagage &C & Burlington on the third Instant Gen'l Washington marched through Princeton from Trenton toward Rocky hill at which place he came up with the Rear of the Enemy's Army, who were very advantageously Posted on which Action ensued which lasted about 40 Minutes when they were entirely routed, with loss of between fifty & Sixty killed, upward of s hundred taken Prisoners with Six Brass field Pieces, & a large quantity of Baggage - our loss is only Six killed Col'o Sergeant brings the Intelligence which may be relied on -

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 6th Virginia Regt, Captain John Jones Coy
Boswell Hutchings

Pension Application of Boswell Hutchings No. S 5587.

That the Regiment was commanded by Colo. [Mordecai] Buckner. That he continued to serve in the said corps until February 1778, when after the expiration of two years service, he was discharged at Valley Forge in Pennsylvania, but by some accident long since lost his discharge. That he was in the battles of Trenton, Princeton, Brandywine, Germantown, and Mud Island [Siege of Fort Mifflin, 10 - 15 Nov 1777], and in several skirmishes at different places.

NOTE: Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris at <http://southerncampaign.org/pen/s5587.pdf>

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Gloucester County Militia
John Inskeep

John Inskeep Pension Application No. 4703, available at www.footnote.com .

On the 15th or 16th of December 1776 a number of the said Officers and among them this Applicant being aware of the great want of cavalry in the Army met at Haddenfield & determined at once to form themselves into a Volunteer troop of horse and being joined by several other Gentlemen of Character & Property altogether between twenty and thirty put themselves under the command of Benjamin Randolph [and immediately set about equipping themselves for active duty and so in a few days - say on the 26th or 27th of the same month marched from their rendezvous at Haddenfield and joined the army near Trenton on the 1st of January 1777 where they were most cordially received by Genl Washington to whom most of the Company having been in the service were personally known. He requested that the troop would act as his escort or body guard which distinguished situation was gladly accepted and on the next day (the 2nd of January) the attack of the British at Trenton was made when our little troop was actively employed. About midnight we were ordered round to renew the fires & then to join the General when the whole army except a few of the guards marched in profound silence on the back road toward Princeton, our troop always near the person of General Washington. A little before sunrise on the 3rd of January General Mercer who commanded the advance fell in with two British regiments a mile or two below Princeton on their march to join the army we had left at Trenton, when a smart action commenced, and some of the militia retreated in disorder which gave Col. Randolph's troop active employment to rally them and for which they were complimented by General Washington. At the first onset General Mercer was mortally wounded, but on the arrival of the main body commanded by General Washington in person who was much exposed, the enemy were attacked with great energy and after a short but severe conflict were routed, leaving on the ground a number of killed & wounded besides about 200 prisoners taken some valuable officers & men of the Americans were also killed & wounded. Immediately after the battle General Washington marched with the army by way of Somerset to Pluckemin where they took refreshments and rest, having been extremely fatigued.

NOTE: This troop was discharged on 22 February 1777.

W. A. Newman Dorland, "The Second Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 46 (1922), pp. 346-365, p. 360.

John Inskoop [Inskip], second son of *Abraham Inskoop* and *Sarah Ward*, and great-great uncle of W. A. Newman Dorland, the first surgeon of the reorganized Second Troop, was born on January 29, 1757, near Marlton, New Jersey, in which town he was educated. His father was a blacksmith and wheelwright, and, according to the custom of the time, the son learned the same trade. When only 19 years of age he became Lieutenant and then Captain in the Second Battalion of Gloucester County Militia, in 1776; and later served as Quartermaster of Colonel Hillman's command. In 1777, 1778, and 1780, he acted as Commissary for this command. He took part in the battle of Princeton, and shortly afterwards married *Sarah Hulings* at Gloucester, New Jersey. In 1782, he lived in Salem, New Jersey, but soon removed to Philadelphia. In 1785, he became the proprietor of the *George Tavern* ("*Sign of St. George*"), situated at the southwest corner of Second and Arch Streets, which he held until 1791, at least, in the latter year being a member of the firm of Inskoop, Kerlin and Co., who ran the stage coaches between Philadelphia, Baltimore and New York. In 1787-89, he was a private in the Sixth Company, Fourth Battalion, Colonel Will, afterwards Colonel Shee. In 1793, he is recorded as the host of the "*Sign of the Jolly Bacchus*," No. 46 Arch Street ("*Philadelphia and Her Merchants*"—Ritter). In 1794, Mr. Inskoop became a china and glassware merchant at No. 31 South Second Street; and the same year, when 37 years old, he became a member and the Quartermaster of the *new Troop of "Volunteer Greens,"* serving with that organization in the Whisky Insurrection (*American Daily Advertiser*, October 10, 1794). In 1799, he succeeded John Barclay as Alderman. On October 21, 1800, he was elected Mayor of Philadelphia, and two days later laid the foundation-stone of the Permanent Bridge at Market Street. In January, 1801, he became an original member of the Chamber of Commerce; and in October, 1800, was elected a trustee of the Mutual Assurance Company. In 1802, he was elected a Director of the Insurance Company of North America. On May 21, 1802, he was commissioned an Associate Judge of Common Pleas in the City of Philadelphia, and was located at No. 80 North Front Street. This office he resigned on March 1, 1805. On October 15, 1805, he was again elected Mayor of Philadelphia; and in 1806, he succeeded Charles Pettit as President of the Insurance Company of North America, which office he held until May, 1831, when he was succeeded by John C. Smith. He died on Thursday, December 18, 1834, in his 77th year, and was buried in Christ Church burying ground at Fifth and Arch Streets. His brother *Abraham Inskoop* (born June 6, 1752; in 1794, a private in the Second Company, Fourth Philadelphia Regiment, Colonel Andrew Guyer; died in 1820), was for many years Judge of Gloucester County, New Jersey. He married *Hannah Stokes* (born December 18, 1745; died March 16, 1816), daughter of *Joshua Stokes* and *Amy Hinchman*; their daughter, *Sarah Inskoop*, married *Joseph Powel Rogers*; their daughter, *Hannah Inskip Rogers* (born 1800; died 1881), married *Joshua Thorne*; and their eldest daughter, *Sarah Ann Thorne* (born June 20, 1829; died October 11, 1915), married on July 3, 1855, Dr. *William Mathews Dorland* (born November 13, 1816; died August 24, 1884).

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Pennsylvania Militia Chester County, Col. William Montgomery's Regt.
James Johnston

James Johnston Pension Application No. S. 2298 available at www.footnote.com. Also in John C. Dann, ed., *The Revolution Remembered. Eyewitness Accounts of the War for Independence* (Chicago, 1980), pp. 399-406, p. 402. Johnston's account is included for the insight it provides into the activities of the detachments left behind across the Assunpink by Washington during the night of 3 January 1777.

At night preparations were made by General Washington for a retreat. Declarant was detailed for the main guard and shortly after relief he (here begins the quote from the original on the right) found the army about to move. Many of the Soldiers thinking they were about to be led against the enemy threw away their knapsacks. General Washington inquired at the Rear of the Column who commands here? Major Bell of Colonel Evans Regiment announced himself as in command and received orders to remain behind for two hours, carefully observing the Enemy. Declarant was with Major Bell and was sent forward by him with a party to reconnoitre the enemy moving carefully forward they had a full view of the Hessians sitting round their fires smoking their pipes. A centinel challenged: Declarant and the others dropped to the ground and lay quiet until the centinel was heard to resume his walk. They then cautiously retrograded and made report. At the expiration of the two hours Major Bell proceeded to join the Main Army. The advance had an engagement with the enemy at Princeton but the force under Major Bell was not in time to take part in it.

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Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Light Infantry Company, Second Battalion Phil County Volunteers
Col. Robert Lewis' Philadelphia Battalion of the 'Flying Camp'
Andrew Keen

Pension Application of Andrew Keen, No. S 22343 at www.footnote.com .

State of Pennsylvania
County of Philadelphia
District of Kensington

On this thirtieth day of October 1833 personally appeared before me, an alderman & Justice of the Peace, in & for the district of Kensington, County of Philadelphia, Andrew Keen, a resident of said district, in said County of Philadelphia & State of Pennsylvania, aged eighty-four years in August last, who being first deposed according to law, doath on his oath, make the following declaration, in order to obtain the benefit of the Act of Congress passed June 7th 1832.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers, and served as herein stated to wit; On the fourteenth day of July A.D. 1776, he entered the Light Infantry Company of the 2nd Battalion of Philadelphia County Volunteers, commanded by Captain Rudolph Neff and marched to Perth Amboy where he continued for the space of upwards of three months, when the regiment was dismissed with orders to hold themselves in readiness to march at a moment's warning; the said Andrew Keen however, with seven of his associates, by name Isaac Keen, Samuel Laycock, Reuben Head, Geo. Lighteiser, Conrad Hoffman, Wm Smith & Sergeant Samuel Wells, were retained in service having been detached as a Guard with a wagon containing money for Head Quarters, on which duty they continued nearly a month when about the latter end of October or the beginning of November, they again joined the army at Head Quarters at New Hope under General Washington and remained with him until some time in the latter end of February 1777; during which person he, the said Andrew Keen participated in the capture of the Hessians, in the subsequent glorious march from the banks of the Assunpink, and in the more glorious surprise of the British Army at Princeton. That the said Andrew Keen with the company to which he belonged, during said Battle of Princeton fought, near the person of General Mercer & was within twenty yards of him when he fell; that after the Battle the army pushed on, crossed the Millstone River & remained that night at Somerset; the next day they continued on to Pluckamine where they arrived about three o'clock P.M. & bivouacked for the space of days at which place they buried a

British officer taken wounded at the Battle of Princeton & drew their rations from whence they marched to Morristown where they remained until discharged.¹

That while at Perth Amboy, his Battalion was under the command of Col. Robert Lewis and that during the affairs at Trenton & Princeton, the detachment to which he belonged was under the immediate command of Lt. Col. Jos Deane.

The pension file of Andrew Keen contains a deposition of Jacob Foulkrod, dated 31 Oct 1833, which states that both Andrew Keen and Jacob Foulkrod were at the Battle of Princeton, under the command of Lt. Col. Joseph Deane. Jacob Snyder also states that he served at Trenton in the company of Capt. Rudolph Neff. Washington possibly kept the squad of eight guards under Capt. Neff together even after they were no longer stationed at New Hope (Coryell's Ferry), viz., "the said Andrew Keen however, with seven of his associates, by name Isaac Keen, Samuel Laycock, Reuben Head, Geo. Lighteiser, Conrad Hoffman, Wm Smith & Sergeant Samuel Wells, were retained in service having been detached as a Guard with a wagon containing money for Head Quarters, on which duty they continued nearly a month when about the latter end of October or the beginning of November, they again joined the army at Head Quarters at New Hope under General Washington and remained with him until some time in the latter end of February 1777."

Jacob Foulkrod's deposition in the Andrew Keen pension file:

This is to certify that I am well acquainted with Mr. Andrew Keen of Philadelphia County, Pennsa; that we were companions in arms under the immediate command of Genl Washington during the greater part of the Revolutionary Struggle. We were together at the battle of Trenton, under the direction of Lt Col J. Deane; at the battle of Assunpink creek and at the battle of Princeton during which our General (Mercer) was killed.

Pension Application of Jacob Snyder No. S23932, dated 11 Mar 1833

That he was drafted in the month of August in the year 1776 and marched to Amboy in the State of New Jersey under the Command of Capt. Rudolph Neff in the Regt. of Coln. Robert Lewis and continued 2 months Generals Roberdeau and Mercer commanded as Continental Officers at the time - was drafted again in the month of December of the same year 1776 under the command of Capt. Isaac Worrell in the Regt. commanded by Coln. Robert Lewis and marched to Trenton, Princeton & Morristown and continued in the service 2 months, during which term he was engaged in the battles that were fought at Trenton and Princeton in December 1776 and January 1777. General Washington commanded in person at both battles.

¹ The officer mentioned by Keen is Captain William Leslie of the 17th Regiment.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 6th Virginia Regt, Captain John Chilton's Coy
John Kirk

Pension Application of John Kirk No. S 5558.

Camped on the bank of the Delaware on Christmas and (as well as he now remembers) on the following morning they crossed the Delaware & marched into Trenton and took the Hessian prisoners. they then recrossed the Delaware taking the prisoners to the Pennsylvania side – in a few days afterwards they recrossed the Delaware and took possession of Trenton, and continued there a few days and from thence he with the army took a circuitous route and fell in at Princeton, and was in the battle fought in the vicinity of that place [3 Jan 1777] where Gen'l. Mercer was Killed [mortally wounded; died 12 Jan]. after the battle of Princeton he was taken sick and sent to the hospital in Philadelphia. And in the spring of 1777 he again joined the Army in Bonbrook [sic: Boundbrook] or Middlebrook in New Jersey and marched in various directions until information was received that the British had landed at the head of Elk [now Elkton MD, 28 Aug 1777].

NOTE: Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris at <http://southerncampaign.org/pen/s5558.pdf>

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Continental Artillery
General Henry Knox

Time	Location
07:30	“arriv’d near Princeton a little after day break”: sunrise is at 7:22 a.m.
07:35	
07:40	Crown forces are “about a quarter of a mile distant from the one [road] in which we were”
07:45	
07:50	
07:55	we march’d a party to attack them this attack they repuls’d with great spirit &
08:00	advanc’d upon another Column just then leaving out of a wood which they likewise put in some disorder
08:05	
08:10	
08:15	
08:20	
08:25	
08:30	
08:35	
08:40	
08:45	
08:50	
08:55	
09:00	

Source:

Henry Knox to Lucy Knox, Henry Knox Papers, Microfilm ed., Reel 3. The letter is also published in its entirety in William S. Stryker, *The Battles of Trenton and Princeton* (Boston and New York, 1898), pp. 449-452; the Princeton quote is on pp. 450-451.

Morristown, 7 January 1777

My dearest Love--

... the General thought it was best to attack Princeton 12 miles in the rear of the enemys Grand army and where they had the 17th & 55th Regts with a number of draughts altogether perhaps 1200 men – accordingly about 1 oClock at night we began to march & make this most extra manoevre – out Troops march'd with great silence & order & arriv'd near Princeton a little after day Break. We did not surprize them as at Trenton for they were on their march down to Trenton on a roud about a quarter of a mile distant from the one in which we were – you may judge of their Surprize when they discovered such large Columns marching up, they could not possibly suppose it was our army for that they took for granted was coop'd up near Trenton, they could not possibly suppose it was their own army returning by a back roud – in short I believe they were as much astonish'd as if the Army had drop'd perpendicularly upon them – however they had not much time for consideration we march'd a party to attack them this attack they repuls'd with great spirit & advanc'd upon another Column just then leaving out of a wood which they likewise put in some disorder but fresh troops coming up and the Artillery beginning to play they were after a smart resistance totally put to the rout the 17th Regt us'd their Bayonets with too much Severity upon a party they put to flight but they were paid for it in proportion – very few escaping – 60 were kill'd on the spot - besides the wounded – we have taken between three & four hundred prisoners all British troops – they must have lost in this affair nearly 500 (? illeg) killed wounded & taken prisoners. – we lost some gallant officers – Brig. General Mercer was wounded ... Lt-Col. Fleming was killed & a Capt. Neal of the Artillery an Exceeding fine Officer – [illeg] will get better – the enemy took his parole after we left Princeton – we took all their Cannon which amounted of two brass six pounders & considerable quantity of military Stores Blankets Suns (?) &c – they lost among amouner of other Officers a Capt. Leslie – son to the Earl of Leven & nephew to Genl Leslie him we brought off & buried with the honors of War.

After we had been about two hours at Princeton word was brought that the enemy were advancing from Trenton – they did as we have since been informed, in a most infernal sweat, - running, puffing, and blowing, and swearing at being so outwitted.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Unknown
John Lardner

Private John Lardner to Captain Smith, 31 July 1824. William S. Stryker, *The Battles of Trenton and Princeton* (Boston, 1898), pp. 442-443.

On the issue of who suggested the night-time march to Princeton on 2/3 January 1777, Lardner wrote:

On the evening of 1 Jan'y 1777 a party of the Troop George Campbell, James Caldwell, myself & I think another, were posted as a patrol on this very road. We remained on it the whole night, occasionally going as high as Quaker bridge. We found that the Enemy had no patrols there, and that apparently they had no knowledge of it. Along this road Washington led his army the following night, on the memorable retreat, & with which he must have been made acquainted or the patrols would not have been placed there.

From my own knowledge I have the best reason to doubt Gen'l Wilkinson's statement, where he says Vol. I. 140 - "Gen'l St Clair had been charged with the guard of the fords of the Assampink & in the course of the day (2^d Jan^{ry}) whilst examining the ground to the right, he had fallen on the Quaker bridge." I am a living witness it was familiar to others some time before. But Wilkinson in another place observes, that the practicability of the rout was well understood by Colonel Reed the Adjutant Genl. - Surely it was.

I well remember the circumstance of the Council sitting near to where the Troop was station'd, on the evening of the 2^d Janry, and to have heard it confidently mentioned the next day & repeatedly afterwards as the universal sentiment - that the thought of the movement that night originated entirely with Washington - solely his own manoeuvre. ...

John Lardner to his mother, 7 January 1777. Lardner Family Papers, Box 5 Folder 9, Collection Description #2171, Historical Society of Pennsylvania

Morristown, 7 January 1777

I wrote you the 5th Inst. with some account of our Rout, since which all has been quiet.

You can't conceive the Distress & Desolation the british Army have brought upon the Inhabitants & the Country they have march'd through & now every countenance seems pleas'd at the Approach of our Army who are to deliver them from a set of incarnate Devils.

The letter of 5 January 1777, in which Lardner presumable also described the Battle of Princeton to his mother, could not be located.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Pennsylvania German (Hubley's or 10th PA) Regt, Capt. Frederick Hubley's Coy
Jacob Lauman

Pension Application of Jacob Lauman No. S 13686.

That he was born in Lancaster Town in the year seventeen hundred and fifty five, that he has no record of his age. That he enlisted in the Army of the United States in the summer or fall of the year of the seventeen hundred and seventy six in the company commanded by Captain Frederick Hubley, in the Regiment commanded by Colonel Hubley, a brother of the Captain, under the command of General [Anthony] Wayne, that he enlisted to serve during the War, that he resided at the time of his enlistment in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, that he was engaged in the Battle of Princeton, some time in the winter of the year he enlisted, he thinks it was a day or so after Christmas [3 Jan 1777], that he was afterwards in the fall of the year seventeen hundred and seventy seven in the engagement at Brandywine [11 Sep]. After that battle he was stationed at a place called Paoli where the American Troops were surprised and a great number killed [21 Sep 1777], ...

That soon after he was out of his apprenticeship, and in the summer of 1776 (as he believes) he enlisted at Lancaster into the American Army for during the war. He enlisted into, or served in Captain Hubleys company in Col. Hubleys regiment (as he believes) in the Pennsylvania line or troops, and, after the first season of his service, the troops in which he served, were under General Wayne, and continued under his command as General until after the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown. That he was at and engaged in the Battles of Trenton [26 Dec 1776], Brandywine, Paoli, White-horse [Battle of the Clouds near White Horse Tavern, Chester County PA, 16 Sep 1777], Germantown, and Yorktown, Virginia, being in many other skirmishes.

NOTE: Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris at <http://southerncampaign.org/pen/s13686.pdf>

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Civilian
Robert Lawrence

Time	Location
07:22	Civil sunrise
07:35	
07:40	as soon as it was well light we saw the Regulars that was left at Princetown Marching towards Trenton
07:45	
07:50	
07:55	
08:00	
08:05	in about half a hours time we saw them comeing back faster then they went
08:10	a Party of them came into our Field laid down their Packs there and formed at the corner of our Garden about 60 Yards from the door
08:15	marcht away Immediately to the field of Battle Which was in William Clarks wheat field and Orchard Round about his house
08:20	plain within sight of our door at about 400 Yards distance
08:25	
08:30	
08:35	
08:40	
08:45	
08:50	
08:55	in about three quarters of an hour from the begining of the battle the Regulars were put to flight
09:00	

Source:

Varnum Lansing Collins, ed., *A brief Narrative of the Ravages of the British and Hessians at Princeton in 1776-77. a Contemporary Account of the Battles of Trenton and Princeton* (Princeton, 1906), pp. 32- 39.

It being near night Genl Washinton with his Army marcht up the Mill pond and the South side of Assanpink brook, and when they came to the woods he ordered many large fires to be made on the sides of the road, and marcht on with his army up the brook to the bridge Rozels mill and past over there and came to Stoney Brook near Isaac Clarks about a mile and half below the bridge on the main road, Where they were hindered some time in making a bridge over the brook for the Army to pas with the Artillery. This was done Unexpected to the Regular Army who to Annoy Washintons men as they thought now and then all night from over the brook fired a Cannon shot at the fires that was left, this bring us to the third day of January 1777.

When as soon as it was well light we saw the Regulars that was left at Princetown Marching towards Trenton, and in about half a hours time we saw them comeing back faster then they went, a Party of them came into our Field, and [p. 33] laid down their Packs there and formed at the corner of our Garden about 60 Yards from the door and then marcht away Immediately to the field of Battle Which was in William Clarks wheat field and Orchard Round about his house and how much further to the westard I Know not It was plain within sight of our door at about 400 Yards distance I can give no Account how the battle was ordered on Either side for want of Proper Information only this Genl Washintons army was so hindered in makeing and passing the bridge that the Battle was begun before their field Pieces could be brought up, where upon they Retreated and Rallyed again with their Artillery towards the last of the battle seven Regulars was seen from our door to fall at once and in about three quarters of an hour from the begining of the battle the Regulars were put to flight with the loss of two brass field Pieces took from them in the field. The Exact Number of their men that was Slain wounded and took prisoners [p. 16; sic] I Know not there was thirty Six dead men the next day buryed in a Stone Quarry among whom there was 15 of Gen' Washintons men, the Other 21 were Regulars besides three of them that lay dead in and near the main Road which Genl Washinton seeing Ordered them to be put in the Waggons and carryed to town. And desired the Country People to bury the dead, besides these there was several others found Dead near the field of Battle and buryed in other places, Which side they belonged to I do not Know, But it is said that most of them was Regulars Genl Washintons [p. 34] army took all the Regulars in town Prissoners, and discharged their Continental Prissoners that they had Confined in the Colledge to the number of 2 among whom (as it said) was about 30 of our Country people that were Accused Either of being Rebels or aiding and Assisting them They took their Stores in which (it is said) was a very large number of new blankets They took all the Enemys Cannon in town and [p. 35] was obliged to leave two of them for Want of Carriage to take them of one gun they threw into a well and then they Marcht on with their Prissoners and plunder to Sommerset Court House that day, and left some of the prissoners, and of their own men to care of the sick and wounded men on both sides Genl Washinton as soon as the battle was over Ordered some of his men to be placed near the Bridge over Stoney brook on the Main Road to hinder the Regulars passing over and to pull up the bridge which was Scarcely

done when the Regulars Appeared Which caused a Second fireing about three quarters of an hour appart from the first in which there was no Execution done that I heard of. In a little time our men Retreated, and the Regulars were Oblidged to Cross the brook at the ford with their artillery almost middle deep in water (the back water of the mill being then up) and form'd on this side the brook and towards night (when they Knew [p. 36] that the other Army was gone) marcht into Princetown Thus that poor and almost Wholly Desolate town of al! its late Inhabitants had change of Masters two if not three times on that day, for they had the Regulars in the Morning The Continentals at noon the regulars again at night who left them to the Continentals that night again and have not yet returned to Assume their Conquest. So Unconstant is the State of War and so Certain and sure the mischiefs and miserys attending it That it is a Wonder that Wise men should ever depend on it.

In the beginning of the forementioned Battle a Womans leg was shot of at her ankle by a Cannon ball she was in one of the houses near the bridge on the main road in the hollow on this side Stoney brook it was thought to [p. 17 sic] be done by one of Gen' Washintons field Pieces. The battle was Plainly Seen from our door Before any Gun was heard a man was seen to fall and Immediately the Report and Smoke of a Gun was Seen and heard, And the guns went of so quick and many together that they could not be numbered, we Presently went down into the Cellar to keep out of the Way of the Shot. There was a Neighbour woman down in the Cellar with us that was so Affrighted that she Imagined that the field was covered with Blood, and When we came out of the Cellar She called Earnestly to us to look out and see how all the field was quit red with blood. When none was to be seen at that Distance. This I mention only to show into What Strange mistakes Sudden frights with the fear of Death may put us into. Almost as soon as the firing was over our house was filled and surrounded with Gen' Washington's Men, and himself on horseback at the door. They brought in with [p. 37] them on their Shoulders two Wounded Regulars, one of them was shot in at his hip and the bullet lodged in his groin, and the other was shot through his body Just below his short ribs he was in very great pain and bled much out of both sides, and often desired to be removed from one place to another, which was done Accordingly and he dyed about three o'clock in the afternoon They was both Used very tenderly by the Rebels (as they call them) The other also bled much and they put a Cloth dipt in vinegar to the wound to Stop it and three of them Stay'd with the wounded men near an hour after the Others were gone, the man that lived was left at our house above two days and one night With his Wound not drest, before the Regulars that was left to take care of the sick and wounded would take him away, though they had notice that day after the battle.

Gen' Washington as he came from the field of Battle saw their packs lying in ye field Where they had left them, and set & guard over them with orders that no body should meddle with them until further Orders the guard stood by them until the Regulars that came from Trenton had formed and then left them Where they lay until near Sun set and then When all the men that left them there were Either slain Wounded taken Prissoners or fled from the battle the Other Regulars and Hessians from Trenton Begun to Plunder their fellow Soldiers Packs takeing out what they Pleased and leaving the rest in the dirt, the next day the Plunderers Inceast and continued from day to day until all was gone but What they refused to take some old Blankets they gave to the Wounded Man. It is Observable that in Plundering they Keep no Order, for one Plunderer will Rob another as Appears by [p. 18 sic] an instance before our door Some of the Men that left their Packs to Secure them the better threw them [p. 38] over the Garden

boarded fence into it, and a Hessian seeing the Packs lying in the garden went in and threw them over the fence into the field Opened one of them and took out some things that a Regular had a mind too, and the other Refused to give him and then the Regular laid hold on him and took" them from him by force and Kickt his breech when he had done, one or two more Scuffles of the like Nature we saw but at a far greater distance.

As soon as the battle was over Genl Mercer (who had his horse shot down under him, and then received several wounds by which in some days after he dyed) was carryed into Thomas Clarks house with several other wounded men, And above Twenty was carried into William Clarks house two of them dyed soon after they was brought in Sixty was carryed to Princetown but how many of them were regulars I know not. By an Account that a Neighbour Gentleman sent to me there was thirty one Regulars found dead In about the field of tattle and nineteen Provincials, and one hundred and Seventy five taken Prissoners of the Regulars and Hessians. This account of the Prissoners is confirm'd by what a Captain of the Millitia told me who was in the Battle and marcht with Gen' Washington to Morristown with the Addition that they were all Privates Besides Officers and how many of them he did not know.

Immediately after the Battle (as I said before) Genl Washingtons Men came into our house Though they were both hungry and thirsty some of them laughing out right, others smileing, and not a man among them but showed Joy in his Countenance. It Really Animated my old blood with Love to those men that but a few minutes before had been [p. 39] Courageously looking Death in the face in Releiveing a part of their Country from the Barbarous Insults and Ravages of a bold and Dareing Enemy. By the Joy that I felt myself I cannot help but be of the Opinion that the most Strict of them all against bearing Arms in our own defence (if they have any love for their bleeding Country) but must in some degree or other Rejoice with the rest of their Neighbours and others for that days happy Relief that it Pleased God to bless us with.

Note: The identification of the author as Robert Lawrence is based on Samuel Stelle Smith, *The Battle of Princeton* (Monmouth Beach, 1967), p. 38.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Civilian
Richard Henry Lee

Richard Henry Lee to Patrick Henry, Baltimore 9 January 1777. *Letters of delegates to Congress, 1774-1789* vol. 6, 1 January 1777 - 30 April 1777. Quoted from the online-edition available at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwdg.html>.

Dear Sir,

I have no doubt but that Mr. President inclosed you with his last dispatches the printed account of General Washingtons success at Trenton. The number of Hessian prisoners there made, do not fall much short of 1100. Since that event we have had no regular account from the army, but from a Committee of Congress at Philadelphia we have the accounts brought into Philadelphia by a number of persons and believed there, in substance as follows. The British forces stationed at Brunswick, Trenton, and other places in New Jersey, hearing of the success at Trenton, collected and marched towards that place to attack our army, now strengthened by the junction of all its detachments and by several corps of Militia. Gen. Washington ordered two Brigades to advance on the Princeton road and interrupt the enemies march. About 3 miles from Trenton they met the enemy and being attacked by a much superior force, were compelled to retreat, which they did slowly keeping up a retreating engagement until they joined the main body drawn up on the heigh grounds on this side a bridge that divides the village of Trenton nearly in two parts. The enemy attempting to force the bridge were received by Gen. Mifflin with the Philadelphia militia and a number of Field pieces, who drove them back with great loss, and some batteries being now opened on the heights commanding the enemies part of the Town, they were soon obliged to quit it with loss. The armies still continued posted opposite each other until midnight, when Gen. Washington (having received certain intelligence that Gen. Howe was on his march in person, with a large reinforcement to join his army) having previously directed large fires to be made to deceive the enemy, decampt, made a forct march that night to meet Gen. Howe, met with him at a place called Quakers bridge, gave him battle and routed his troops, taking from 6 to 800 prisoners. Pursuing the fugitives he entered Princeton where a number of Officers, 6 or 7 field pieces, and the 40th Regiment were taken. The British army that remained at Trenton knew nothing of General Washingtons design until they heard the firing next morning, and then, having possessed themselves of the heights for some time, they retreated towards Brunswick along the Pennytown road, a circuitous, western way, leaving the place of engagement on the right hand a good distance. This extraordinary motion denotes panic, because their direct rout to the scene of action was along the road to Princetown, as thus

[The account goes on-]

That our Army was pursuing from Princeton to Brunswick, where the enemy had large Stores kept. We know that Gen. Heath with above 3000 men is about Hackingsack and Colo. Ford with 1500 Jersey militia is before him in the way to Trenton. This is the posture we understand things to be in, and we wait in hourly expectation of receiving authentic intelligence of the total rout of the enemies army in Jersey and their disgraceful evacuation of that State. Thus we bid fair to derive great advantage from what we once apprehended would injure us extremely, the dispersion of our army. The enemy knowing we had no army, and trusting to their Tory intelligence that no forces could be collected, had divided their troops in such a manner as to expose them to ruin from Militia only, or chiefly so; for excepting about 1500 Eastern troops, the same number of Virginians, about 200 of Smallwoods Marylanders and a broken Pennsylvania regiment, the rest of Gen. Washingtons army is Militia. Another valuable consequence will result from this success, it will prove to our enemies that America, without an army, is formidable in its militia. For sudden exertions, the Militia certainly do well, but they cannot bear the continued discipline of camps and campaigns. This certainty makes it of the last importance that our regular Army should be assembled with all possible dispatch, and such you will find to be the sense of Congress by their requests to the several States for this purpose. Our wicked Enemy to Freedom & all its friends, are actually preparing to try Gen. Lee by a special Court Martial. For it seems, that in order to be aided by a court martial that Gentlemans resignation of his commission was not accepted. We have sent to remonstrate with Mr. Howe on this subject, to demand Gen. Lees enlargement on his parole, and to assure that the same infliction exactly that is applied to Gen. Lee, shall directly be applied to 5 Hessian Field officers and Colo. Campbell their favorite Engineer who shall be reserved for that special purpose. We have offered 6 Hessian field Officers in exchange for Gen. Lee.

I heartily wish you the compliments of the season, and am with great esteem dear Sir your most affectionate and obedient servant,

Richard Henry Lee

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: German Regiment, Capt. Heyser's Coy.
William Lewis

Pension application of William Lewis, No. W 4263.

[he was] attached to the German Battalion commanded by Col. Hoosecker who deserted and joined the enemy at Princeton

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Head-Quarters
BG Benjamin Lincoln

Collection Gratz 4 Box 13, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia

General Benjamin Lincoln to General Wooster, 8 January 1777

I have the pleasure to inform you that last Friday General Washington attacked the enemy at Princetown and killed and took five hundred and that on Sunday last were taken thirty nine Waldeckers and one of the Light Horse.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 6th Virginia Regiment, Col. Mordecai Buckner
John Lipford

Pension Application of John Lipford No. S 8866.

On the 4 day of August [1832] personally appeared th before me William Walton one of the Commonwealths Justices of the peace for the County of Buckingham and one of Justices of the County Court of Buckingham and State aforesaid (which is a Court of record) John Lipford a resident of said County, and State aforesaid aged seventy seven years, who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on his Oath make the following declaration, in order to obtain the benefit of the Act of Congress passed June 7th 1832. that he enlisted in the Army of the United States on the 4th day of Feb'y 1776 with Charles Fleming and serving in the Regiment of the line under the Command of Colo. [William] Dangerfield untill about the Month of June, he was then with the assent of the officers transfered from Capt. Flemings Company to Capt. Thomas Pattesons Company to be with his two brothers who had enlisted under Capt. Patteson in the County of Buckingham, and a Man from Capt. Pattesons Company was transferred to Capt. Fleming Company to be with his Brother, he was marched to Gwins Island to oppose Dunmore, and left Williamsburg about the 1st Sep't. under the command of Colo. [Mordecai] Buckner marched through Maryland Pensylvania to Trenton in New Jersey, we marched from there and met Gen'l. Washington retreating after the Battle at long Island [27 Aug 1776], retreated with him, Washington, back to Trenton, was at the taking of the Hessians was at the battle at Prince Town, In May following I was Transfered to Gen'l. [Daniel] Morgan, was in several skirmishes near summerset C. House [14, 17, 19 June 1777], marched and joined the army under Gen'l. Gates was in the battle at the taking of Burgoyne

NOTE: Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris at <http://southerncampaign.org/pen/s8866.pdf>

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Civilian
Christopher Marschall

William Duane, *Diary of Christopher Marshall, Philadelphia and Lancaster, during the American Revolution, 1774 -1781*. (Albany, 1877), pp. 110-111.

3. News flying about of an engagement between our forces and those of the enemy at Trenton. This raises the spirits of the Tory party, who are in great expectation of Howe's success. Published this day the Resolve of Congress and Council of Safety, respecting the establishing of the Continental Currency.
4. The news of the day, and confirmed by express, it's said, just arrived at nine at night, is that Gen. Washington occupied part of Trenton, and Howe the other with the main body of the British army. Our General being informed of Gen. Howe's advancing with four thousand men, went privately at midnight in order to intercept Howe, and meeting with him at Maidenhead, an engagement ensued early in the morning, when the enemy, standing a smart fire for half an hour, gave way, when Gen. Washington pursued them to Princeton, when the Fortieth Regiment took refuge in the College, which our General summoned to surrender, or else he would fire the building and burn them in it; upon which they all surrendered. They likewise took three hundred prisoners on the road with eight field pieces, &c. He also sent off two brigades to the relief of that part of his army he left behind him to amuse the main body of the enemy at Trenton, which decamped as soon as they heard of Gen. Washington's victory, and filed off towards Pennytown. Thanks to God for this victor!
5. Yesterday Gen. Putnam left this city for the camp with five hundred men, and Gen. Irving is to have command of this city in his absence. It's further said that Gen. Washington is appointed sole dictator for the space of six months.
7. The gondolas returned to this city, and brought some Tory prisoners with them, taken in the Jerseys. It was the severe freezing upwards that brought the gondolas down.
9. This afternoon, were brought to town, between seventy and eighty English prisoners (among whom it's said were some of their Light Horse), who were sent to our new prison.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 4th Battalion, Philadelphia Militia
Captain Samuel Massey

Manuscript of Samuel Massey, Captain 7th Co. Philade militia, 4th Battalion in 1777 - The Property of Louis C. Massey, great grandson

John Reed Collection, Record Group 10, Valley Forge NHP

Memorandum of Occurrences attending the Armies of the United States and those that were sent out by the King of Great Britain their operations in different quarters of the provinces & colonies then called –

Jan 2 1777 United States – General Washington gained Intelligence of the British coming in full force against him at Trenton – gave Orders for the March of the Militia then quartered at Crosswicks /with Glovers Regiment/ to Trenton – the Troops & Militia marched about 12 oClock in the Mornign out of Crosswicks to Trenton – the Roads so Bad, they were frequently halted – to assist the Horses in drawing the Artillery – retarded the March so much – that they did not reach Trenton until after Sunrise – the Militia scarcely got in their Quarters – before they were alarmed by Sound of Drum to Arms. – not having Time to take any Refreshments Marched out of Trenton about 9 oClock AM & continued maneuvering until 2 oClock – when they were alarmed by firing between the advanced Parties – and between 3/4 oClock – the Canonade began at Trenton and continued until Night came on – which put an End to further Operations – when the firing ceased – Orders were issued to make up Fires as quick as possible – and thus the Army remained until 12 oClock in the Morning – when the Fires were refreshed – the Army moved off as privately as possible leaving the Ground with their Fires well supplied with Wood & look up a Line of March & continued it until day light scarce any person in the Army knew which way they were pursuing. But when Morning appeared – the Doubt was removed – about Sun rise an Attack began at Princeton which lasted about 2 Hours – in the Army ceased firing at this Battle the Army lost General Capt Shippen & Lieut Anthony Morris – they took a Number of Prisoners – and left a great Number dead & wounded on the Spot -- and Marched thro' Princeton with their Prisoners & all the Cattle that could be collected 0 the Army got supplied with some Spirits & wine – and the Militia with a few Blanketts. – General Washington pursued a Route by Kingston from thence to Somersett – where the army halted the Night of the 3d & the only place /which was abt 8 oClock Pm/ they had Time to take Refreshment. Thus they sustained a March without provision from Crosswicks, which they left 12 oClock AM the 2nd Jan 4 1777. Which is 44 Hours – the next Morning on the 4 January – the Army left Somerset Courthouse and continued their March to Pluckimin –

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 6th Virginia Regiment
Thomas Massie

Pension Application of Thomas Massie No. W 7403. Published as "Pension Declaration of Major Thomas Massie." *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* vol. 21, no. 2 (April 1913), pp. 184-192.

Gen'l Washington having fortunately gained a grand point in eluding Cornwallace's intention of bringing him into a general action, made up large fires in front & left those who had been in the van during the day to keep them up. He immediately marched with his army & taking the Princetown road, reached that place early the next morning, defeated Colo Mahood who Lord Cornwallace had left there with troops to defend the place & his stores. Gen'l Washington having taken off those stores &c, proceeded down the road by Kington & Summerset Courthouse to Morristown, where he established his head quarters.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 8th Virginia Regiment
Sergeant Thomas McCarty

Jared C. Lobdell, ed., "The Revolutionary War Journal of Sergeant Thomas McCarty." *Proceedings of the New Jersey Historical Society* 82 No. 1, (January, 1964), pp. 29 - 46, p. 41. McCarty's account is included as an example of how far the sound of the cannon-fire carried: it is about 12 miles from the Old Barracks in Trenton to Nassau Hall, Bordentown is seven miles south-east of Trenton, Burlington is twelve miles to the south-west, which means that the cannon fire carried more than 20 miles.

Thursday, January 2 - In the morning orders to make ready, and I served the men some flour and meat. Then about 12 o'clock alarm guns fired and a [three words illegible] the cannon balls flew fast and close to me and the baggage. That night and day I was unwell. About two hours in the night we were ordered off with the baggage, and about two came to Bordentown, and about ten o'clock the next day [on 3 January] to Burlington, and in my way heard a heavy cannonade, but here I am now.

Saturday, January 4 - I was in town waiting for orders. I had got into a room and remained so till evening, when I heard the dreadful news of several brave officers being killed.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Pennsylvania Rifles, Captain John Marshall's Coy (later in Col. Walter Stewart's Regiment)
Cary McClelland

Pension Application of Cary McClelland No. S 9006 available at www.footnote.com

In the dusk of evening Washington gave orders for every man to be at a fire about two rolls (?) apart ... the fires were burning G. Washington marched us around the enemy on to Princeton, which the British had left the day before. The British had left a guard at Princeton over the baggage. - Declarant heard G. Washington tell Gen. Mercer to detach a body of men, and go and attack the guard. Declarant was one of the detachment. In the first of the engagement Gen. Mercer had the hoof shot off his horse with a three pounder; and was himself wounded in the groin and fell. After that we had to push bayonets at the right and left wings and G Mercer was stabbed 7 times with bayonets. When we retreated a little distance and were relieved by Gen. Washington with a reinforcement. The british guard then surrendered and we took all the baggage. Gen. Mercer survived this action but a short time. Then we marched towards the British head quarters at Brunswick, kept behind 80 men falling trees across the road and pulling up bridges to keep back the British.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: unknown (Virginia ?) Regiment
John McClure

Pension Application of John McClure No. R 6632.

that he enlisted in the army of the United States on the 10th day of March 1776 for a Term of eighteen months with Major Patrick Lockhart who sent him from Botetourt County State of Virginia his place of residence heading a company of eighteen men to Long Island [NY] and there in September [two words illegible] joined the Army under Captain Frelinghuysen [possibly Frederick Frelinghuysen who later became Colonel] Major not recollected Col. Warner and Genls. [Charles] Lee Reed and Washington and served said time as orderly sergeant and was in the battle of Trenton December 26th 1776 also in the battle at Princeton January [3rd] 1777 and received a discharge from Capt. Frelinghuysen October 11th 1777.

NOTE: Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris at <http://southerncampaign.org/pen/r6632.pdf>

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Chester County (PA) Militia Capt. Thomas Strawbridge's Coy
Thomas Mifflin's Brigade

Pension application of William McCracken No. R 6665

State of Maryland, Harford County

On this 20th day of January 1834 personally appeared before me the subscriber ... William McCracken a resident of Harford County and State of Maryland [who] entered the service of the United States under the following named officers ... That a short time anterior to the Capture of the Hessians at Trenton there was a draft of Militia in Chester County Pennsylvania that he resided at that time near New London Cross Roads and was drafted under Captn Thomas Strawbridges Company ... and that he belonged to General Mifflin's brigade. that his company immediately proceeded to Philadelphia where he heard of the Capture of the Hessians that his company went up the Delaware to Bordentown or Burlington he is not certain which after staying there two nights he went with his company across the country to Princetown & as they marched on heard the firing of the compheting armies and was ordered to break down a bridge which they in part cut down & set fire to repose of it when the British fired field pieces from an adjoining Hill, they went from thence to Princeton & followed the regular Army & went from thence to Somerset Court House.

McCracken is 88 years old at the time.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Miles' Pennsylvania Rifle Regiment, Col. Samuel Miles, Capt. John Marshall's Coy, 13th Pennsylvania Regiment
Lieutenant James McMichael

“Diary of Lieutenant James McMichael, Of The Pennsylvania Line, 1776 – 1778.” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 16, (1892), pp. 129 – 159, and in *Pennsylvania Archives*, Second Series, vol. 15, pp. 195 – 218, the quote on p. 203.

The original autograph manuscript *Journal for Ja's McMichael: commencing the 27th May A.D. 1776 containing a brief account of the marches of the Penn. Rifle Reg't with the distance in miles from place to place and some remarks on the country and inhabitants / 1776-1778*. [i.e., 27 May 1776 to 12 May 1778, 126 pp.] is at Princeton University

January 3. [1777] at 1 A.M. we all paraded and marched for Princeton. We reached Stony Brook at 9 A.M. where we sighted the enemy. Gen. Mercer with 100 Pennsylvania riflemen and 20 Virginians, were detached to the front to bring on the attack. The enemy then consisting of 500 paraded in an open field in battle array. We boldly marched to within 25 yards of them, and then commenced the attack, which was very hot. We kept up an incessant fire until it came to pushing bayonets when we were ordered to retreat. Here Gen. Mercer was mortally wounded, Col. Hazlet and Major Fleming both killed, with 19 rank and file, and 60 wounded. Having retreated a short distance, we were reinforced, when we immediately rallied, and with the utmost precipitation put our foes to retreat. We killed 60 on the field, wounded 75, and took 215 prisoners. We evacuated Princeton and marched for Somerset Court House, where we arrived at 8 P.M.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Third Battalion, Philadelphia Associators
Lieutenant-Colonel Samuel Meredith

William S. Stryker, *The Battles of Trenton and Princeton* (Boston, 1898), pp. 468-469.

Major Samuel Meredith to –

Morris Town, Jany. 9th 1777.

The Greatest stroke of Generalship that has been shown in this war was exhibited by General Washington in our march from Trenton to Prince Town. It entirely disconcerted the progress of the enemy, who knew nothing of our march till the firing happened at Prince Town between them and us, for we went a back road all the way. What was done there you have heard I don't doubt, with a good deal of exaggeration. It was, however, a very capital stroke, for those who were not taken or killed retired with utmost precipitation. Those from Trenton did so likewise. They are now posted on this side of Brunswick, the landing Piscataway, Amboy, &c. they retired from Elizabeth Town yesterday. The militia of this County fell upon their Rear & took 90 or 100 of them, (and killed some), with a considerable quantity of Baggage. Our Baggage, when we left Trenton, was all sent down to Burlington, so that we have no shift of clothes at all. But it is expected in a few days. ...¹

NOTE: Meredith was married to Lambert Cadwallader's sister Peggy. Lambert was colonel of the 4th Pennsylvania Regiment.

Stryker identifies Meredith as a "Major" but upon Washington's recommendation the three battalions of Philadelphia Associators in early December 1776 had been consolidated into a single brigade of 1,200 men under Colonel Cadwalader as Brigadier-General. John Nixon became Colonel of the Third Battalion, Samuel Meredith its Lieutenant-Colonel. They left Philadelphia for Trenton on 10 December. On 13 December 1776, Washington wrote in a letter to the President of Congress: "Cadwalader, with the Philadelphia militia, occupies the ground above and below the mouth of the Neshaminy River, as far down as Dunk's Ferry, at which place Colonel Nixon is posted with the Third battalion of Philadelphia."

¹ On the transfer of baggage to Burlington see the "Journal of Sergeant William Young" *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 8 (1884), pp. 255-278, pp. 265-266.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Virginia Riflemen
Joshua Mersereau

Pension application of Joshua Mersereau No. S 7224.

In April 1776, I became a volunteer in a Corps of Virginia Rifle men stationed on his Staten Island commanded by Major Stevens Capt. Otho Williams, and Lieut. Abraham Shepard, in May of the same year, he Corps above mentioned took 8 prisoners from a tender of the Asia Man of war which had approached the shore, from the time I left the Corps on Staten Island, on the first July in the same year, I was employed by General Washington in company with my Father and Brother in obtaining information of the intended movements of the enemy, until and served in that capacity until the defense of Quackinie Bridge [sic, ?], joined General Washington's Army at New York and retreated to Brunswick, about the first of December we retreated to Princeton and thence to Trenton, and crossed the Delaware [River], after crossing the Delaware, I was ordered with my Father to examine the River and bring all the boats from the Jersey shore to prevent the British from pursuing & was engaged in that capacity for some days. I was at the taking of the Hessians in December 1776 and at the battle of Princeton in January 1777. I was engaged the remainder of the winter after the battle of Princeton in purchasing horses for teams in light horse for General Mifflin [sic, Thomas Mifflin] I also purchased some for General Lafayette.

NOTE: Transcribed by Will Graves [Methodology: Spelling, punctuation and grammar have been corrected in some instances for ease of reading and to facilitate searches of the database ...] at <http://southerncampaign.org/pen/s7224.pdf>

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Head-Quarters
Major Apollos Morris

Time	Location
07:22	Civil sunrise
07:30	? About sunrise just after passing a little river about one and a half mile from Princetown, some officers in the rear of Sullivan's division which lead the army, perceived <u>two or three British light horse-men on the heights to the left.</u>
07:40	Washington "ordered <u>Mercers brigade, the next which followed, to quit the line of march</u> pursue and attack it. He then road on after Sullivans division, which continued its march towards Princetown"
07:45	The Americans marched in files without flanking parties thro' the lower road, the British detachment in the upper ... the distance between the two roads in which they marched <u>did not here exceed half a mile (!)</u>
07:50	Washington "had just got to the head of the division which was now <u>ascending (!)</u> thro the open grounds near Princetown when an irregular firing was heard"
07:55	after a little time increased rapidly - Mercer expecting that the British [would stay on] the road ... pushed up the hill inclining to his right
08:00	soon after Mercer's brigade was running
08:05	The Pennsylvania militia which was <u>next in the line of march</u> and had on the firing <u>quitted the road</u> and moved towards it
08:10	the firing stoped Sullivans division and made him call back a battalion detached to post itself beyond the town
08:15	the 40 th appeared pouring out of the back gate of the college and taking possession of a dike which extended from thence down the hill.
08:20	
08:25	These were soon removed by the fire of two field pieces
08:30	but it occasioned a fresh delay and the whole regiment [which ?] being expected to follow Colonel Hand's riflemen who had been detached the other way to fall on the flank of the 17 th &c were recalled
08:35	
08:40	? Some of the Americans ... with Sullivans division surrounded the town and entered at both sides without opposition
08:45	? Some of the Americans ... with Sullivans division surrounded the town and entered at both sides without opposition

Source:

"Major [Apollos] Morris's Account of the Affair at Trenton, 1776." MS Sparks 53 (Miscellaneous papers relating to the Revolution, 1752-1779. item 4, Harvard University Library, pp. 11-19.

A Council of war was called and General Washington determined to quit his position and pursue a plan less hazardous than a general engagement. After some difficulty in putting the militia together, as no general signal could be given, and the night so cold that the men paraded could not stand any time from the fires. – He began his march about ten o'clock, leaving his fires all burning, and a part of the militia near the bridge. – this was the more necessary as a corps [here begins p. 12] of the British remained near the town and had centinels near the bridge - He [Washington] took an oblique direction from his right, and passing thro a road a considerable distance to the left of the British, marched till he fell in with another * road which leads from Bordentown and Crossex to Princetown, in which he continued to march.

* (Road) The direct road from Trenton to Princetown is thro' Maidenhead – this circuit increases the distance from eleven to fourteen or fifteen miles. As these roads approach Princetown, they approach one another, the Maidenhead road running on the heights to the left – the Crossex in the low grounds to the right till it brings you close under Princetown.

About sunrise just after passing a little river about one and a half mile from Princetown, some officers in the rear of Sullivan's division which lead the army, perceived two or three British light horse-men on the heights to the left. General Washington happened to be near and with a glass descryed a body of infantry, but the intervening trees &c made it impossible to form any judgment about their numbers. Supposing this a detachment sent out of Princetown to reconnoiter, he ordered Mercers brigade, the next which followed, to quit the line of march pursue and attack it. He then road on after Sullivans division, which continued its march towards Princetown (the object) thro the *

* Note. The declivity does not begin till you come half way from the Maidenhead to the Crossex road in the place where they pass which was nearly the place of action. The Americans marched in files without flanking parties thro' the lower road, the British detachment in the upper being ordered to join Lord Cornwallis at Trenton that morning.

slopes of the grounds and intervening trees, this whole division and the detachment passed each other unobserved [begin p. 13] and probably the whole army would, tho the distance between the two roads in which they marched did not here exceed half a mile, had not the light horsemen moved out. He had just got to the head of the division which was now ascending thro the open grounds near Princetown when an irregular firing

was heard after a little time increased rapidly and closed with a rumbling volley not as close as those on field days but yet not broken by any partial default, and soon after Mercer's brigade was running with precipitation and dispersed. The Pennsylvania militia which was next in the line of march and had on the firing quitted the road and moved towards it, the disorder was communicated, and kept up by a stragling fire from the pursuers as well as that of a field piece, which they took from and had turned against Mercers brigade bringing it on as they pursued. [Neil's gun] General Washington whom the above firing and route had recalled from Sullivan's division, galloped back to the head of the Pennsylvanians in this moment of disorder and was exposed to both firing for some [begin p. 14] time for several began to fire before they could be got to form. What contribut'd to restore order was the alertness of the Philadelphia # light infantry which ran up on the right flank of the pursuers and the good

Note. Young fellows of the better sort.

countenance of a New England battalion which advanced in good order in front, and some rounds of grape fired from two field pieces [Moulder] opportunely advanced on their left flank together with a full view of so superior a force ## by which they must have been soon

Note. When they came to the declivity besides those in front of Sullivans division on their left and nearer to Princetown than they were, must have been in full view, as well as the rear of the army

surrounded determined them to retire.

Some of the Americans pursued the the [sic] rest with Sullivans division surrounded the town and entered at both sides without opposition – in it almost the whole of the Prisoners then brought on with the army were taken vizt six officers and 182 non-commissioned and private men among them were some dismounted dragoons, individuals of different corps that had advanced to Trenton but the greater part of officers and men belonged to the 55th which from this circumstance it was concluded had only a part of it concerned with the 17th in the field. It was now first known that the [begin p.15] force left in Princetown consisted of three battalions and that the corps engaged with Mercers brigade was a part of them ordered to reinforce the army at Trenton for the attack intended there.

But to return the firing stoped Sullivans division and made him call back a battalion detached to post itself beyond the town and prevent the escape of any toward Brunswick and very soon after some of the 40th appeared pouring out of the back gate of the college and taking possession of a dike which extended from thence down the hill. These were soon removed by the fire of two field pieces, but it occasioned a fresh delay and the whole regiment being expected to follow Colonel Hand's riflemen who had been detached the other way to fall on the flank of the 17th &c were recalled and kept some time, which with the confusion before mentioned gave time for the 17th &c to go off as well as they did. From the middle of the ascent to the place where the British corps were drawn up the killed and wounded lay dispersed. Amongst the several [begin p. 16] American

officers some of whom were bayoneted, wounded and calling for quarter, particularly a Captain Neal of the artillery and Yates a young Virginia officer. Repeated wounds were also given to old Mercer evidently unable to get away and the American officers said that some of the British wounded did not seem to expect any quarter. The greatest part of them lay on the ground where the corps was first drawn up, and near their knapsack and two pieces of cannon.

B Note. The men were exasperate by learning of the shooting of a captain of the 45th and his servant the preceeding day as he travelled unarmed and nothing that happened could be said to be done in cold blood. The Americans made use of some expressions but shewed then, to the prisoners no other resentment.

One dragoon horse was taken in the field and one in Princetown. The dismounted and wounded dragoon prisoners were taken in Princetown. The account given by the officers of Mercer's brigade was that Mercer expecting that the British corps would have kept the road and returned towards or taken the woods to the northward pushed up the hill inclining to his right [sic] to prevent it. That coming near the summit of the declivity a fence between an house and a barn presented itself thro' a gate in it they rushed without reconnoitering into a thick planted orchard [begin p. 17] and were soon surprised to find themselves in presence of a well up line of infantry with a flanking piquet and two pieces of cannon. This line was in an open field, separated from the orchard only by a two bar fence. There was no being off, they therefore pushed across the orchard (which was narrow tho' it extended a good way to the right and left) to get possession of the fence hoping from the appearance of a little bank at bottom, that it would afford some shelter. 'twas at this time their irregular fire began which as the asserted staggered apart of the line – but the volley and charge was made in such a manner as to oblige them to give way and run. Their field piece was brought into the orchard but they passed it in advancing and Captain Neal being killed it became useful only to their pursuers. The rout to taking the town as before related. After they were in possession of Princetown they arranged their prisoners taking paroles of two or three sick officers¹ but had not time even to distribute the rum found in store, tho much wanted, before a firing was heard on the Trenton or Maidenhead road. This was from the advanced parties of Lord Cornwallis's [begin p. 18] army, on some men left at the river a little beyond the place of action Genl. W: judging what it was assembled all that were in or near the town, sent officers after those engaged in pursuing and leaving every thing taken but the prisoners and a few necessaries which were distributed amongst these who happened to be near the place where they were found, marched by the Brunswick road he led of to the left and in the evening reached Somerset Court-house. It was proposed at Rocky Hill to make a large detachment for * Brunswick but the men were too much fatigued to hope to effect anything in time.

* Note. Brunswick is about 18 miles from Princetown by the direct road.

¹ See the letter from Donop to Grant in "Primary Sources - Crown Forces".

They had been almost constantly on their legs from the time of their parading at Trenton without sleep, baggage or provisions more than for the day. The baggage &c was left under a guard about a mile and half behind Trenton of the Bordentown road. The militia left below the bridges without any notice of the movement of the army and a great number of straggling officers and soldiers also unapprized of [begin p. 19]

xo Note: six officers and 182 N.C. officers and private men were bro't with the army from Princetown, some sick officers were left prisoners on parole— 40 more prisoners were made on the pursuit – the killed and wounded in the field were between 30 and 40 amongst the latter was Captain McPherson of the 17th who languished there for six months after and is probably dead.² The whole number of British wounded collected at Princetown about a week after including some who were there before amounted to 56.

x Note. Near 14 miles from Princetown here it was that a No of Waggons with the baggage escorted by an English officer and 60 or 70 men had been surrounded and summoned to surrender by four companies of militia, but refusing the militia did not venture to attack 'em

² McPherson's parole to go to New York dated Princeton, 7 September 1777, and signed by Dr. Witherspoon, is in the Grant Papers, Library of Congress, Reel 46.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Unknown
John Morris

Pennsylvania Archives 1st series vol. 5 (1853), pp. 161-162.

John Morris Jr. To Council Of Safety 5 January 1777.

Bristol Jan'y, 5th 1776, [7.]

Sir,

I rec'd your Favour of the 4th Inst. last night about 11 O'Clock, and in the name of your suffering Soldiery thank you for your kind Notice of them. A dozen Bushels I have ordered to be left here under the Care of the Doctor for the use of the sick & wounded— and the Rem[ainde]r. have ordered over to Burlington there to be stored till the Baggage moves forward: For at present nobody knows where the army is for a Certainty,—tho' by all the Intelligence we can procure from stragglers they are between Princeton & Brunswick— The Brigade of Pennsylv I have no doubt arrived at the latter place yesterday morning, where they were to be met by Genl. Heath. I am just setting off for Burlington, must therefore conclude.

I am Y'. most Obedt.
& very hble Servt.

JOHN MORRIS Jr.

P. S. Please to Inform my father that my Br[oth]er S. C. Morris recd no hurt in ye Battle—but that Anthy Morris recd a wound with a Bayonet in ye Neck & a Bullet in his Leg.—

Directed,
To The Hon'ble Thomas Wharton, Esquire,
President of the Council of Safety.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Civilian
Margaret Morris

Margaret Morris, "Private Journal kept during a Portion of the Revolutionary War." Larry R. Gerlach, ed., *New Jersey in the American Revolution. A Documentary History* (Trenton, 1975), pp. 282-287, pp. 285-286. It is also published in John H. Jackson, *Margaret Morris: Her Journal with Biographical Sketch and Notes* (Philadelphia, 1949). Though the widowed Mrs Morris lived at Green Bank near Burlington, a house formerly owned by Governor William Franklin and a distance of more than 25 miles from Princeton, she could still hear "very distinct[l]y" the cannon fire from Princeton.

3d This Morning between 8 & 9 oClock we heard very distinc[t]ly, a heavy firing of Cannon, the sound came from towards Trenton, about noon a Number of Soldiers, upwards of a thousand came into Town in great Confusion, with Baggage & some Cannon. From these Soldiers we learn there was a smart engagement Yesterday at Trenton, & that they left them engaged near Trenton Mill, but were not able to say which side was Victorious. ... About bed time I went in the next house to see if the fires were safe, & my heart was melted with Compassion to see such a number of my fellow Creatures lying like Swine on the floor fast a Sleep, & many of them without even a Blanket to cover them it seems very strange to me that such a Number shoud be allowed to come from the Camp at the very time of the engagement, & I shrewdly Suspect they have run away for they can give no account why they came, no where they are to March next.---

4th The accounts hourly coming in are so Contradictory & various, that we know not wch to give credit to. We have heard our people have gaind another Victory, that the English are fleeing before them, some at Brunswick, some at Princeton. The prisoners taken by our Troops are sent to Lancaster Jail --- a Number of Sick & wounded brought into Town, calls upon us to extend a hand of Charity towards them— Several of my Soldiers left the next house, & returned to the place from whence they came, upon my questioning them pritty close, I brought several to confess they had ran away, being scared at the heavy firing on the 3^d — There were several pritty innocent looking lads among them, & I simpathized with thier Mothers when I saw them preparing to return to the Army. ...

NOTE: The sympathies of Margaret Morris' fellow Quaker Sarah Logan Fisher lay with the Crown: her diary does not mention the Battle of Princeton at all. See Nicholas B. Wainwright and Sarah Logan Fisher, "'A Diary of Trifling Occurrences': Philadelphia, 1776-1778." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 82, No. 4 (October 1958), pp. 411-465.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Civilian
Robert Morris

Robert Morris to William Bingham, Philadelphia, 26 February 1777. Gratz 1, Box 20, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

You will have seen by former advices that kind Providence gave a change to the affairs of America on Christmas Night when General Washington begun an attempt to surprize Trenton which he effected the next morning & took Prisoners three Hessian Regiments, soon after by a Master Stroke of General Ship he surprized took & destroyed three other Regiments chiefly British at Prince Town, all this was done with Militia, a kind of Troops not to be depended on in a general Action in the open Field against a large, regular & well disciplined Army. Genl. Washingtons experience taught him this lesson & his abilities enables him to make the proper use of such Troops as he has, therefore his aim was to change the Seat of War & draw the Enemy into a part of the Country favourable for this kind of War he knew was best for him & accordingly after the two Feats at Trenton & Prince Town he marched his small Army to Morris Town a Hilly Country in the Upper parts of the Jerseys.

Robert Morris to Governor Nicholas Cooke, Philadelphia 9 January 1777. *Letters of delegates to Congress, 1774-1789* vol. 6, 1 January 1777 - 30 April 1777. Quoted from the online-edition available at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwdg.html> .

Sir.

I have the honor to transmit you herewith a letter from the Honb Mr Ellery who desires me to give you an account of the battle of the 3 inst. which he supposes to have been fought at Trenton. Common fame had been too busy and magnified the transactions of that day by private intelligence to Baltimore far beyond the reality. I take it for granted Mr Ellery has given you the situation of the 2 armies on Thursday evening the 2d instant as I transmitted to Congress an exact account thereof. That night Genl Washington (not choosing to risk a general action the next morning) decamped with his whole army except a guard of 500 men so privately that even that guard did not miss him, and by a forced march in the night he got between Trenton and Princeton leaving the main body of the ennemis army waiting at the former place, in the expectation of attacking him there, for they had taken post within cannon shot and placed their out guards at each end of Trenton Bridge within 100 yards of each other. In the morning our guard were astonished to find their commanders gone. The comr of the Guard cannonaded the enemy awhile to amuse them and

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then followed the baggage of our army which he brought to Burlington. When the ennemie found the Americans gone and heard a firing between them and Princeton they were in the utmost consternation, got under arms, took possession of the heights expecting to be attacked and waited untill they were undeceived, when they marched fast as they could for Princeton. The firing they heard was an engagement between three regiments of British, some broken Hessians and Highlanders and our advance party within a mile and a half of Princeton in which this small body of the enemy behaved very well but were soon routed with the loss of about 50 or 60 killed and abt 100 taken prisoners. Our people pushed on to Princeton where they killed and took a number more with some field pieces, blankets, baggage, cattle, sheep and stores.

The Genls original design was to have surprized Brunswick also but his troops were quite exhausted with hunger, thirst and fatigue; many of them had not slept, eat or drank for 36 hours, numbers of them were almost naked and in short they were not in a condition to undertake any new exploit or to wait an attack from an enemy superior in number. Less fatigued and better provided the Genl therefore quitted Princeton, took up some bridges to impede the enemy and went aside to Somerset Court house where they rested that night. He is since got to Morris town where I hope he is greatly reinforced by Genls Heath and McDougal. Genl Howe is collecting his forces together and their armies are again become very interesting. The enemies loss at Princeton was not less than 600. At Trenton on the 26th 918, and at various times consequent of the action of the 26 inst-300. Since the action of Princeton several more parties and stragglers have been brought in by Militia so that upon the whole their loss in killed, wounded and prisoners must be considerably more than 2000 In N Jersey and I hope to hear soon of further success. My time being much taken up in public business you will excuse me for not being more particular and I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your honor's most obedient servant,

Robert Morris.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Delaware Regiment
William Newel/Newil

Pension Application of William Newel (Newil) No. S 40203

On this thirteenth day of May in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighteen, before me the Subscriber, one of the Associate Judges of the Court of Common Pleas, in and for the County of Huntingdon and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania aforesaid, personally appears William Newil, aged Sixty four years, resident in Huntingdon County and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania aforesaid, formerly of the State of Delaware, who being by me, first duly Sworn, according to law doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the provision made by the late Act of Congress entitled “an Act to provide for certain persons engaged in the land and Naval Service of the United States in the Revolutionary War” That he the said William Newil enlisted in the Neighbourhood of Wilmington in the State of Delaware in the Company commanded by Captain Harris in the Regiment called the Delaware Blues commanded by Col Hall in or about the month of August, one thousand seven hundred and seventy six; That he continued to serve in the said Corps, or in the service of the United States until after the Capture of Lord Cornwallis & his Army in 1781 at Yorktown in Virginia, when he was discharged in the following Winter by his then Captain William McKenan in the Town of New Castle in the State of Delaware which discharge was burned in his House when it was burned in Huntingdon County aforesaid about fourteen years ago. That he was in the battles of Trenttown at taking the Hessians, Princetown, Brandywine, Germantown, Monmouth & in two Battles at Cambden in South Carolina [Battle of Camden, 16 Aug 1780; Battle of Hobkirk’s Hill, 25 Apr 1781] and in several other Skirmishes.

NOTE: Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris at <http://southerncampaign.org/pen/s40203.pdf>

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: New Castle County Militia, Captain George Evan's Coy, Colonel Thomas Duff's Regt.
Ensign George Nixon

Pension Application of George Nixon No. S 8919 at www.footnote.com . He is 81 years old [born 1752] and a resident of Clark Township, Clinton County, Ohio, when he testifies on 22 July 1833.

He joined Pennsylvania troops commanded by General Mifflin. Company consisted of 50-60 men; fought at Princeton. He still retained the sword and spontoon he carried at Princeton as an ensign.

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers and served as herein stated. On the 10th day of December 1776 and not long previous to the battle of Trenton New Jersey this deponent then being a resident of the State of Delaware, New Castle County held the office of ensign in the Militia of the said county of New Castle in the Company commanded by Captain George Evans whose Lieutenant was Paul Ralston, did unite with said officers in appointing a day for volunteers to meet them at the Brandywine Bridge and march to the relief of the American Army agreeable to the proclamation of General Washington & to repel the British forces then on their march toward Philadelphia; and to their great satisfaction were met at said bridge by a great part of their own Company & others making in all 50 or 60 men, on the 15th of December in said year 1776 when it was unanimously agreed to place themselves under the officers aforesaid and there upon said volunteer company was marched immediately by said officers to the City of Philadelphia and there attached to a Regiment commanded by Colonel Thos. Duff and joined with the Pennsylvania troops commanded by General Mifflin. Said troops were marched from thence to Bordentown and from thence to an encampment not far from Trenton New Jersey where they were stationed at the time General Washington crossed the Delaware and surprised and captured the Hessians stationed at that place. Immediately on his return the body of Militia to which the deponent belonged joined the Army of Washington, recrossed the River with him and were stationed with him at said Trenton on the memorable 2d of January 1777 when the British marched to attack the Americans. This deponent is old and frail but well recollects the whole scene then displayed. After renewing the fires about midnight the American troops were silently withdrawn and after gaining a position in the enemy's rear were marched toward Princeton, near which place early next morning they met the rear of the British troops where a battle was fought and the latter defeated, in which this deponent bore his share to the best of his skills and understanding as Ensign in said Company and he has now in his possession the very sword and spontoon by him carried on that occasion. After said battle & the retreat of the British the Americans were marched to an encampment near Morristown, where the deponent served in his company as aforesaid until the 15th of March [?] as well as he recollects when said troops were marched back to Philadelphia and said company discharged, the deponent having served as Ensign therein for three months....

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Rhode Island Regiment, Col. Stephen Hitchcock's Regt
Captain Stephen Olney

C[atherine] R. Williams, *Biography of Revolutionary Heroes, containing the Life of Brigadier Gen. William Barton, and also, of Captain Stephen Olney* (Providence, 1839), pp. 194-200.

Captain Olney says, "After dark, we were dismissed a little while to get our breakfast, dinner, and supper. As the night advanced it became ex-
[p.195] tremely cold, and it seemed to me extravagant that our men should pull down such good cedar fences to augment our fires, and they were replenished by some stragglers, as we afterwards understood, who were ordered for that purpose." ...

We will give Captain Olney's history of the march of the Rhode-Island regiment, in his own words.

"The roads which the day before had been mud, snow, and water, were congealed now, and had become hard as a pavement and solid, and our army was ordered to parade in silence, and leave those comfortable fires. The orders for our [p. 197] march were given in so low a tone, that some of the Colonels were at a stand which way to move their regiments. After marching all night, at sunrise we found ourselves in the vicinity of Princeton, and a detachment of the British with fieldpieces drawn up in order of battle, to receive us." The Americans had taken especial care, not to be followed; the patrols were left on their rounds, the fires kept up, &c., and no suspicion entered the British camp that they had departed. The detachment which they now met, was three regiments which had lodged at Trenton, on the preceding night, and were now on their march for Maidenhead. The Americans suddenly appeared and charged them with great impetuosity. The English defended themselves so rigorously, that the militia faced about, and were retiring in disorder. The brave General Mercer, of Virginia, placed himself in the forefront of the battle and attempted to rally them, but fell in the attempt, mortally wounded — and again the militia turned their backs. But instantly the tide of war rolled back —"

Washington, to the rescue, was enough to animate all hearts; followed by a select corps of the conquerors of Trenton, he rushed on with overwhelming force and restored the battle. The English regiments were separated and in the greatest confusion. The English Colonel Mawhood, after sustaining the assault a few moments, cut his way through with the bayonet, and followed by as many of his forces as could follow him, escaped to Maidenhead; the next made several ineffectual attempts to follow them, but were driven back and fled to New-Brunswick. The third followed them, except between 300 and 400, which were taken prisoners; over 100 were left dead on the ground. The loss of the Americans in slain, was [p. 198] nearly equal, and among the number was the gallant Mercer, the compatriot in arms, the tried friend, the endeared companion of Washington. An hour before, he was blooming in life and urging on his men to the fight, while even more than the eloquence of the appeal, his own

gallant bearing had influence. But few moments had the devoted chief to gaze on the inanimate form of his friend. Alas! the times brooked no delay. But to Capt. Olney's account again of the Rhode-Island regiment.

When they came up with the British regiment, Colonel Hitchcock, he says, was sick and absent. Major Israel Angell, the only field officer present, made a short speech to the regiment, encouraging them to act the part that became brave soldiers, worthy of the cause for which we were contending. We then marched a short distance with a wood upon our right, and partly in front, and the first notice that I had of the enemy being so near, they, to the number of 30 or 40, fired a full volley on the front of the column composed of Jersey or Pennsylvania militia, who broke and came running through our ranks. This had like to have disordered our march, but Captain Jeremiah Olney, in a peremptory manner, ordered them to join our platoon. I was in this platoon, and I seconded the motion, in earnest, so that with some persuasion, and a few hard words, some ten or twelve of them complied, and the rest made off into the woods.

When clear of the woods and other obstructions, our column displayed and marched in line; at this instant the enemy made a full discharge of musketry and field-pieces, loaded with grape shot, which made the most horrible music about our ears I had ever heard, but as they overshot, there were but few but what continued the march, look- [p. 199] ing well at the colors, which were carried steadily by ensign Oliver Jencks, of Cumberland, (no fool of a job to carry colors steady at such a time.) The enemy perceiving we were not all dead and that we continued to advance in order with a reserved charge for them, turned their backs and fled in disorder. We pursued them to Princeton College, where the 300 submitted as prisoners. By this time, our cannon, which we had left at the bridge, west of Princeton, began to play at the enemy we had left at Trenton, who having lost sight of us last night, were in pursuit of us this morning. From the time it took to secure the prisoners, I was fearful that both the contending armies would pass through the town together; but it happened ours got over first, and took the road to Millstone; theirs were at our heels, but they returned to their winter quarters at Brunswick.

When at Princeton, we lamented very much the want of 400 or 500 fresh troops, to have proceeded to Brunswick to burn their winter provisions, magazines, &c. The two last nights' march, the first through mud, snow and water, the last over frozen ground, with the hardships of the day, seemed to have nearly exhausted both men and officers — some of whom were almost as bad as barefoot. Though we were rather short of provisions no one complained, and we had been too busily engaged to think of hunger; and we rejoiced to find ourselves so much better situated than we were the preceding night at Trenton.

It was during this battle that Captain Olney was so happy as to save the life of Colonel Monroe, afterwards President of the United States. He fell in endeavoring to rally the affrighted militia of Pennsylvania, in the beginning of the battle, and as they rushed through the ranks of the [p. 200] Rhode-Island regiment, creating great disorder. Captain Jeremiah Olney stopped some of them and compelled them to form with their platoon, while Stephen Olney raised Colonel Monroe, and carried him to a place of safety, not dreaming that he bore in his arms the future President of the

Union. This must have been the work of a moment, for he was very soon back again and fighting. It is singular that Captain Olney does not mention any thing of this in his narrative, but probably he considered it as irrelevant to the history of the battle. It is said that he never spoke of it except when questioned on the subject, and possibly thought it ostentatious to boast of an action resulting in mere humanity, in his own history.

NOTE: Monroe had been wounded a few days earlier at Trenton and did not make the march to Princeton.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 4th Battalion Philadelphia Militia
Lieutenant Charles Willson Peale

Horace Wells Sellers, "Charles Willson Peale, Artist-Soldier." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 38 (1914), pp. 257-286, his "Journal" begins on 4 December 1776 on p. 271.

2d.—At one o'clock we began to move, and directed our course through the woods, directly from the road, and after some time northerly. By this, I expected we were going to surround the enemy—but after marching some miles, I learned that we were going a by-road to Trenton, marching pretty fast; however, the sun had risen just before we saw Princeton. We proceeded as fast as possible, and were within a mile of the town, when we were informed that all was quiet. A short time after, the battalion, just ahead of us, began an exceedingly quick platoon firing, and some cannon. We marched on quickly, and met some of the troops retreating in confusion. We continued our march towards the hill where the firing was, though now rather irregularly. I carried my platoon to the top of the hill, and fired, though unwillingly, for I thought the enemy too far off, and then retreated, loading. We returned to the charge, and fired a second time, and retreated as before. Coming up the third time, the enemy retreated. I must here give the New England Troops their due. They were the first who regularly formed, and stood the fire, without regarding the balls, which whistled their thousand notes around our heads; and, what is astonishing, did little harm among us—none that I know of where we were. Some that had retreated, and then advanced through a wood on our right, engaged the enemy. We lost in all about 12 men. General Mercer was wounded in his leg, and fell into the enemy's hands, when our men were first surprised; and when they, in turn, were obliged to fly, they stabbed him with a bayonet. We lost, besides, Capt. Shippen of the 2d Battalion, and a Lieutenant of the 1st of Philadelphia Militia.

We now advanced towards the town, and halted about a quarter of a mile distant, till the artillery came up, and our men collected in better order. On the artillery firing, a number that had formed near the bridge began to disperse, and immediately a flag was sent, and we huzza'd victory. The prisoners taken at the place where the attack first began, were brought in, and we were resting, on our arms, waiting for leave to enter the town to refresh ourselves, when we heard the sound of cannon in our rear. We thought it was at Trenton, but finding it approached nearer, we perceived the enemy close upon our heels. We now began to march on through the town. I expected we should be collected in order when we got into the back of the town, but we were still continued on. I then expected we would halt when we should have crossed the bridge, which is at the lower end of the town, and have ascended the hill, which is pretty steep on the other side. Here, again, I found my mistake. We were continued on about three or four miles. We took a wrong road, going to the right, when we should have taken the left. Here, halt was cried through the army. I heard some rumors that the Light Horse were coming, and some soldiers fixed their bayonets. At last we were informed that we must return, and go to the left, which distance we shortened a little by going through the woods. The roads had now become very sloppy, and the troops so fatigued that many stopped by the way—some of my men declared they could go no farther. I told them of the danger of falling into the hands of the enemy, yet this could not induce all to keep up. When I got over a bridge about five miles from Somerset Court House, I stopped to collect as many of them as I could, and got several. I there received orders from Colonel Cox to continue as far as I could, as the enemy was only seven miles distant from us—three miles farther we should receive farther orders. We were to stop at ----- to

282 *Charles Willson Peale, Artist—Soldier.*

take the prisoners to Philadelphia, and that I might purchase any necessaries we might want. The Colonel offered me Money. I did not want, having sufficiency in my pocket. We then marched off, and continued our way, pretty briskly; got to Somerset Court House, expecting to have quarters in the Court House, but found it was already occupied by the prisoners. I then pushed on to a tavern a little further, and got my men into a loft amongst a fine heap of straw, where some Hessians had lain. This was gladly accepted by them, who, at other places were dainty, refusing to go into a house where soldiers had been quartered, for fear of their vermin—now they were glad to lie down, and were asleep in a few moments, so that I could not get a single man to go with me in search of provisions.

.....

5th.—Some of Capt. Shippen's men joined my company, whom I supplied with rations. The weather is very favorable, though rather cold; for had it rained or snowed we should have been badly off, as many of the men had no blankets. We spent this night much better than the last. I went into town and got a barrel of flour, and engaged a negro woman to bake it by 4 o'clock at which time our order was to march. I went several times to get some of it, but could get none, yet expected I should have it before we should march. Many of the men, in their hard march on an icy road, were entirely barefooted. I got a raw hide to make them moccasins; but made a bad hand of it, for want of a proper needle or awl.

(p. 283)

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: New Jersey Regiment
Captain John Polhemus

"Major John Polhemus." *The American Monthly Magazine* 9 (1896), pp. 287-293, pp. 288-289.

In November, 1776, the term of his company's enlistment having expired, at the request of General Gates, he and his men remained two weeks over time, until relieved by the Third Regiment, Colonel Dayton. At this time he was informed by Colonel Sterling of his re-appointment on November 29 as fourth captain, First Battalion, Second Establishment, Continental Troops, New Jersey Line, for three years or during the war. ...

Rapidly succeeding military events are thus described by the Major in his journal, as follows:

On the 26th of December, 1776, the army moved from Newtown, and crossed the Delaware to Trenton, where, after a severe contest, the enemy fell back in defeat.

We whipped them terribly, and took a thousand Hessians prisoners, driving them into Newtown jail yard like a pack of sheep, during a severe hailstorm. We allowed the officers to wear their side arms, also the privilege of occupying part of the house with General Patterson and myself.

On the 3d of January, 1777, we attacked them at Princeton, and drove them to New Brunswick. I was left behind with a rear guard to secure stores and bury the dead, which we did by hauling them on sleds to great holes and heaping them in." "I was then relieved by Colonel Chamberlain. ... Our regiment passed on the left side of the Millstone River, where our mill stood; the British passing before us on the other side."

One night the British lay near Ten-mile Run, not more three miles distant. ... In the morning they sent a company of dragoons to burn the mill and cut down the bridge, but as they hove in sight a body of militia came down the hill with a field piece and opened on them. They scampered like a drove of oxen, luckily for us, for at that time we had four hundred bushels of wheat and a large quantity of flour on hand. The mill belonged to my father-in-law, John Hart, then a member of the Continental Congress, and myself.

Going to the mill I found about fifty of the British that Morgan's rifles had killed, belonging to the Fifty-fifth British Regiment. We buried them and on going to the house I found a British sergeant in my bed, with a part of his face shot off, also a number of sick and wounded soldiers.

As there was no way by which we could take them with us, I swore every man of them not to take up arms against the independence of America, unless exchanged according to the rules of war, and left them.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Surgeon with the Continental Army
Dr. Jonathan Potts

"Death of Major Anthony Morris." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 1 (1877), pp. 175-180, pp. 177-179.

Letter of Dr. Potts to Owen Biddle.

Dated at the Field of Action, near Princeton, Sunday Evening, Jan'y 5th.

My D'r Friend :—¹

Tho' the Acc't I send is a melancholy one (in one respect), yet I have sent an Express, to give you the best Information I can collect. Our Mutual friend Anthony Morris² died here in three hours after he received his wounds on Friday morning.³ They were three in Number, one on his chin, one on the knee, & the third and fatal one, on the right temple, by a grape shot. Brave Man! he fought and died nobly, deserving a much better fate. General Mercer is dangerously ill indeed, I have scarce any hopes of him, the Villains have stab'd him in five different Places. The dead on our side at this Place amount to sixteen, that of the Enemy to 23. They have retreated to Brunswick with the greatest Precipitation, and from Accounts just come, the Hero Washington is not far from them: they never have been so shamefully Drub'd and outgeneral 'd in every Respect. I hourly expect to hear of their whole Army being cut to pieces, or made Prisoners. It pains me to inform you that on the morning of the Action, I was obliged to fly

¹ Owen Biddle was a descendant of one of the proprietors of West Jersey. He was a brother of Col. Clement Biddle, who was present at the battles of Trenton and Princeton. On July 23, 1776, he was chosen a member of the Pennsylvania Council of Safety, and lived on Market near Third Street. The next year he was President of the Pennsylvania Board of War.

² Anthony Morris was the great-grandson of an early settler, also named Anthony.

Anthony Morris, born August 19, 1654. Mayor of Philadelphia, 1704. Died Aug. 23, 1721.

Anthony Morris, born March 15, 1681-82, was his grandfather. He was Mayor of Philadelphia in 1739, and died Sept. 23, 1762.

Anthony Morris, his father, was born Nov. 14, 1705, and died October 2, 1780.

Anthony Morris, born Aug. 8, 1738; killed in battle near Princeton, Friday, January 3, 1777.

³ The skirmish took place early on Friday morning, the 3d of January, and did not last a half hour. Gen. Washington ordered the Pennsylvania Militia to support Mercer, and led in person two pieces of artillery under Capt. Thomas Moulder, to a position near Thomas Clark's house, about one fourth of a mile from the spot where Mercer engaged the enemy. With this force was the First Philadelphia Troop of Cavalry, about twenty in number, commanded by Captain Samuel Morris, a brother of Anthony.

before the Rascals, or fall into their hands, and leave behind me my wounded Brethren -,1 would you believe that the inhuman Monsters rob'd the General as he lay unable to resist on the Bed, even to the taking of his Cravat from his Neck, insulting him all the Time.

The number of Prisoners we have taken, I cannot yet find out, but they are numerous.

Should be glad to hear from you, by the bearer; is the Reinforcement march'd ?

I am, in haste, your most obedient

humble Serv't,

JON'N POTTS. Dated at the Field of Action, near Princeton, Sunday Evening, Jan'y 5th.

Morris was first buried in the graveyard of the Stone Quaker Meeting-House, near the battle-field, but his remains were subsequently brought to Philadelphia, and buried, at the request of his family, without military honors, in Friends' burying-ground.

The following military order was, however, issued on 24 January 1777:

"One Capt., 2 Sub's, 2 Corp's, 2 Drum'rs & 50 men from the garrison in the Barracks, to parade at the City Tavern, at two o'clock this afternoon, to escort the funerals of the late Coll. Hascllett & Capt. Morris. The rest of the garrison off Duty, to attend with side arms only. Coll. Penrose, Coll. Irvine, Coll. McKey. to attend as bearers."

Note: see also Morris, Anthony.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Head-Quarters
General Israel Putnam

Pennsylvania Archives 1st series vol. 5, (Philadelphia 1853), p. 163.

General Putman To Council Of Safety

Bristol, Jany 5th, 1777.

Gentlemen,

By the best Intelligence I can collect, I believe that the Army under Gen. Washington after taking Possession of Princeton, proceeded on with all Expedition to Brunswick; so that the Enemy are now, I believe, in the possession of Princeton with General Howe at their Head. If this be the Case now is our Time, and let me beg of you to dispatch the Militia with all possible Expedition to join in — and desire Gen. Irving to use his utmost Endeavours to forward the Militia and other Troops as fast as they arrive — I have got one Piece of artillery to go with me, and I hope to be joined at Bordentown with about 7 or 8 hundred men, together with what I have will make 1400 or 1500 Men.

I have taken some more effectual Measures to get Intelligence to Bay. I have sent off a Light Horseman up the Delaware until he gets opposite the Enemy.— I have likewise sent Major Burr to Trenton to cross there & come down to Bordenton to me. — Since I have been writing the above I have received a Letter from Major Mifflin at Bordenton, which informs that Gen. Howe has left Princeton & proceed on after General Washington, leaving about 200 Men to take Charge of the wounded. I shall proceed as fast as possible, and I hope to give a good account of them.

I am, Gentm, your Hbl. Serv',

ISRAEL PUTNAM

Pennsylvania Archives 1st series vol. 5, (Philadelphia 1853), p. 171.

Gen. Putnam, To Council, &c. 1777.

Trenton 7th Jan^y 1777.

Sir,

I am happy to tell you that by a Letter just received from his Excellency I am informed that the Loss of the Enemy in the Attack at Princetown amounts in killed, Wounded & Prisoners to near 600.

The Letter is dated at Pluckamin 5th In^t where he intends remaining for a few Days to refresh his Army which as well as the Enemy's has had hard Duty—He is in great Hopes with the Assistance of Heaven to drive them entirely out of the Jerseys.

I am ordered to take Post at Crosswix to which Place I shall march to morrow morning.

It will be Policy to make our strength at least three Times as great as it is, Nevertheless encouraging the Militia to march on as fast as possible & join mo at Crosswix. His Excellency has ordered all the Baggage Wiggons, to be sent from Burlington to him.

You will please to show this to the Committee of Congress as Scarcity of Paper obliges me to omit writing this being the only Piece I could procure.

I am Sir

Your hb^e Serv^t

ISRAEL PUTNAM.

Directed.

On Public Service, Thomas Wharton Esq^r President of the Council of Safety for the State of Pinnsylvania at Philadelphia.

Exprest:—Permit the Bearer to pass to Philad^a order Gen^l Putnam, Jan^y 7 177 Jonaⁿ Mifflin D. Q. M. G.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: New Castle County Militia, Captain Walter Carson's Coy
James Rankin

Pension Application of James Rankin No. R 859 at www.footnote.com

after being there a considerable time was marched to Philadelphia to join the regiment commanded by Colonel Haslet from thence we marched to Trenton and was in that Battle. From thence to Princeton and was in the last of the Battle and Colonel Haslet and General Mercer was killed and after the Battle he fell sick and was removed to Mount Holly hospital from thence returning home and got home in the month of March 1777.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Philadelphia Associators
James Read

"Letter of James Read, of Philadelphia, 1777." In: *Notes and Queries. Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 16 (1892) pp. 465-466.

The following extracts are taken from a letter of James Read to his wife, dated from Morristown, New Jersey. Although connected with the naval service, he was granted leave to participate with a company of Philadelphia Associators, of which he was a junior officer, in the Jersey campaign.

Our fatigues have been great but they ought not to be thought of when compared to the service which has been rendered our country. As for my own part, my health and spirits always increased as our hardships did and it will be acknowledged we have had our share hitherto. . . . The materials for writing are exceedingly hard to be procured here and, when got, no place can be found to write in. I am now sur [p. 466] rounded by a room full of people where a constant noise is kept up by talking. ... As to our two battles, Trenton and Princeton, suffice it to say, that our conduct and success there (particularly the latter) has saved the country for this campaign. O my Susan! it was a glorious day and I would not have been absent from it for all the money I ever expect to be worth. I happened to be amongst those who were in the first and hottest of the fire and I flatter myself that our superiors have approved of our conduct. ... I do not intend, and I am sure my Susan would not wish me, to quit the service I am now in until I have fully done my duty, and I really think if we stick together but two or three weeks more, with the reinforcements we are daily receiving we shall oblige these invaders to quit our country [that is, as explained by another letter, force them to quit New Jersey]. We understand that they have collected their whole force at Brunswick, which can't be above seven or eight thousand men at most, and they are very short of provisions and we are distributing large parties all around which prevents their getting any supplies, so that they are in an uneasy situation and much frightened. They have got their transports round to Amboy, which is a proof that they wish to retreat if they can effect it. However I hope we shall have it in our power to ruin them one way or the other before Spring. ... I would wish to say a few words respecting the actions of that truly great man Gen. Washington, but it is not in the power of language to convey any just idea of him. His greatness is far beyond my description. I shall never forget what I felt at Princeton on his account, when I saw him brave all the dangers of the field, and his important life hanging as it were by a single hair with a thousand deaths flying around him. Believe me I thought not of myself. He is surely America's better Genius and Heaven's peculiar care."

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Head-Quarters
General Joseph Reed

William B. Reed, *The Life and Correspondence of Joseph Reed, Military Secretary of Washington* vol. 1 (Philadelphia, 1847), pp. 287-291

January 2d, 1777, twelve o'clock at night.

Dear General Putnam,

The enemy advanced upon us to-day. We came to the east side of the river or creek, which runs through Trenton, when it was resolved to make a forced march and attack the enemy in Princeton. In order to do this with the greatest security our baggage is sent off to Burlington. His Excellency begs you will march immediately forward with all the force you can collect at Crosswicks where you will find a very advantageous post; your advanced party at Allentown. You will also send a good guard for our baggage wherever it may be. Let us hear from you as often as possible. We shall do the same by you,

Yours,

J. Reed. To Major-General Putnam, Mount Holly.

It must have been but a few minutes after this letter was written, that the midnight march of the 2d of January was commenced, the first effect of which was to turn the tide of the war and compel the enemy, in no ill-founded panic, to abandon all their recent conquests, and evacuate New Jersey.

MY NOTE: This is now William B Reed speaking, NOT Joseph Reed! "GENERAL JOSEPH REED'S NARRATIVE OF THE MOVEMENTS OF THE AMERICAN ARMY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF TRENTON IN THE WINTER OF 1776-77" *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 8 (1884), pp. 391- 402, ends just before the Battle of Princeton.

At nightfall on the 2d, the weather was unusually mild, so much so as to thaw the roads, and induce very reasonable apprehensions that they might be found impassable. In the course of the evening, however, a sudden change, such as often occurs in our variable climate, took place, the wind veered to the northward, and it became intensely cold, the roads though rough being frozen hard. A working party was detached to the lower

ford near the bridge in Trenton, with orders to continue busily and noisily at work till daybreak, and fires were lighted on the lower bank of the Assanpink near which the American sentinels were to be seen during the night. The scheme was completely successful. The army was secretly withdrawn. Mercer with the flying camp in advance, and the main body consisting principally of the Pennsylvania troops, under Washington's immediate command, marched by the road to Sandtown and the Quaker Bridge, towards Princeton. About daybreak they had reached the point where the chasseurs had been captured. Here Washington paused till his column was consolidated, and then pushed rapidly on, their approach being yet undiscovered. After crossing Stoney Brook, the Americans pursued its bank till they reached a blind road at the edge of the wood below the Meeting-House, by which, according to the information of the guides, there was a more direct and less exposed route to Princeton than by the main road still some distance in advance. The main body defiled on this road to the right, while Mercer with his brigade, composed principally of the remains of the Delaware and Maryland regiments, pushed on along the creek to take possession and if possible destroy the bridge,—over Stoney Brook,—by which Lord Cornwallis's approach, should he have taken the alarm, might be obstructed.

The British troops at Princeton consisting of the 17th, 40th, and 55th Regiments, wholly unsuspecting of the near approach of an enemy, had been put in motion at an early hour to join Lord Cornwallis at Trenton. But one regiment, (17th,) commanded by Colonel Mawhood had, however, actually marched. At daybreak it had reached Cochrane's house, a short distance from the bridge over Stoney Brook, and in the first light of the morning the two advancing parties, Mawhood's regiment and Mercer's brigade, discovered each other. Mawhood, after a moment's halt on the hill, made a rapid retrograde movement, crossing the bridge and pushing back to join the other regiments supposed to be approaching from Princeton. Mercer immediately moved to the right so as to intercept him, and gain the rising ground near Clark's house. The Americans having a shorter distance to march, reached their position sooner than the enemy and formed behind a hedge fence in front of the house. The action immediately began with great spirit. At the first fire Mercer's horse was disabled. One of his colonels was mortally wounded, and carried to the rear. This caused a momentary confusion and the American line broke. Captain Neal who was in command of the artillery was killed, and while Mercer on foot was endeavouring to rally his men and to form his troops so as to cover his flank by Clark's house and barn, the enemy made the charge in which Mercer was bayoneted and left on the field.

Immediately on the sound of the firing reaching Washington, who was pushing on towards Princeton, he detached a body of the Pennsylvania militia to the left, and with them hastened to sustain Mercer. He reached the rising ground beyond the wood in time to witness the first retreat of this corps. The Pennsylvanians were formed under cover of the wood, and becoming, in the true restlessness of raw troops, impatient under the fire of Mawhood's artillery, moved rapidly in advance beyond the cover. Washington rode hastily by them, waving his hat and calling to them to maintain their ground. He then rode forward under the fire of the enemy's battery to rally the remnant of Mercer's detachment, his artillery forming on the brow of the little ridge near the wood. At this moment the 7th Virginia regiment came rapidly up from the wood, and forming on the right of the Pennsylvanians, the whole moved forward with a loud cheer. The conflict was short and severe, and the British in their turn broke and retreated. Washington, leaving a party to break down the bridge, and sending orders to St. Clair to continue the advance to Princeton, went with a detachment

of cavalry in rapid pursuit of the fragments of Mawhood's regiment now completely dispersed. The fate of the day was thus decided. The other British regiments, after a moment's stand, and the interchange of a few shots with St. Clair's advance guard near the College, fled in disorder to Brunswick. Princeton was immediately taken possession of by the Americans. Such was the fatigue, however, of the troops, they not having slept for two nights, or had anything to eat since the morning before, it became necessary to relinquish the movement against Brunswick, and to withdraw the army first to Kingston and then to Pluckemin, whence on the 5th, Washington wrote his despatch to Congress informing them of his success. On the first retreat of Mawhood's regiment, Mercer was found on the field in a state of entire insensibility, the combined effect of the cold and his wounds, and carried by his Aid Major Armstrong to Thomas Clark's house in the rear. Here he was nursed with all the care which tenderness could bestow. Two young Quaker women, who had not fled at the terrors of a neighbouring field of battle, watched by the bedside of the dying soldier. Armstrong was applying such remedies as were at hand to Mercer's numerous and ghastly wounds, when a large party of the enemy, believed to be Lord Cornwallis or General Lesley's vanguard, retreating from Maidenhead and Trenton, was discovered rapidly approaching. Armstrong and his party were peremptorily ordered by Mercer to leave him and join the army. They barely had time to do so when the house was surrounded and Mercer was again a prisoner. On hearing the sound of cannon in his rear, Lord Cornwallis had discovered at daybreak the military stratagem of which he had been the victim. Calling in his guards he began his retreat with such rapidity that he reached Brunswick the same evening, his advance entering the lower end of Princeton about the same time that Washington's rear-guard quitted the town.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 5th Virginia Regiment, Col. Charles Scott
Jesse Reynolds

Pension Application of Jesse Reynolds No. W 5683, also at <http://vagenweb.org/bedford/reynolds.doc>

Virginia, Bedford County,

On the 25th day of September 1832 personally appeared before Thomas Sale a justice of the peace in and for the said County of Bedford, Jesse Reynolds, a resident of the said county, and State of Virginia, aged 78 years who being duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following declaration, in order to obtain the benefit of the provisions made by the act of Congress passed June 7th 1832.

That he enlisted in the Regular Army of the United States in the year 1776 under one Gross Scrugs, and served in the 5th Virginia Regiment of the Continental line. That he enlisted in the county of Bedford and State of Virginia, and marched from thence to Norfolk, and after remaining there some short time, proceeded to join the Northern Army, under the command of Gen'l Gates. That he was attached to Colo. Morgan command, and was engaged with the Regular Army at Saratoga, where Gen'l Burgoyne was taken, and received a bad wound in the hand and had his gun broken. That he entered the army as a private soldier, but in some short time thereafter was promoted to a Sergeant, in which capacity he continued to act until he returned home.

That he was also in the battles of Princetown and Trentown, and aided in capturing about 400 hessians, and was commanded by our Capt. Henderson, and Ensign Washington. That after he returned to the County of Bedford, he served in the militia Six months at one time, and three at another time, and that he served in the Regular Army upwards of two years, and thinks his discharge has been lost or mislaid.

I hereby relinquish every claim Whatever to a pension, or an annuity, except the present, and declare that my name is not on the pension rool [roll] of any county, in any State.

[signed] Jesse Reynolds

Sworn and subscribed the day & year aforesaid.

[signed] Th. Sale. J.P.

Jesse's pension application was accompanied by the following sworn affidavits:

And the said Thomas Sales, a justice of the peace for the said county, do hereby declare his opinion that the above named applicant was a Revolutionary Soldier, and served as he states, and thinks the said applicant is prevented by bodily infirmity from attending court.

[signed] Th. Sale. J.P.

Virginia, Bedford County to wit: This day personally appeared before me Thomas Sale a justice of the peace for the aforesaid county, Captain George Lambert of the said county, a Revolutionary officer and made oath that he is well acquainted with the above applicant, Jesse Reynolds, and knows that he the said Reynolds is a Revolutionary soldier, and was attached to Gen'l Morgans Rifle Corps while engaged at Saratoga, and that the said Reynolds served in the Regular army two years. Given under my hand this 25th day September 1832.

[signed] Th. Sale. J.P.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 1st (or 2nd) Massachusetts Regiment
Lieutenant Jonas Rice

Pension Application of Jonas Rice, No. W 22082.

He was born in Worcester Township, Worcester County, Massachusetts on June 26, 1755. He married at Casleton Township, Rutland County, Vermont on March 13, 1786 Elizabeth Fairchild. He died on February 17, 1839. He served as a lieutenant in Captain James Blakely's Company of Colonel William Malcom's Regiment (Malcolm's Additional Continental Regiment, created 7 January 1777, after Princeton) at Fort Herkimer and Fort Plain in 1779. His file contains two of his commissions which are signed by Governor George Clinton.

... was in the battles of Trenton & Princeton having volunteered after his time expired & served six weeks. In 1777 he served six weeks as a volunteer ...

where they had a skirmish, thence to White Plains, Kings Ferry -
thence to New Jersey to Pennsylvania & joined the army at
Mifflin, opposite Trenton, & to Red Bank, N. Jersey, where he was
discharged - was in the battles of Trenton & Princeton, having
volunteered after his time expired & served six weeks. In 1777 he served
6 weeks as a volunteer to assist in the capture of Burgoyne -
In 1778 he enlisted & served nine months in Capt. Gains' company
in Col. Rufus Putnam's Regt. of Mass. Nixon's Brigade - served at White

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: German Regiment, Capt Heyser's Coy
Edward Robertson

Pension application of Edward Robertson, No. S 35050.

[enlisted in the] German Regiment commanded by Colonel Housaker of Pennsylvania, George Stricker Lieutenant Colonel, Frederick County, Maryland, Major Weltner, who was the other field officer, of Fredericktown, Maryland, who was afterwards on the Colonel being arrested and discharged, for his conduct at Princeton, and the resignation of the Lieutenant Colonel, promoted as Lieutenant Colonel, and when discharged Major Weltner was in command.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Philadelphia Light Infantry Company
Thomas Rodney

Time	Location
07:22	civil sunrise: the sun rose as we passed over Stony brook
07:35	proceeded to within a mile and a half of Princeton and the van had crossed Stony Brook,
07:40	Gen. Washington ordered our Infantry to file off to one side of the road and halt
07:45	Gen. Sullivan was ordered to wheel to the right and flank the town on that side
07:50	two Brigades .. wheel to the Left ... surround the town ... to break down the Bridge and post a party at the mill on the main road,
07:55	Mercers brigade ... headed by Col. Haslet ... Gen. Mercer was to march straight on to Princeton without Turning to the right or left
08:00	Gen. Mercers Brigade owing to some delay in arranging Cadwaladers men had advanced several hundred yards ahead and never discovered the enemy (?) until he was turning the buildings they were posted behind, and then they were not more than fifty yards off.
08:05	
08:10	Gen. Cadwalader's Philadelphia Brigade came up and the enemy ... took post behind a fence and a ditch in front of the buildings ... and so extended themselves that every man could load and fire incessantly; the fence stood on low ground between two hills;
08:15	the militia gave way and the whole brigade broke and most of them retired to a woods about 150 yards in the rear; but two pieces of artillery stood their ground and were served with great skill and bravery
08:20	Gen. Washington having rallied both Gen. Mercers and Gen. Cadwaladers brigade they moved forward and when they came to where the artillery stood began a very heavy platoon fire on the march.
08:25	This the enemy bore but a few minutes and then threw down their arms
08:30	We then pushed forward towards the town spreading over the fields and through the woods to enclose the enemy and take prisoners.
08:35	Our ... force met at the Court House [Nassau Hall] and took ... about 200 prisoners and about 200 others pushed off and were pursued
08:40	
08:45	
08:50	

Sources:

Diary of Captain Thomas Rodney, 1776-1777. (Wilmington, 1888), pp. 33-37.

January 2d 1777

At two o'clock this morning the ground having been frozen firm by a keen N. West wind secret orders were issued to each department and the whole army was at once put in motion, but no one knew what the Gen. meant to do. Some thought that we were going to attack the enemy in the rear; some that we were going to Princeton; the latter proved to be right. We went by a bye road on the right hand which made it about 16 miles; During this nocturnal march I, with the Dover Company and the Red Feather Company of Philadelphia Light Infantry led the van of the army and Capt. Henry with the other three companies of Philadelphia light Infantry brought up the rear.¹ The Van moved on all night in the most cool and determined order but on the march great confusion happened in the rear. There was a cry that they were surrounded by the Hessians and several corps of Militia broke and fled towards Bordentown but the rest of the column remained firm and pursued their march without disorder, but those who were frightened and fled did not recover from their panic until they reached Burlington.

When we had proceeded to within a mile and a half of Princeton and the van had crossed Stony Brook, Gen. Washington ordered our Infantry to file off to one side of the road and halt. Gen. Sullivan was ordered to wheel to the right and flank the town on that side, and two Brigades were ordered to wheel to the Left, to make a circuit and surround the town on that side and as they went to break down the Bridge and post a party at the mill on the main road, to oppose the enemy's main army if they should pursue us from Trenton.

¹ Nine months later, Crown Forces also have a "red feather" light infantry company: "With the reinforcements for General Howe, the 46th Regiment went from Ireland to America, in 1776, and saw much hard service in the earlier campaigns of the War of Independence. It was during the expedition to Philadelphia that the light company of the regiment assumed the scarlet feather, so long its distinguishing, badge, and which still survives in the helmet-plate of the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry. The regimental version of the story is that in an affair of outposts on 26th September, 1777, when the brigade of the American general, Wayne, was defeated, a light battalion, composed of the light companies of the 46th and five other corps, had a sharp encounter with some of Washington's Horse. So much incensed were the Americans at their defeat that they sent word that "The Light Bobs had better look out, as no quarter would be given them." To which the Light Battalion rejoined that they were "Quite Ready," and tipped their feathers red as, a distinguishing badge, to prevent the Americans withholding quarter from other British troops by mistake. Thenceforth the "red feather," ever seen where danger was thickest, was the distinguishing badge of those six companies all through that long war. When the struggle was over the symbol disappeared from all the companies, save one. By the 46th it was retained, and in time red ball, which, after the abolition of flank companies, was, by Her Majesty's gracious permission, adopted by the whole battalion and worn until the introduction of the helmet." http://www.lightinfantry.org.uk/regiments/canada/can_infantry.htm

The third Division was composed of Gen. Mercers brigade of Continental troops, about 300 men, and Cadwaladers brigade of Philadelphia militia to which brigade the whole of our light Infantry Regiment was again annexed.

Mercers brigade marched in front and another corp of infantry brought up the rear.

My company flanked the whole brigade on the right in an Indian file so that my men were very much extended and distant from each other; I marched in front and was followed by sargeant McKnatt and next to him was Nehemiah Tilton [afterwards Lieut.-Col. Tilton].

Mercers brigade which was headed by Col. Haslet of Delaware on foot and Gen. Mercer on horseback was to march straight on to Princeton without Turning to the right or left

It so happened that two Regiments of British troops that were on their march to Trenton to reinforce their army there, received intelligence of the movements of the American army (for the sun rose as we passed over Stony brook) and about a mile from Princeton they turned off from the main road and posted themselves behind a long string of buildings and an orchard, on the straight road, to Princeton.

The first two Divisions of our army therefore passed wide to the right and left and leaving them undiscovered went on to Princeton.

Gen. Mercers Brigade owing to some delay in arranging Cadwaladers men had advanced several hundred yards ahead and never discovered the enemy until he was turning the buildings they were posted behind, and then they were not more than fifty yards off.

He immediately formed his men, with great courage, and poured a heavy fire in upon the enemy, but they being greatly superior in number returned the fire and charged bayonets, and their onset was so fierce that Gen. Mercer fell mortally wounded and many of his officers were killed, and the brigade being effectually broken, began a disorderly flight.

Col. Haslet retired some small distance behind the buildings and endeavored to rally them, but receiving a bullet through his head, dropt dead on the spot and the whole brigade fled in confusion. At this instant Gen. Cadwalader's Philadelphia Brigade came up and the enemy checked by their appearance took post behind a fence and a ditch in front of the buildings before mentioned, and so extended themselves that every man could load and fire incessantly; the fence stood on low ground between two hills; on the hill behind the British line they had eight pieces of artillery which played incessantly with round and grape shot on our brigade, and the fire was extremely hot. Yet Gen. Cadwalader led up the head of the column with the greatest bravery to within 50 yards of the enemy, but this was rashly done, for he was obliged to recoil; and leaving one piece of his

artillery, he fell back about 40 yards and endeavored to form the brigade, and some companies did form and gave a few volleys but the fire of the enemy was so hot, that, at the sight of the regular troops running to the rear, the militia gave way and the whole brigade broke and most of them retired to a woods about 150 yards in the rear; but two pieces of artillery stood their ground and were served with great skill and bravery.

At this time a field officer was sent to order me to take post on the left of the artillery until the brigade should form again, and, with the Philadelphia Infantry keep up a fire from some stacks and buildings, and to assist the artillery in preventing the enemy from advancing.

We now crossed the enemies fire from right to left and took position behind some stacks just on the left of the artillery; and about 30 of the Philadelphia Infantry were under cover of a house on our left and a little in the rear.

About 15 of my men came to this post, but I could not keep them all there, for the enemies fire was dreadful and three balls, for they were very thick, had grazed me; one passed within my elbow nicking my great coat and carried away the breech of Sargeant McKnatts gun, he being close behind me, another carried away the inside edge of one of my shoesoles, another had niched my hat and indeed they seemed as thick as hail.

From these stacks and buildings, we, with the two pieces of artillery kept up a continuous fire on the enemy, and in all probability it was this circumstance that prevented the enemy from advancing, for they could not tell the number we had posted behind these covers and were afraid to attempt passing them; but if they had known how few they were they might easily have advanced while the two brigades were in confusion and routed the whole body for it was a long time before they could be reorganized again, and indeed many, that were panic struck, ran quite off.

Gen. Washington having rallied both Gen. Mercers and Gen. Cadwaladers brigade they moved forward and when they came to where the artillery stood began a very heavy platoon fire on the march. This the enemy bore but a few minutes and then threw down their arms and ran.

We then pushed forward towards the town spreading over the fields and through the woods to enclose the enemy and take prisoners.

The fields were covered with baggage which the Gen. ordered to be taken care of.

Our whole force met at the Court House and took there about 200 prisoners and about 200 others pushed off and were pursued by advance parties who took about 50 more.

In this engagement we lost about 20 killed, the enemy about 100 men killed and lost the field.

This is a very pretty little town on the York road 12 miles from Trenton; the houses are built of brick and are very elegant especially the College which has 52 rooms in it; but the whole town has been ravaged and ruined by the enemy.

As soon as the enemy's main army heard our cannon at Princeton (and not 'til then) they discovered our manoeuvre and pushed after us with all speed and we had not been above an hour in possession of the town before the enemy's light horse and advanced parties attacked our party at the bridge but our people by a very heavy fire kept the pass until our whole army left the town.

Just as our army began our march through Princeton with all their prisoners and spoils the van of the British army we had left at Trenton came in sight, and entered the town about an hour after we left: it, but made no stay and pushed on towards Brunswick for fear we should get there before him, which was indeed the course our General intended to pursue had he not been detained too long in collecting the Baggage and Artillery which the enemy had left behind him.

Our army marched on to Kingston then wheeled to the left and went down the Millstone, keeping that River on our left; the main body of the British army followed, but kept on through Kingston to Brunswick: but one division or a strong party of horse took the road to the left of the Millstone and arrived on the hill, at the bridge on that road just as the van of the American Army arrived on the opposite side.

I was again commanding the van of our army, and General Washington seeing the enemy, rode forward and ordered me to halt and take down a number of carpenters which he had ordered forward and break up the bridge, which was done and the enemy were obliged to return.

We then marched on to a little village called Stone brook or Summerset Court House about 15 miles from Princeton where we arrived just at dusk. [end of page 37]

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 20th Continental Regiment, Colonel John Durkee
Sergeant Nathaniel Root

Time	Location
07:22	Civil sunrise
07:30	About sunrise of the 3 rd January 1777,
07:35	reaching the summit of a hill near Princeton
07:45	we observed a light-horseman looking towards us, as we view an object when the sun shines directly in our faces.
07:50	Gen. Mercer observing him, gave orders to the riflemen who were posted on the right to pick him off. Soon after this
07:55	as we were descending a hill through an orchard, a party of the enemy ... fired upon us. At this moment we were ordered to wheel.
08:00	We formed, advanced and fired upon the enemy.
08:05	They retreated eight rods to their packs ... I advanced to the fence
08:10	The British were re-enforced ... I soon heard Gen. Mercer command ... 'Retreat!'
08:15	I ran for a little piece of wood ... at this moment Washington appeared in front of the American Army
08:20	I immediately joined the main body, and marched over the ground again.
08:25	The British were unable to resist this attack and retreated into the College.
08:30	Our army was there in an instant ... and a white flag appeared
08:35	
08:40	
08:45	
08:50	
08:55	
09:00	

Source:

Sergeant R -, "The Battle of Princeton." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 20 No. 1, (1896) pp. 515-519, pp. 516-518.

“When we were about commencing our march for Princeton, Lord Cornwallis left that place with the intention of attacking, and at one blow cutting off the rebel army. He appeared near Wood Creek or the Assanpink river, where a skirmish took place at the bridge over the creek. The Hessians were placed in front of the British troops, and endeavored to force the bridge. They retired, and we were left undisturbed for the night.

“Leaving our fires kindled to deceive the enemy, we de-camped that night, and by a circuitous route took up our line of march for Princeton. General Mercer commanded the front guard of which the two hundred volunteers composed a part. About sunrise of the 3rd January 1777, reaching the summit of a hill near Princeton, we observed a light-horseman looking towards us, as we view an object when the sun shines directly in our faces. Gen. Mercer ob-

¹ About half of these volunteers were killed in the battle of Princeton or died of the small-pox soon after.

serving him, gave orders to the riflemen who were posted on the right to pick him off. Several made ready, but at that instant he wheeled about, and was out of their reach. Soon after this as we were descending a hill through an orchard, a party of the enemy who were entrenched behind a bank and fence, rose and fired upon us. Their first shot passed over our heads cutting the limbs of the trees under which we were marching. At this moment we were ordered to wheel. As the platoon which I commanded were obeying the order, the corporal who stood at my left shoulder, received a ball and fell dead on the spot. He seemed to bend forward to receive the ball, which might otherwise have ended my life. We formed, advanced, and fired upon the enemy. They retreated eight rods to their packs, which were laid in a line. I advanced to the fence on the opposite side of the ditch which the enemy had just left, fell on one knee and loaded my musket with ball and buckshot. Our fire was most destructive; their ranks grew thin and the victory seemed nearly complete, when the British were reinforced. Many of our brave men had fallen, and we were unable to withstand such superior numbers of fresh troops.

"I soon heard Gen. Mercer command in a tone of distress, 'Retreat!' He was mortally wounded and died shortly after. I looked about for the main body of the army which I could not discover—discharged my musket at part of the enemy, and ran for a piece of wood, at a little distance where I thought I might shelter. At this moment Washington appeared in front of the American army, riding towards those of us who were retreating, and exclaimed 'Parade with us, my brave fellows, there is but a handful of the enemy, and we will have them directly.' I immediately joined the main body, and marched over the ground again.

"O, the barbarity of man! On our retreat, we had left a comrade of ours whose name was Loomis from Lebanon, Ct., whose leg was broken by a musket ball, under a cart in a yard; but on our return he was dead, having received several wounds from a British bayonet. My old associates

were scattered about groaning, dying and dead. One officer who was shot from his horse lay in a hollow place in the ground rolling and writhing in his blood, unconscious of anything around him. The ground was frozen and all the blood which was shed remained on the surface, which added to the horror of this scene of carnage.

"The British were unable to resist this attack, and retreated into the College, where they thought themselves safe. Our army was there in an instant, and cannon were planted before the door, and after two or three discharges, a white flag appeared at the window, and the British surrendered. They were a haughty, crabbed set of men, as they fully exhibited while prisoners, on their march to the country. In this battle, my pack, which was made fast by leather strings, was shot from my back, and with it went what little clothing I had. It was, however, soon replaced by one which had belonged to a British officer, and was well furnished. It was not mine long, for it was stolen shortly afterwards.

"Immediately after the battle an officer observing blood on my clothes said 'Sergeant R—you are wounded?' I replied 'No,' as I never expected to be injured in battle. On examination I found the end of my forefinger gone, and bleeding profusely. When and how it happened I never knew; I found also bullet holes in the skirts of my coat, but, excepting the slight wound of my finger, was not injured.

"In this battle and that of Trenton, there was no ardent spirits in the army, and the excitement of rum had nothing to do in obtaining the victories. As I had tried powder and rum on Long Island to promote courage, and engaged here without it, I can say that I was none the less courageous here than there. The Army retreated to Pluckemin mountains. The weather was extremely cold, and we suffered greatly from its severity. We stayed three or four days and then marched through New Jersey towards New York.

Samuel Steele Smith, *The Battle of Princeton* (Monmouth Beach, 1967), p. 40, erroneously identified Sergeant R_ as a member of Miles' Pennsylvania Rifle Regiment. Our identification of Sergeant R_ as Nathaniel Root is based on the many congruencies between the account of Sergeant R_ and Nathaniel Root in his pension application No 18574 (available at www.footnote.com), e.g., having part of his finger shot off.

State of Connecticut County of Tolland
Probate District of Hebron

On this 2d day of August 1832 personally appeared in open Court before me Abner Hendel Judge of the Court Probate within and for the district of Hebron now sitting Nathaniel Root a resident of Coventry and district aforesaid aged seventy five years ... On the next day after the battle at Lexington (viz) the 20th of April 1775 he was ploughing in his field when the news came of said battle with an order (to?) at the same time to repara to head quarters of his regiment immediately, he took his cattle from the plough, mounted a horse and proceeded to Pomfret in the county of Windham the place assigned for the regmt to meet: when & where a draft was made from the regmt of about one half of its number of which declarant was one; and ordered to proceed directly to Cambridge Mass. Elias Buell was Captain of the company to which he belonged. Tho -- Joseph Talcott was Lieut. Samuel Robinson and Thomas Brown was Major of the regiment. that he with the above named officers and men marched immediately to the aforesaid Cambridge.

(He was born at Coventry in the year 1757 where his birth is recorded, and was there residing when he first entered into the service of the United States, and has constantly resided in sd Coventry until the present time) he soon went to Lexington and saw the blood of the slain in the aforesaid battle on the floors and in the houses perforated with balls; he was then & there employed in keeping guard and in military exercise. Colonel Putnam afterwards General Putnam was the principle commandent of the troops at Cambridge: he continued in the service six weeks as aforesaid & was then verbally discharged by the commanding Officer. The declarant does not now know of any person living who was with him in the sd service.

In the latter part of October or first of November 1775 he enlisted into the Continental Army as a serjeant the residing in said Coventry in the company commanded by Capt. Thomas Dyer of Windham of which company Daniel Tilden was 1st Lieut - Holt 2nd Lieut Benjamin Durkee ensign: supposed to be the 20th regiment commanded first by Benedict Arnold afterwards by Colonel John Durkee of Norwich. He enlisted as aforesd to serve from the first of January following for the term of one year: and from sd first of November to the first of December following he served per order as a recruiting Officer, and enlisted 12 men for the term aforesaid who with the declarant on the 8th of December joined sd regiment at Cambridge 1775. (then follows a brief account of 1776 campaign)

The term for which he enlisted having expired the first of January, he continued in the service a volunteer and went with the army to Princeton: he marched with the front guard commanded by General Mercer into Princeton battle, was with him when wounded, and heard his order to retreat. The declarant had also a part of one of his fingers shot off in the battle. The front guard began to retreat, but General Washington forced them about - the enemy took refuge in the College; but were compelled to surrender to the Americans. From Princeton we marched to Morristown where having taken the small pox he was detained sick till the middle of March when he returned home."

Root was born on 25 March 1757 in Coventry, CT and died there on 21 September 1840.

This identification is re-enforced by the fact that Coventry is a community next to Lebanon, which is mentioned in Sergeant R_'s account who writes p. 517:

"On our retreat, we had left a comrade of ours whose name was Loomis from Lebanon, Ct., whose leg was broken by a musket ball, under a cart in a yard; but on our return he was dead, having received several wounds from a British bayonet."

The Loomis is a long-established family from Lebanon, the identity of the soldier killed at Princeton -- there are 15 Loomis living in Lebanon in 1776/77: Benoni Loomis Jr., Ezekial Loomis, Israel Loomis Jr., Jarom Loomis, Jesse Loomis, John Loomis, Jonathan Loomis, Joseph Loomis, Joseph Loomis Jr., Simon Loomis (three separate entries for a Simon Loomis, may be same person, but chronology shows all alive after January 1777), Thomas Loomis, Asa Loomiss, Jacob Loomiss, Joseph Loomiss, Thomas Loomiss Jr. -- has not been established; Private Isaiah Beaumont from Lebanon, however, was wounded at Battle of Princeton on 3 January 1777.

These men from Lebanon, CT, are listed as having fought at Princeton: Isiah Beaumont, Daniel Tilden, John Buel, Jonathan Woodworth, John Alden, John Willes, Roger Strong, and Andrew Fitch.

Isaiah Beaumont enlisted as a private in a company commanded by Capt. Robinson of the regiment commanded by Col. John Durkee in the Connecticut Line, for 16 months from date of enlistment on Sept. 1, 1775. He marched to Boston, then to New York via New London, lay at NY or Paulis Hook, then retreated cross NJ, crossed Delaware at Wells Ferry. Encamped in woods during severe snowstorm, recrossed Delaware right after Christmas and engaged at Trenton. Soon after he was at battle of Sanpink Bridge, repulsed Br & Hessians, left there in middle of night, marched to Princeton where he was wounded in the arm. He was to be discharged soon after that battle but stayed on another month because army was so short of men. He later served in militia under Gen. Sullivan in Rhode Island. He was 15 years old when he enlisted, probably 17 by the time he was discharged.

Root's pension application contains a deposition by Corporal Jacob Loomis who describes Nathaniel Root as being a sergeant in the 20th Regiment at the time of the Battle of Princeton. Jacob Loomis' own pension application No. S46203 confirms the presence of Capt. Dyer and Col. Durkee at Princeton.

Concerning the strength of the 20th Regiment Richard Patterson of the Old Barracks Museum in Trenton wrote in an e-mail:

By about the time of the Battle of Trenton on 25/26 December 1776, Mercer's Brigade included Colonel John Durkee's 20th Continental Regt. (raised in Connecticut) 30 officers, 283 men present and Colonel Philip Burr Bradley's battalion of Connecticut State troops (under Capt. Benjamin Mills) 18 officers and 124 men present. How many men from these units remained as long as the Battle of Princeton is conjectural.

In a separate e-mail concerning the deployment of Mercer's brigade on the battlefield Mr. Patterson referred to a "letter from Mercer to Durkee detailing their orders for the attack on Trenton dated Dec. 25th (printed in Stryker, pg. 359-360). At Trenton Mercer's Brigade was formed from right to left: Durkee, Bradley, Rawlings, and Stone, formerly Smallwood's Maryland regiment which contained several rifle companies. Almost in anticipation of how Morgan and Dearborn were paired at Saratoga, the right grand division of the little brigade was musket men, the left grand division was largely riflemen. The rifles were apparently not detached but fighting in the line of battle, perhaps somewhat protected by the bayonets of the right grand division. Considering it suffered little if any casualties on the 26th, it likely had the same order of battle at Princeton, only with the right grand division further weakened by the many returning home. That may have contributed to Mercer's being overrun early at Princeton with too few bayonets to protect all the rifles.

Further misunderstanding may be due to Hand being so famous as a rifle commander later in the war that many less knowledgeable probably figured all the riflemen were under Hand. On the 26th, fully one fourth of all Washington's infantry was rifle armed, and the rifles were generally not detached except in small pockets.

See also the pension application of Philemon Baldwin.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Civilian
Benjamin Rush

George W. Corner, ed., *The Autobiography of Benjamin Rush. His "Travels through Life" together with his Commonplace Book for 1789-1813* (Princeton, 1948), pp. 127-128.

About 4 o'clock [a.m. on 3 January 1777] Dr. Cochran went up to Trenton to inquire for our army. He returned in haste, and said they were not to be found. We now procured waggons, and after putting our patients [wounded from the 2nd battle of Trenton] in them directed that they should follow us to Bordentown, to which place we supposed our Army had retreated. At this place we heard a firing. We were ignorant from whence it came, 'till next morning, when we heard that general Washington had met a party of the British army at Princeton on his way to the high lands of Morris County in New Jersey, thro' a circuituos rout that had been pointed out to him the night before by Col. Jos. Read [Reed], and that he had defeated them. We set off immediately for Princeton and near the town passed over the field of battle still red in many places with human blood. We found a number of wounded officers and soldiers belonging to both armies. Among the former was General Mercer and a Capt. McPherson, a British officer. [Capt., 17th Regt of Foot] They were under the care of a British surgeons mate, who committed them both to me. General Mercer had been wounded by a bayonet in his belly in several places, but he received a stroke with the butt of a musquet on the side of his head, which put an end to his life a week after the battle.

Benjamin Rush, "On the case of the wounded." Norman P. Desmarais and James H. McGovern, ed., *The Essential Documents of American History* 1 no. 1 (1997), pp. 161-162.

See also: "To the Officers in the Army of the United American States: Directions for Preserving the Health of Soldiers." *Pennsylvania Packet* 22 April 1777.

Benjamin Rush to Richard Henry Lee

BORDENTOWN, January 6th, 1777.

Dear Sir--

Before this reaches you, you will, I dare say, have heard of the affairs of Trenton and Princeton. At the former place, victory was undecided; at the latter, it was complete. Too much praise cannot be given to our brave troops for the patience with which they have undergone cold, hunger, and all the usual distressed of a winter's campaign; the Philadelphia militia behaved like heroes; at Princeton, like young troops, they broke at first, but, like veterans, were rallied without much difficulty. Much credit is due to a brigade of New England men, commanded by Colonel Hitchcock, in both actions; they sustained a heavy fire, from musketry and artillery, for a long time, without moving; they are entitled to a great share of the honour acquired by our arms at Princeton. General Mercer's death cannot be too much lamented. I had the pleasure of dining with him two days before he fell, and was never more highly feasted with patriotic sentiments; his character was marked with all the traits of one of the heroes of antiquity; the manner of his death was equally honourable to himself and to our cause. I cannot help thinking but that the Congress owe some funeral honours to his memory; perhaps an oration would have a better effect in this case than in that of General ----- . What do you think of the Congress writing a letter of condolence to the widow?

I congratulate you upon the addition of Colonel Knox to the list of general officers; he is a brave, sensible, enterprising man. I saw his behavior in the battle of Trenton; he was cool, cheerful, and was present every where. I have picked up an original letter from General Howe to Count de Donop, at Trenton, a copy of which I shall send you, to be laid before Congress; it contains, among other things, a warrant for plundering the inhabitants of New Jersey; it must be published.

Yours, &c.
BENJAMIN RUSH.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 2nd Virginia Regiment, Col. William Woodford
James Scott

Pension Application of James Scott No. S 32511.

State of Indiana }
County of Dearborn }

On this 13 day of October 1834 personally appeared th before me John M Pike, one of the Special Judges of the County & State aforesaid James Scott aged over 76 years, who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on his oath make the following Declaration, in order to obtain the Benefit of the provisions made by the Act of Congress passed June 7th 1832.

That he enlisted in the Army of the United States in the year 1776 in May or June, in [William] Woodfords Brigade, William Heath [T. Will Heth] Colonel – John Patton Captain, Jesse Davis Lieutenant, Arthur [?] Lynn Ensign – Virginia State Troops or as it was called, the Continental Army – Entered service in Winchester Virginia – marched & joined the grand Army.

Enlisted for 3 years in Woodfords Brigade – was at the Battle of Princeton in the Winter after entered the service, and afterwards was at the Battle of Brandywine, in the fall of 1777. fought near a small creek called Brandywine, about 20 miles from Philadelphia – Lafayette & Woodford were both wounded here.

NOTE: Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris at <http://southerncampaign.org/pen/s32511.pdf>

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Continental Artillery
Major Samuel Shaw

Josiah Quincy, ed., *The Journals of Major Samuel Shaw, the First American Consul at Canton* (Boston, 1847), p. 29. Also in William S. Stryker, *The Battles of Princeton and Trenton* (Boston, 1898), p. 480-481.

After the defeat of the British at Trenton, he thus writes from Morristown (January 7th, 1777):

You have without doubt heard of our success at Trenton. Our army lay in the town two days. On the third day, about noon, we were alarmed by the enemy advancing, and in about two hours they came up from Princeton and drove our advanced guards into Trenton. Our people on this retreated from the thickest of the town over a bridge, and waited for the enemy to approach; but night coming on put a stop to any thing further being done at that time. In the mean while the General came to a resolution of stealing a march upon the enemy, and attacking their troops, which were left behind at Princeton, about eleven miles by a back road. We began our march about midnight, which was performed with so much secrecy that the enemy knew nothing of it till the next morning discovered that we were gone, and the first news they had of us was our beating up their quarters at Princeton. We killed, wounded, and took about five hundred of them at that place. This, with our taking the Hessians, has given our affairs quite a different turn, so that the militia are embodying in all parts of the Jerseys, and appear determined to have satisfaction for the injuries they have sustained from the enemy. I had the pleasure of being in both actions, and can truly say, I think it impossible for any troops to behave better than ours did; only at Princeton the militia, who had never seen any action, were a little skittish at first, but after that behaved very well. We are under very little apprehension from the enemy at present, as they seem very much panic struck; and in so great haste were they to get to a place of security, that they did not stay long enough at Princeton to take care of their wounded.

Our army love our General very much, but yet they have one thing against him, which is the little care he takes of himself in any action. His personal bravery, and the desire he has of animating his troops by example, make him fearless of any danger. This, while it makes him appear great, occasions us much uneasiness. But Heaven, who has hitherto been his shield, I hope will still continue to guard so valuable a life.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 2nd Connecticut Regiment
Captain Isaac Sherman

Franklin Bowditch Dexter, *Biographical sketches of the graduates of Yale college with annals of with annals of the college history* vol. 3: May 1763-July 1778 (New York, 1903), pp. 393-394.

Isaac Sherman ... was teaching in Exeter, New Hampshire, in 1774, and was looking for occupation in Massachusetts when the attack on Lexington took place in 1775. He immediately entered the service there and received a commission as a captain. After the siege of Boston he went with the army to New York, was promoted to be major of his regiment in March, 1776

On the formation of the Continental Line he entered the service of his native State, and was commissioned in January, 1777, as Lieutenant-Colonel of the Second Connecticut. His final rank (from October, 1779) was that of Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant. His own statement of his services is given in a letter towards the end of his life, as follows:

I entered the army immediately after the battle of Lexington, and continued therein till sometime after the preliminary articles of treaty were announced in the United States. I was at the siege of Boston, — with General Washington at the taking of the Germans at Trenton, — commanded the advance guard into Princeton on the third of January, 1777, — at the battle of Monmouth, — with General Wayne in the taking of Stony point, — and many other actions and skirmishes in my power to enumerate. I underwent great hardships, privations and dangers. At White Marsh in the close of the year 1777, I was placed in front of the American Army 17 days, was twice in action, in which nearly 120 brave Americans lost their lives under my command.

Note: Washington rode with St. Clair's brigade of New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Massachusetts troops, incl. two six pounders, which marched at the head of the column. Sherman commanded St. Clair's advance guard

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: United States Marines
Captain William Shippen

Pennsylvania Evening Post, January 18, 1777:

"Yesterday the remains of Captain William Shippen, who was killed at Princeton the third instant, gloriously fighting for the liberty of his country, were interred in St. Peter's Churchyard. His funeral was attended by the Council of Safety, the members of Assembly, officers of the army, a troop of Virginia light horse, and a great number of inhabitants. This brave and unfortunate man was in his twenty-seventh year, and has left a widow and three children to lament the death of an affectionate husband and a tender parent, his servants a kind master, and his neighbors a sincere and obliging friend."

John Fanning Watson, *Annals of Philadelphia*, (Philadelphia, 1881), p. :

"General Hugh Mercer, killed at Princeton, was brought to Philadelphia, and was buried with military honours on the south side of Christ church yard; and Captain William Shippen, killed also at Princeton, was buried at St. Peter's."

PENNSYLVANIA SOCIETY, SONS OF THE REVOLUTION. DECENNIAL REGISTER OF THE PENNSYLVANIA SOCIETY OF SONS OF THE REVOLUTION 1888-1898

ROLL OF ANCESTORS: SHIPPEN, WILLIAM 1750-1777

Capt. of a Privateer, March 22, 1776; Capt. of Marines, brig "Hancock," PA Navy, June 15, 1776; Capt. of Marines, on land service, Dec. 15, 1776-Jan. 3, 1777; killed at the battle of Princeton.

"Pew Holders at S. Peter's Church, Philadelphia, 1753-1785." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 18 (1894), p. 366.

Pew No. 43, Wm Shippen (or rather his widow). The article states that he was promoted to "Captain of Marines" on the privateer *Hancock* on 22 March 1776 at the request of the owner of the vessel. The *Hancock* sailed from Philadelphia around 1 July and returned in November 1776.

Francis Bernard Heitman, *Historical Register of officers of the Continental Army during the war* (Washington, 1893), p. 413 gives Wingate NEWMAN as CO of the ship *Hancock* and Capt of the Independent Company Pennsylvania Artillery 2 December 1776.

Worthington Chauncey Ford, ed., *Journals of the Continental Congress 1774-1779* (Washington, DC, 1905)

Resolution on the *Hancock*; June 8, 1776:

Saturday, June 8, 1776

The Congress took into consideration the resolutions moved yesterday:

Resolved, That they be referred to a committee of the whole [Congress.] Whereupon,

The Congress resolved itself into a committee of the whole to take into consideration the resolutions referred to them; and, after sometime spent thereon, the president resumed the chair, and Mr. [Benjamin] Harrison reported, that the committee have taken into consideration the matter to them referred, but not having come to any resolution thereon, desired leave to sit again on Monday next.

Resolved, That this Congress will, on Monday next, at 10 o'clock, resolve itself into a committee of the whole, to take into their farther consideration the resolutions referred to them.

On petition of John Bayard, Joseph Deane, and William Erskine, Being presented to Congress, and read,||

Resolved, That the Secret Committee be directed to sell ||the petitioners|| 550 lb. of powder, and 400 lb. of swivel and grape shot, for the use of their privateer Hancock, and also 750 lb. ||of powder|| before applied for.

The several matters to this day referred, being postponed,

Adjourned to 10 o'Clock on Monday.

Horace Wells Sellers, "Charles Willson Peale, Artist-Soldier." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 38 (1914), pp. 257-286, p. 283, 5 January 1777:

5th.—Some of Capt. Shippen's men joined my company, whom I supplied with rations. The weather is very favorable, though rather cold; for had it rained or snowed we should have been badly off, as many of the men had no blankets. We spent this night much better than the last. I went into town and got a barrel of flour, and engaged a negro woman to bake it by 4 o'clock at which time our order was to march. I went several times to get some of it, but could get none, yet expected I should have it before we should march. Many of the men, in their hard march on an icy road, were entirely barefooted. I got a raw hide to make them moccasins; but made a bad hand of it, for want of a proper needle or awl.

W. A. Newman Dorland, "The Second Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 46 (1922) pp. 57-77, p. 73, fn 181:

Jeremiah Fisher was a soldier of the Revolution, beginning his military career in the marine service. The marines were fitted out in Philadelphia in 1776, and returned from a cruise shortly before the battle of Princeton. They joined General Washington's army and took part in this battle, in which Mr. Fisher's close friend, Captain William Shippen, was killed. From this time Mr. Fisher provided for the four children of Captain Shippen. On January 30, 1777, he married Elizabeth Young. He took the oath of allegiance to the State on June 27, 1777. His career in the Philadelphia Militia was long and varied. On July 1, 1777, he succeeded Captain Samuel Massey in command of the Seventh Company, Fourth Associators' Battalion, Colonel John Bayard. In 1778, he was Captain of the Third Company, First Philadelphia Battalion, Colonel William Bradford; and, in September, 1778, Captain in the Seventh Battalion, Philadelphia City Militia, Colonel Bradford. In April, 1779, he is recorded as First Lieutenant in the Fourth Artillery Company; and, on June 19, 1779, he was so commissioned in James Lang's Seventh Company of the Pennsylvania Battalion of Artillery Militia, Colonel Jehu Eyre, and accompanied this Battalion on its tour of duty at Mud Island from June 23, to August 23, 1779. He subsequently rejoined this company on April 23, 1781, as a gunner; and, on April 23, 1783, was commissioned Captain Lieutenant of the company. He continued for many years in the Artillery Regiment, serving in various capacities. In 1787-88, he is recorded as a bombardier in the Eighth Artillery Company. On May 28, 1792, he was commissioned Captain of the Fourth Company of the Regiment, then commanded by Colonel Thomas Mifflin. He was elected First Major of the Fifth Philadelphia Militia Regiment on Monday, August 18, 1794; and Major Commandant of the Artillery on Monday, October 20, 1794, serving with his command during the Whiskey Insurrection. In 1784, he was a resident of Mulberry Ward. He died about noon on Tuesday, July 29, 1800, at his residence, Filbert Street near Eighth Street, and was accorded a military funeral on the 30th instant, the entire Regiment of Artillery parading.

Jeremiah Fisher on behalf of the children of Captain William Shippen, killed at Princeton. Was in "the Marine Service".

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: First Coy of Horse, Philadelphia Associators
Conrad Spangenburg

Pension application of Maria, widow of Conrad, Spangenburg No. R 9954.

On this Thirtieth day of January A.D. 1839 Personally appeared before the Court of Common Pleas, in and for the said County and State aforesaid, Maria Barbara Spangenburg, aged Seventy Seven Years, resident of the aforesaid County, who being first duly affirmed according to law, doth on her affirmation make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provision made by the act of Congress passed July 7th 1838 Entitled, "an act for the Half pay and pension of certain Widows." That She is the widow on Conrad Spangenburg deceased; who was the Trumpeter; and attached to the first Company of Horse that left Philadelphia, under the Command of Captain Samuel Morris, and that Her Husband the aforesaid Conrad, entered the Service at the commencement of the Revolutionary War. And further declares, He was at the Battle of Trenton after which, he the said Conrad, took three Hessians prisoners, for which act, General Washington promised to reward him. She further declares that he was attached to General Pulaski's Regiment; and was also at the Battles of Princeton, Brandywine and Germantown, and that He (Conrad) carried the Flag of Truce from our army to the British, when they had possession of New York; and further saith that one John Bulkley was aid de camp to General Pulaski. Declarant further states, that She was Married to the aforesaid Conrad Spangenburg, on the Twenty Eighth day of August, Seventeen hundred and Eighty Eight by the Reverend Doctr. Nicholas Colin, Pastor of the Swedes church, as will more fully appear by reference to her certificate of Marriage, hereto annexed, And that He (Conrad) died on the Eighth of October, Eighteen hundred and four and that She has remained his widow, ever since his death as will more fully appear by reference to the proof hereto annexed.

her
Maria X B. Spangenburg
mark

Affirmed and Subscribed
before me in open Court
Arch. Randall
Judge Com. Pleas

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Head-Quarters
BG Arthur St. Clair

Gratz 4, Box 14, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

Arthur St. Clair to James Wilson in Congress, 11 January 1777.

The particulars of the Prince Town attack you may probably have heard, and it really was one of the finest Manoeuvres that ever was performed, and must oblige the Enemy to respect our General and for the future use a little more Circumspection than for they have done for some time by part it happened thus. The Enemy had collected a very considerable force and moved down to Trenton to attack General Washington, but arriving too late in the Day they were contented with a Cannonade and a little skirmishing with the advanced Parties in which they suffered considerably and both Parties drew off for the Night - about ten o'Clock at Night our Army moved off in great Silence and took a back Road directly for Prince Town and got in March without being discovered by the Enemy, tho there was only a small Stream of Water betwixt their Parties and Ours, and we had our Artillery to draw off - We arrived at Prince Town about Sun Rise and immediately attacked three Regiments of British Troops posted there forced them, killed a great Many and took three hund^d Prisoners - had we arrived but two Hours sooner they had been compleatly surprised and taken without firing a Shot, but it was difficult to get the Militia in Motion which occasioned that Delay - Nothing could equal the Surprise of the Enemy when the Day came on and they found our Army decamped but the Firing at Prince Town soon gave them Notice of the Route we had pursued and they returned with all the haste it was possible for Men to make and were close to Prince Town before we had time to remove the Stores a Considerable Quantity of which were in Town - the General with his fatigued Troops did not think it prudent to hazard a general Battle and immediately marched off to Kingston.

Arthur St. Clair, *A Narrative of the manner in which the Campaign against the Indians, in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-one, was Conducted, under the Command of Major General St. Clair, together with his Observations on the Statements of the Secretary of War and the Quarter Master General, relative thereto, and the Reports of the Committees appointed to inquire into the Causes of the Failure thereof: taken from the Files of the House of Representatives in Congress* (Philadelphia, 1812), pp. 242-243.

On the second crossing to that place, when lord Cornwallis met us, and an action the next morning seemed unavoidable, notwithstanding the army was in a very unfavourable position, the general summoned a council of the general officers at my quarters, and after stating the difficulties in his way; the probability of defeat, and the consequences that would necessarily result if it happened, desired advice. I had the good fortune to suggest the idea of turning the left of the enemy in the night; gaining a march upon him, and proceeding with all possible expedition to Brunswick. General Mercer immediately fell in with it, and very forcibly pointed out both its practicability, and the advantages that would necessarily result from it, and general Washington highly approved it; nor was there one dissenting voice in the council, except as to some of the details, of little moment, and I was instantly sent to prepare for its execution; the consequences are well known. But after we had reached Princeton, and the little force there had been dispersed, a new difficulty arose; the enemy were coming on rapidly, and our rear guard, about two miles *off*, was warmly engaged with their advance, and the general was missing: he had joined in the pursuit of a flying part of Manhood's corps and followed it too far, and whether he was killed or taken prisoner was not known, and the very doubt of either of them having happened, occasioned the greatest consternation, when he happily appeared to dispel it. But, what was now to be done? The design of proceeding to Brunswick was necessarily abandoned; it was eighteen miles distant, and the troops were very much fatigued, and, as the principal deposite of the enemy's military stores was at that place, they had certainly not been left unguarded; resistance was therefore to be expected, which would require some time to overcome, and a superior army was close upon us.

William Henry Smith, *The St. Clair Papers. The Life and Public Services of Arthur St. Clair*. 2 vols. (Cincinnati, 1882), vol. 1, pp. 36-42.

In his own brief narrative, St. Clair says: "The General summoned a council of the general officers at my quarters, and, after stating the difficulties in his way, the probability of defeat, and the consequence that would necessarily result if it happened, desired advice. I had the good fortune to suggest the idea of turning the left of the enemy in the night, gaining a march upon him, and proceeding with all possible expedition to Brunswick. General Mercer immediately fell in with it, and very forcibly pointed out its practicability and the advantages that would necessarily result from it, and General Washington highly approved it, nor was there one dissenting voice in the council." ...

It was broad day before the British discovered that their enemy had eluded them, and gone they knew not whither. The morning was bright, serene, and extremely cold, with a hoar frost that bespangled every object, when the Americans readied the junction of the Quaker and main roads, about two miles from Princeton. Washington had ordered General Mercer, with a detachment of three hundred and fifty men, to continue along Stony Brook with his brigade until he should reach the main road, where he was to destroy a bridge over which it passed, and take post for the double purpose of intercepting fugitives from Princeton and covering the American rear against Cornwallis from the direction of Trenton. Meanwhile, the three regiments of the enemy, the Seventeenth, Fortieth, and Fifty-fifth, which had spent the night at Princeton, were preparing to join Cornwallis at Trenton. The Seventeenth, under Colonel Mawhood, was already on the march, and had crossed the bridge which Mercer was approaching to destroy, when discovering the head of the American column, and supposing it a light detachment, he recrossed the bridge, purposing to cut it off.

At this moment Mercer's corps emerged into view not five hundred yards from the British line. The discovery was mutual, and the respective corps then endeavored to get possession of the high ground on their right. The Americans reached the house and orchard of William Clark, "but perceiving the British on the opposite side of the height, and a worm fence between them, they pushed through the orchard, and anticipated their antagonists by about forty paces." The first fire was delivered by Mercer, which the enemy returned, and instantly charged with the bayonet. The Americans, who were armed chiefly with rifles, were thrown into confusion and fled in disorder. Major Wilkinson, seeing that the Americans were retiring in confusion by the house of Clark, spoke of it to General St. Clair, who charged him not to mention the circumstance, lest it should affect his own troops. "The time from the discharge of the first musket," says "Wilkinson, "until I perceived our troops retreating, did not exceed five minutes, and I well recollect that the smoke from the discharge of the two lines mingled as it rose, and went up in one beautiful cloud." The enemy pursued the retreating Americans as far as the brow of the declivity, when, discovering the whole army instead of a detachment as was supposed, they halted and brought up their artillery. On hearing the first fire, General Washington directed the Pennsylvania militia to support General Mercer, and, in person, led them on with two pieces of artillery. Perceiving the militia in confusion, he galloped past them, waving his hat and encouraging them to reform before the enemy. Nothing daunted by the presence of a superior force, Colonel Mawhood directed a company of infantry to attempt

Captain Moulder's battery, which had formed to the right of Clark's house under direction of General Washington, but they were repulsed with considerable loss. The British displayed great intrepidity, but perceiving the inspiring effects of the gallantry of the American Commander-in-Chief, and realizing the hopelessness of the contest, they retreated precipitately up the north side of Stony Brook, leaving their artillery on the ground. Before the fire had ceased at the first onset, Colonel Mawhood, mounted on a brown pony, with a dozen infantry, and a pair of beautiful spaniels playing before him, crossed the line of direction of the other division so near that had not the Americans been stationary, he must have been captured. On observing the halt of his guard General St. Clair directed Major Wilkinson to gallop forward and order a charge, but it was too late, as Mawhood had passed, yet the fire of the guard knocked down two of the infantry.

The Fifty-fifth British regiment did not reach the vicinity of Clark's in time to participate in the action, and perceiving Mawhood and his Seventeenth in retreat followed closely by Washington, they returned to Princeton, and joined the Fortieth in quarters at the College. The two regiments afterward drew out and formed in line on the brow of a ravine. In this position they were attacked by General St. Clair, and after a sharp resistance were driven back to the College again. They took possession of the buildings and knocked out the windows, apparently for the purpose of defending themselves at all hazards; but being saluted in their quarters with artillery, thought better of it, rushed out in a disorderly manner and made good their escape to Brunswick. St. Clair had no cavalry to send in pursuit; indeed, the entire cavalry in the American army consisted of twenty-two gentlemen of Philadelphia, who had volunteered, and were then with Washington in another direction. In killed, wounded, and prisoners, the British lost five hundred men; upwards of one hundred were left dead on the field. The loss of the Americans was about thirty, but, alas! it included the brave and able General Mercer, who fell mortally wounded in the first attack at Clark's, Colonels Haslet and Porter, Major Morris, and Captain William Shippen.

After St. Clair had dispersed the enemy from Princeton College, and most of the other troops had come up, a new difficulty arose; the enemy were coming on rapidly, their advance being already warmly engaged with the American rear-guard, under Brigadier-General Potter, at Stony Brook, and General Washington was missing. There was great consternation at the moment, which was dispelled by his sudden reappearance. It seems that when he joined in pursuit of Mawhood, his impetuosity carried him further than was prudent. Having returned from his fine fox chase, he was confronted with the necessity of again baffling the superior army under Cornwallis, now in hot pursuit. What was to be done? The design of proceeding to Brunswick was necessarily abandoned; it was eighteen miles distant, and the troops were very much fatigued, and, as the principal deposit of the enemy's military stores was at that place, they had certainly not been left unguarded; resistance was, therefore, to be expected, which would require some time to overcome, and here was Cornwallis pushing at the rear. Again St. Clair's quick perception and information proved useful to Washington. In passing to the northward, in the beginning of the campaign, St. Clair's route lay through Morristown, at the time when a large party of the enemy were foraging the lower country, and had advanced as far up as Springfield, at the foot of the range of mountains, known by the name of the Short Hills, where General "Williamson was opposing them with the militia. St. Clair set off on the instant to join him, but before he reached him the enemy had retired ; but he had thereby an opportunity to see some part of those hills which were afterwards of so great

120 through 122)

use to General Washington, and from which Sir William Howe never could decoy him, and dared not to attempt to drive him. St. Clair described Morristown and its vicinity to General Washington as a place where the army could be cantoned. He quickly decided, and the army had orders to take the route towards that place, and St. Clair was left with a rear-guard to destroy the bridges, the last of which was barely effected when the enemy appeared and fired upon the Americans.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Civilian
Ezra Stiles

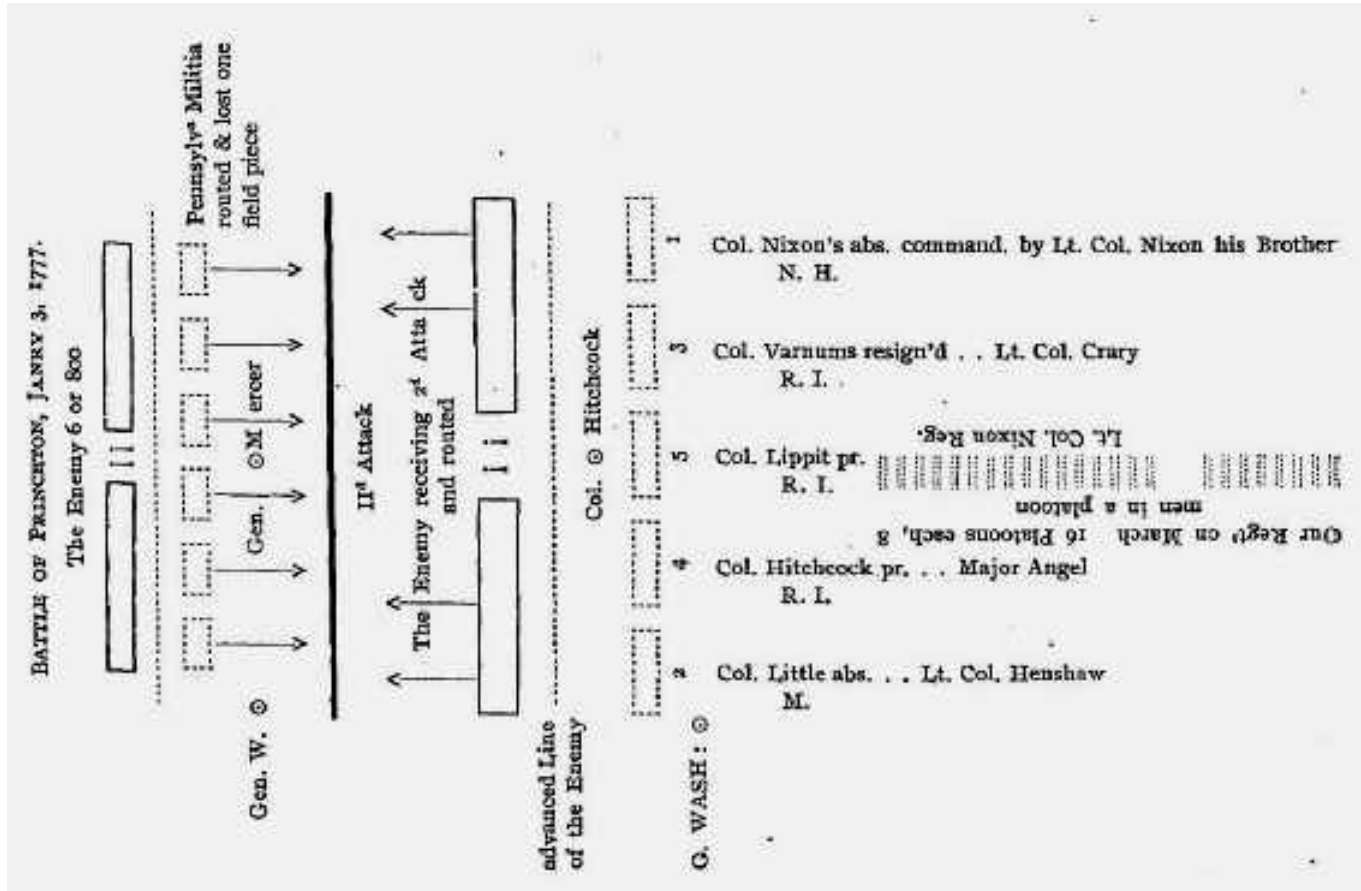
Franklin Bowditch Dexter, *The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles*, vol. 2: March 14, 1776 - December 31, 1781 (New York, 1901), pp. 118-120.

30. [January 1777] Spent the Eveng with Mr. Richmond an officer in the Army. He left Gen. Washingtons Camp at Morristown Ldsdy before last or 19th Instant; was at Peeks Kill 21" & arrived here to day. He was of Gen. Cadwalladars Division at Bristol, & to have crossed over to Burlington 26th Dec. but prevented by Ice. Afterwards was of a party that went to Burlington, Mt Holly & Bordenton & Croswick. While at Croswick, Gen. Wash, ordered them to Trenton about 3 Janry. Hence he marched with Gen. Washington to Princet^o & Morristown: He was in Col. Hitchcocks Brigade which routed the Enemy near Princet^o & in the action. He gave me this account of the March which was a masterly piece of Generalship. ...

About Midnight marchg orders were spread thro' G. Wash. Camp, & they instantly marched off to the southwd supposg themselves going towds Burlington, till they turned northwd. Sun an hour high in the mornng they at Maidenhd, 2 or 3 Miles off of Princeton, came up with a Body of the Enemy (some say 500, none above 800), phps. 4 or 500, which advanced and a Battle ensued. Mr. Richmond was in it being in Col. Hitchcocks Brigade. Now this is known to be one of the best disciplined Brigades in the Continental Service — I know it had this Reputa at Prospect Hill at Cambridge. [p. 120] Gen. Mercer with the Philada Militia desired & were permitted the honor to begin the attack — they accordg met the Enemy, gave two fires, suffered Gen. Mercer to fall wounded into the Enemys hands, & began to be broken. Gen. Washington then in the midst of the Fire ordered the N Engl. Brigade under Col. Hitchcock about 400 to attack. They rushed on, made five fires & in six minutes had the Enya Arty & pushing on routed the Party, & took about 200 and marched to Princetown. This party of Enemy getting Notice of our March had sent to Trenton, & instantly the Body there returned, & had arrived within two miles of Princeton, when G. Wash, left Princeton & proceeded on the road 6 or 7 miles towds Brunswick. He then turned off to the left & took the road to Somerset Courthouse, where they arrived that night. But without halting they proceeded to Planket, & there lodged the third night. Thence they came to Morristown 17 Miles from Brunswick. The Enemy marched to Brunswick, G. Wash, have disadjusted & broken their Plan.

Ibid., p. 139: Two officers of Col. Lippets Rh. Isld Regt present in the Battle of 3 Jany within 1 1/2 m. of Princeton, gave me the Acc^o of the Order of Battle. Gen. Mercer behaved bravely, was wounded & taken & afterwds died of his wounds in Philada. After the Rout of the Pensy. Militia, G. Wash, ordered Col. Hitchcock's Brigade to advance. They formed about 200 yds distance fr. the Enemy — began the fire within 100

yds, & in that 100 yds. discharge twice & thrice — rushed on with Impetuosity — the Enemy retreating to their Artillery of two field pieces — our men rushed on, took the Artillery & routed the Enemy—who tho' in confusion recovered at several Intervals, formed, fired & retreated, till in a general Rout about 200 or more reached the Town & there surrendered; while phps. twice as many escaped for their Lives towards Brunswick. Our five Regts might be 5 or 600. Col. Lippets of 16 platoons, only 8 in each, had about 128 men. We recovered & took three field pieces.



This map is on p. 138

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Head-Quarters
Lord Stirling

New Jersey. Revolutionary War Miscellaneous Bound Books, 1776-1783, Book 43 B Number 97, microfilm at the David Library of the American Revolution; also in *Pennsylvania Archives* 1st series vol. 5, (1853), page 157.

General Lord Stirling to the President of Congress

Newtown, January 4th 1777

Sir,

I have not yet been able to learn the particulars of General Washington's last Expedition into New Jersey, but he certainly has gained some Considerable advantage, the 17th and 55th Regiments were completely routed near Prince Town the 40th which was left in the Colledge 'tis probable were either taken prisoners or fled to Brunswick. Gen'l Washington's army passed thro' Prince Town about nine o'clock A.M. and the Enemy's army arrived there about 2 o'clock P.M. from Trenton. Our People took about 20 Waggon loads of Baggage belonging to the latter, wh must greatly distress them. I was ill with the Rheumatism before our first Expedition to Trenton, but the fatigue and hardship I endured for forty hours in the worst weather I ever saw – rendered me unfit for further duty in the field. Genl Washington therefore placed me here to do the best I could secure the ferries & upper part of the Country against any surprise, or to pass above. I will do the best I can with the few I have to command.

Thomas Watson a man of very good Character, has made my heart bleed for him; he has refused the Continental Money for Hay Necessary for the Subsistence of our troops, I confined him, he is a good man by all account; I have relaced him, I have suffered him on his parol to go & abide with his family; 'till your further order I do not like to meddle with these Civil matters & for God Sake take them of my Shoulders.

I have a Number of prisoners from the Enemys Army pouring in upon me, (thank God) but tell me what I am to do with them, there is no Roam for them here, I wish we may have as many more as will puzele you what to do with, this is the first line I have been able to scrawl since I passed the Delaware last.

Most respectfully, yours,

STIRLING.

Pennsylvania Archives 1st series vol. 5 (1853), pp. 170-171; also partially in William S. Stryker, *The Battles of Trenton and Princeton* (Boston and New York, 1898), pp. 452.

Lord Stirling To — S , 1777.

New Town Jan' 7, 1777.

Sir,

I have received your letter of Yesterday date, am much obliged to you for the Intelligence Communicated, and shall order the printed resolves to be dispersed thro' the most public parts of this Country. I shall send off to Philadelphia about 70 British prisoners tomorrow morning, Gen' Washington has upwards of 200 more with him, some more I understand are gone by Burlington ; I have Just received a letter from Gen' Washingtons Secretary he says the loss of the Enemy at Princetown was at least 500, including killed & prisoners a number of their wounded are mattered in the farm houses so that very few of the three Regiments viz: the 17th 40th & 55th , & 60, dismounted light Horse made their Escape ; It was the Generals design to have surprised Brunswick; But the Enemy's main body pressed so close on his Rear that he was obliged to abandon that design & file off to the left at Kingston on the 5th he was at Pluckimin about 16 mile to the North West of Brunswick, by possessing the Hills in that Country he will be able to make the scituation of the Enemy very uneasy in East Jersey, I doubt not it will oblige them to abandon it.

with much respect & Esteem

I am

your most Humble Serv'.

Stirling

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: German Regiment, Capt. Feister's Coy
George Stottlemeyer

Pension application of Private George Stottlemeyer Nr. R10238.

George Stottlemeyer's pension application dated 19 February 1835 details the whereabouts of the German Regiment on 3 Jan 1777. It infers that the German Brigade was with or adjacent to Col. Cadwalader's (Philadelphia Militia) troops.

... Philadelphia, remained in this place until about two weeks before Christmas 1776 - sailed in a vessel from Philadelphia up to Trenton affiant aided in the capture of the Hessians at Trenton on the glorious December 25 1776 - same night recrossed the Delaware & came up to Coryell's Ferry - recrossed the river from this last place & advanced on the enemy as far as a little place called Maidenhead in Jersey here we were attacked by the British - we relocated to Trenton around at this last place about night - engaged the enemy January 1 1776 (2 Jan) - on the 2nd day of Jan 1776 (3 Jan) our regiment and the Philadelphia militia were ordered round to attack the enemy at Princeton - attacked them, took many prisoners.....

Stottlemeyer's pension claim was rejected because he later deserted from the service.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 5th Virginia Regiment
David Street

Pension Application of David Street No. W 6164.

On this 23 day of October 1832 rd Personally appeared before the Court of Halifax County now sitting, David Street a resident of Halifax County and State aforesaid aged Seventy eight years, who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress passed June 7th 1832, that he enlisted in the Army of the United States in the month of February 1776 in the County of Bedford in the State of Virginia for two years with Captain Henry Terril, John Loggins first Lieut., Thomas McReynolds 2nd lieut, and Robert Walker Ensign. On the 26th of March 1776. we left Holt's Store in the said County of Bedford and marched direct to Williamsburg Virginia, where we joined the 5th Virginia Regiment under the command of Major [blank] and Colo Seall in Gen'l. [Edward] Stephens brigade and remained with him at different places in Virginia Maryland and Pennsylvania, until some time in October 1776 we joined General Washington's Army at New York and was in a battle at Trenton the 26th December, in another battle at Trenton the 2nd of January 1777. another at Princeton. we were still under the command of Gen'l. Stephens. Col. Seall and Josiah Parker commanded. we were marching in various directions until the 10th of June 1777.

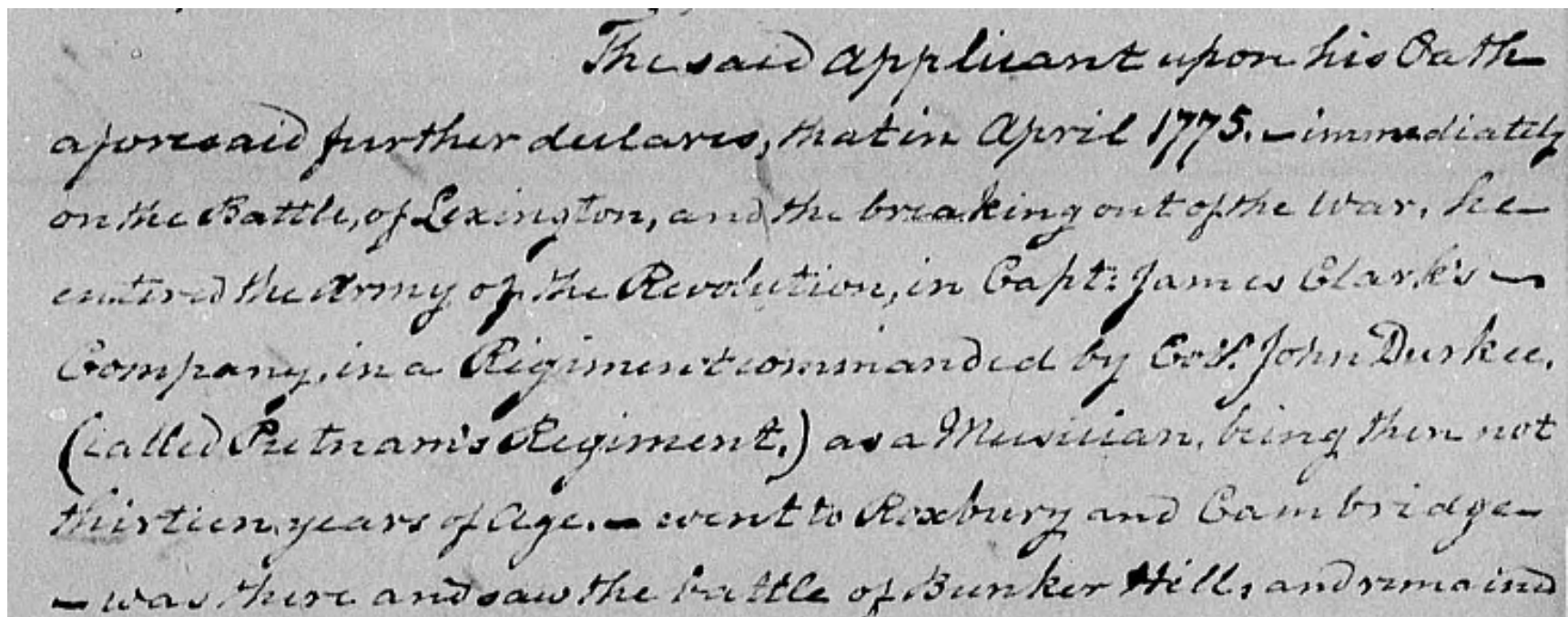
NOTE: Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris at <http://southerncampaign.org/pen/w6164.pdf>

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 20th Connecticut Regiment, Capt. Daniel Tilden's Coy, Col. John Durkee's Regt
Roger Strong

Pension Application of Roger Strong No. S 14575 at www.footnote.com .

Roger Strong was born in Lebanon, CT on 13 May 1762 and enlisted in April 1775, just before his 13th (!) birthday



The said Applicant upon his Oath
aforesaid further declares, that in April 1775. — immediately
on the Battle of Lexington, and the breaking out of the War, he
entered the Army of the Revolution, in Capt: James Clark's
Company, in a Regiment commanded by Col: John Durkee,
(called Putnam's Regiment,) as a Musician, being then not
thirteen years of Age. — went to Roxbury and Cambridge
— was there and saw the Battle of Bunker Hills and remained

1776, — the Regiment, he belonged to, forming and being
the rear guard through the whole of that Retreat, until
said Army had crossed the Delaware River at Trenton
— He was with said Army at the time the Hessians were
taken at Trenton, and for six or eight Weeks after, and
after his term of Enlistment had expired. — He then re-
turned home in company with some of his field and
other Officers, and Soldiers, carrying with them the small
Co. which said Applicant had within ten days after

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Washington's Lifeguard
William Sulcer

Pension application of William Sulcer [alias, Mathias Selser] No. W 9687.

On this 11th day of September 1833, personally appeared in open court, before the President Judge of the Circuit Court of Knox County, Indiana, William Sulcer, a resident of Green County State aforesaid, aged seventy seven years, who being first duly sworn according to law, doth on his oath, make the following declaration: that he was born in Shanadock County, Virginia, near where the town of New Market now stands, in the year 1756, according to a record made by his father in the German language: that in the year 1775 troops were required to march against the Indians, and his father was bound to obey orders, he, the applicant, being then approaching his nineteenth year, offered his services as a substitute for his father, and was received, and was attached to a company commanded he believes by Captain Lewis; he is positive that Colonel Lewis commanded the Regiment to which the company belonged, and said Colonel was killed in the engagement with the Shawnee Indians at the point formed by the Junction of the Kanawha and Ohio Rivers where said Regiment attacked and defeated a body of hostile Indians, the troops were marched towards home and after six months service he was discharged at Staunton, Virginia; that soon after his discharge as aforesaid, he enlisted in said town of Staunton in a Virginia Regiment to serve for and during the war, and remembers the names of Van Swearington or Van Sweargren and Linder, as officers but owing to the lapse of time, and old age, and the names of so many different officers floating in his indistinct memory, he is unable to state their grades with precision; he thinks he was then called Mat, and may have been entered Mathias, instead of William his proper Christian name, upon the rolls; that he was marched from Staunton to Winchester, and his father being acquainted personally with General Washington, he was by order attached to the General's life guard and marched to Delaware where the Army under General Washington then were: that he crossed the Delaware on the ice, passed through Jersey, and was on service in Washington's guard at the battles of Trenton, and Princeton: that in 1777, in the battle of Brandywine, he was severely wounded by a ball passing through his leg, and lost his horse and remained on the field of battle shielded by a log, for two nights, when the British all disappeared, and he crawled to the house of one David Cartmill, an Irishman, and a true Republican, whose kindness nursed him and caused his father to come to him from Virginia, ...

NOTE: Transcribed by Will Graves at <http://southerncampaign.org/pen/w9687.pdf>

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: New Jersey Militia, Captain Cornelius Lanes Samuel Sutphin

Samuel Sutphin Pension Application No. R10321 available at www.footnote.com and <http://www.doublegv.com/ggv/battles/sutphin.html>, quoted with permission.

Samuel Sutphin, as his application shows, was a black slave during the war. His application was repeatedly denied for lack of detail of time of service and for having no documentation. Important area men pressed for his pension, while other (white) men made simpler, less detailed applications and were approved, at least one of which Sutphin testified for. There was apparently prejudice because he was black, and also because he had been a slave, and served as a substitute. As a slave, he was not able to volunteer or enlist in the militia, and they may have thought that only those who served voluntarily should receive a pension. He was illiterate and did not know what name he had been enrolled under~ the application shows he was called Sutphin only well after the Revolution. He was not found on the Continental records by the War Department, and I am not sure which Samuel he might be, if any, in the records of militia Captain Jacob Ten Eyck, which records I also have. He was helped in his quest by Doctor Lewis Condict, who tried to help the NJ veterans of the Revolution get pensions.

The applications transcribed here are interesting for several other reasons. Samuel Sutphin was both black and culturally Dutch~ he says he did not speak much English at the time and knew his Dutch officers but not the English ones. The Jersey Dutch retained their own language well into the 1800's, although many also spoke English. Names are often various due to the switching between English and Dutch~ pronunciations seem to be different, plus many names translate~ Johan to John, Dyrck to Richard (Dick), Jacobus to Jacob, Coon Rod to Conrad. The same man might write his name several ways, both due to the less standardized spelling of the time, less familiarity with the rules of spelling, and what language he was thinking in. This could also lead to his name having been lost by the War Department.

He also points out something else important. Pension applications were not written by the applicant. They were recorded by a court clerk from testimony given in open court. The clerk might make errors in taking the testimony down on paper. Some may have listened to the applicant, then written it down afterwards. Transcribing verbal testimony is not easy~ in the late 1800's, the reporters at the Reno inquiry, during the army's inquiry into Custer's defeat, had wide variations from the official recording~ which is more accurate? Pension applications are never considered primary documentation due to the years gone by between the action and the account, with subsequent errors in memory, and also to the very advanced years of the deponents, who might have suffered some loss of mental agility. The fact that they were written from a verbal account is another reason.

A sad case of an old veteran probably denied a pension due to his race....The entire set of papers in the federal record is included here; if not transcribed, then a short description is given. Spelling and grammar uncorrected, pages separated by a plain rule, my notations and comments in brackets in bold:

State of New Jersey
County of Somerset}

On this fifteenth day of August 1832, Personally appeared before the Judges of the Superior Court Of Common Pleas, in and for the County of Somerset, now sitting, **Samuel Sutphin**, a colored man, and a resident of the Township of Bernards in the County of Somerset and State of New Jersey, aged Eighty Five years, who being first duly sworn according to law, doth, on his oath, make the following declarations, in order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress passed 7th June 1832~

That he entered the service of the United States under the following named officers, and served as herein stated, That he entered the service while a slave of Casper Bergen as his substitute on promise of receiving his freedom, ^and continued therein more than two years. That he enlisted in the company at Millstone under the command of Captain Coon Rod Ten Eyck, that he continued in said company one month, went with said company to Communipaw, That after one month entered the company of Captain Jacob Ten Eyck, went with the company to Elizabeth Town, Staid there one month and returned, After one month he entered Captain John Ten Eyck's company, went to Elizabeth Town and staid one month, saw the British soldiers. That he afterward served under Captain Philip Van Arsdalen one month and next under Captain Jacob Jennings one month, That Previously to the forgoing Services he entered the company of Captain Philip Von Arsdalen, remembers General Sterling was the superior Officer and that Frederick Frelinghuysen and Richard Meddagh were Colonels, That at the time of his entering the company it was warm weather. That he went with the company from Hunterdon to Elizabeth Town and thence to Communipaw, staid out one month, Shortly after he entered the company of Captain Westcott under Colonel Seely, remembers Lieutenant Davis was an officer in said company to Van Nestes Mill, That the British were on the opposite side of the Millstone river, the company could not cross the bridge, several Pieces of cannon being stationed thereon, by the British, That the company crossed the river about a mile below the bridge, approached the enemy, fired upon them killing one horse, pursued after but could not overtake them, Then the company went down toward Brunswick, saw ^a small detached part of the British lying in ambush near the road, fired upon them, and drove them away, seizing upon and taking five cannon which they left behind in their flight, + That about a hundred of the British army stationed near by, took Doctor Lawrence Van Dorveer Prisoner, which he saw, + That the company then retreated and returned to Van Nestes Mills, Deponent took one of the enemy prisoner, for which general Dickinson Presented him with a Gun which he still Possesses.

After this he entered the company of Captain Cornelius Lanes under Colonel Frederick Frelinghuysen, That it was at the time of Cutting Grass and near harvest, That the company went from Readington to meet Col. Frelinghuysen at Millstone, From Millstone they marched to Griggstown and thence to Princeton, Where they arrived at Princeton in the morning, That the battle commenced between nine and ten in the morning of the arriving and continued until three in the afternoon, That he fought in said battle. That at three in the afternoon of the same day orders came from General Washington that the army should retreat. That the company in which he served left Princeton at three in the afternoon, and encamped at night on the mountain near Rocky hills, and thence returned to Readington, That after the battle of Princeton he was drafted in the company under the command of Captain Isaiah Younglove, in which company Robert Robinson was Lieutenant, Went with the company to Head Quarters at West Point marched thence to Utica in pursuit of the Indians, taking wit them two friendly Indians as guides, their names were Shawnee John and Indian Ben, Marched thence to Buffaloe, made an attack upon the Indians and killed three, it was late in the fall, They kept garrison until winter then returned to Head Quarters, was placed on picquet guard That a number of Hessians approached him while standing on guard, he shot at and killed one, saw him fall. at this time the main guard coming up attacked the Hessians, killing 16 and taking forty six prisoners, the number killed inclusive of the one was seventeen, Deponent wounded at this time in the leg, which disabled him from performing any duty two and a half months, That he then returned with the company to Hunterdon, That he served in said company nine months, Deponent commenced performing the duties of a soldier in the beginning of the revolution, and continued in readiness to serve, during the whole of said time, That at the commencement of the Revolution he lived at Readington in Hunterdon County, Was a slave of Casper Bergen, and is now free, That he has no documentary evidence of his services in the war, and that all who knew ^of his services in the War, are now deceased. That after the revolution he was sold to a second master of whom he purchased his freedom.

He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to pension or annuity except the present and declares that his name is not on the pension rolls of the agency of any State~

Sworn to and Subscribed in open court the day and year aforesaid \

[signed] Wm.B. Gaston

his
Samuel Sutphin

X
mark

State of New Jersey,
Somerset County, Ss:

Personally appeared before me William B. Gaston, one of the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas in and for the said County aforesaid, Samuel Sutphin the within named applicant for the benefit of the provision made by the act of Congress passed June 7th, 1832 who being sworn according to law upon his oath Saith. that he entered the service of the United States as a Substitute for Casper Bergen in the Spring of the year 1776 and served first in the company of Captain Coon Rod Ten Eyck went immediately to communipaw (sic). Stood on guard and continued there one month, the Company was then dismissed and he returned home, that in the month of July (he thinks) 1776 he entered the Company of Capt. John Ten Eyck went directly to Communapaw, was then on duty one month, the company bring (sic) dismissed he returned home, Dickinson was General, + Meddock Col. That next entered the company of Capt. Philip Van Arsdalen in the latter part of Summer of the Same year the Company marched to Flatbush on Long Island and in two hours after their arrival the engagement commenced between the British and Hessians, on the one Side and the Americans on the other Side. the Americans were obliged to retreat and being pursued by the enemy Suffered Considerable loss. Lord Stirling, Genl. Sullivan + Several other officers were taken prisoners. the battle Continued about 6 hours. Deponet fought in this battle, and as the company was dismissed immediately after the retreat, he returned home, that Richard Middack was Col. at this engagement. That he was next called out in the latter part of Summer or the beginning of fall Same year by Capt. Van Arsdalen to march to the Highlands, in this place he stood on guard and continued there to perform duty two months. The company marched from the Highlands to a place called "New Blazing Star" he Stood upon guard and continued then two months- In January 1777 he entered the company of Capt. Cornelius Law under Col. Frelinghuysen. the company went from Readington on the Same day to meet Col Frelinghuysen at Millstone from Millstone they marched to Greggstown and then to Princeton when they arrived in time to apart (sic) in the battle which had just commenced, a party of the British were driven into the College and were attacked with cannon which were fired into the it. part of the british Surrounded and the rest fled. The Americans then returned to Pluckemin when he was dismissed + returned home. In the Spring he entered the company of Capt. Westcott under Col. Seely and marched to the Millstone River ... Sworn and Subscribed this 23d. day of September 1833 before me

[signed]Wm. B. Gaston

his
Samuel Sutphin

X
Mark

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 7th Regiment, Maryland Line, Col. John Gunby
William R. Taylor

Pension Application of William Taylor No. S 7687.

On this 11th day of November 1834 Personally appeared William R. Taylor before the Court of Pleas and quarter Sessions now sitting who states that he is of the age of Eighty Eight years, or thereabout he having been sworn according to Law doth on his oath make the following Declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the Provision made by the Act of Congress passed June 7th 1832 That he enlisted in the army of the United States in the year as near as he now recollects of 1777 or 1778 about the time of the battles of Trenton & at Princeton, with Captain Speaker [probably Benjamin Spyker] and served in the 7th Regiment of the meriland line under the Following named officers. Colo [John] Gunby Lieutenant Anderson he enlisted first for the Term of three years he thinks the bounty was fifty Dollars & the pay fifty shilling per month he first enlisted in the state of Meriland the County he does not recollect But it was between Frederic Town & George Town.

NOTE: Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris at <http://southerncampaign.org/pen/s7687.pdf>

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 16th Massachusetts Regt
James Thacher, MD

James Thacher, *A Military Journal During the American Revolutionary War, From 1775 to 1783. Describing Interesting Events and Transactions of this period; with numerous Historical Facts and Anecdotes* (Boston, 1827), pp. 72-73.

We are now [by 15 January 1777; Thacher is at Fort Ticonderoga] informed of another very important advantage which General Washington has gained over the royal army by means of a well concerted stratagem. After his success at Trenton, General Washington received considerable reinforcements of troops from Virginia and Maryland, and some regiments of militia, which enabled him again to cross the Delaware into the Jerseys and face the enemy. While at Trenton, Lord Cornwallis advanced to attack him, and a severe cannonade commenced. The feeble American army was reduced to a delicate and perilous situation. A superior enemy in front and the river Delaware in the rear, the ruin of our army by an attack the next morning appeared almost inevitable. To extricate himself from this very critical position, required the skill and address of Washington, nor did the resources of his mind fail him in this instance. In the evening he ordered a great number of fires to be lighted up in his camp, and leaving a sufficient number of men to keep them burning during the night to deceive the enemy, stole a march with his main army, taking a circuitous route, and, at nine o'clock the next morning, attacked three regiments of the British who were posted at Princeton, routed them, and drove them from their redoubts. By this masterly manoeuvre, the enemy lost about five hundred in killed, wounded and prisoners. The loss on our side is very inconsiderable in point of numbers, but we have to lament the death of Brigadier General Mercer, a brave officer who commanded the Virginia militia. The fact is published, that after General Mercer surrendered himself, the enemy, deaf to the voice of humanity, stabbed him with their bayonets, and with the butt end of a musket battered and disfigured his face in a savage manner. It is to be remarked, that on this memorable occasion Lord Cornwallis was completely out generalled; while he was expecting to find the Continental army at their lighted fires at Trenton, he was astonished and confounded to hear the firing occasioned by this same army, beating up their quarters twelve miles in his rear. His lordship immediately repaired by a forced march to Princeton, but arrived too late to retaliate on his vigilant antagonist, who had taken up his route to Morristown. Finding that the Continentals were out of his reach, his lordship proceeded without halting, to Brunswick. Stratagems in war, when wisely concerted, and judiciously executed, are considered as characterizing a military genius of superior order, and is a quality of inestimable value in every commander.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 20th Connecticut Regiment, Col. Durkee's Regt.
Captain James Tilden

Pension Application of Captain James Tilden, 6th Coy, 20th Regt, John Durkee's Regt, no. S 4683, available at www.footnote.com . Tilden's account is included as an example of an officer who did not heed Washington's request to stay an extra six weeks beyond their original enlistment.

Fresh and important NEWS:

PROVIDENCE, Jan. 12, 1777.

THIS Morning an Express arrived to his Honor the Governor, from the Honorable Governor TRUMBULL, of Connecticut, with the following very agreeable and important INTELLIGENCE, viz.

Extract of a Letter from the Honorable Governor Trumbull, to the Honorable Governor Cooke, dated Jan. 10, 1777.

I SEND an Express, with the agreeable News inclosed, which has just come to Hand, the Enjoyment of which I could not delay communicating to you, and most sincerely congratulate you thereon. I also received, in a few Moments after, a verbal Account, attended with a good Degree of Credibility, but not sufficiently authentic to be relied on, that General Putnam had attacked the Enemy (I take it not far from Burlington, on the East of Delaware, opposite Bristol, 12 Miles from Philadelphia) killed and taken the whole 17th Regiment, save 20 Men, nearly destroyed also the 40th, and taken almost the whole Baggage of two Brigades more.

Copy of a Letter from Theodorus Burr, Esq; to the Authority and several Committees in Connecticut, dated Fairfield, January 9, 1777, 6 o'Clock in the Evening.

GENTLEMEN,

I Herewith send you an Extract of a Letter from Col. Jesse Root, dated January 8th, 1777, viz.

"Last Night an Express arrived from General Washington, with the agreeable News, that last Friday he attacked a Party of the Enemy, about 2 Miles East of Princeton, killed and took 500; he also took 6 Field Pieces, and a great Quantity of Blankets, Stores, Waggon, &c. The Waggon were left behind, by Reason of the Enemy's cutting the Traces, and taking the Horses out before our People got up.

"The Express also informs, that on Sunday the Militia at Morris-Town turned out very spiritedly, and that they attacked a party of Waldeckers, took 35, and killed several, the Number not known; they also took a Light Horse-Man."

One Division of General Washington's Army, was at Morris-Town, in New-Jersey, when the last Account came away.

The above Intelligence was taken from a Hand-Bill, printed at Providence, and brought to Town at Half past Ten o'Clock this Morning, by a Gentleman in the Stage-Coach.

BOSTON, January 15, 1777.

Printed by POWERS and WILLES.

Trumbull, Jonathan, *Fresh and important news! Providence, Jan. 12, 1777: This morning an express arrived to his honor the governor, from the Honorable Governor Trumbull, of Connecticut, with the following very agreeable and important intelligence, viz. ...* (Boston, 1777)

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: New Jersey "Standing troops"
Frederick F. Van Liew

Pension application of Frederick F. Van Liew No. S 23035

... in the State of New Jersey in Montgomery Township, there deponent Enlisted again in the five months service under one Captain Low (thinks Peter Low) as a private in the Standing troops ... The next morning we set off for Trenton and made no halt until we got over the delawer River into the State of Pennsylvania, the Brittish being about three or four miles behind in pursuit of us, when deponent got as far as New Brunswick on this march, his five months service Expired, but continued on his march with the army to Pennsylvania, and remained with them. That while Washington lay in Pennsylvania he recruited and got fresh men and on the 26th of Decr. deponent crossed over with the army to Trenton and took nine hundred and thirty six Hessians (as was reported at the time) and took them over into Pennsylvania with us, the Brittish soon after sent an army to Trenton and a small army at Princeton six miles distant. On the third day of January thereafter Washington sent an Army to Princeton surrounded the Town and took & killed the most part of them. After the battle was over, deponent left the army and went to his Brothers in Montgomery Township in Summerset County in the State of New Jersey.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Head-Quarters
General George Washington

The Papers of George Washington quoted from the on-line edition at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gwhtml/gwhome.html>

George Washington to Continental Congress, January 5, 1777

Pluckamin, January 5, 1777.

Sir:

I have the honor to inform you, that since the date of my last from Trenton I have remov'd with the Army under my Command to this place. The difficulty of crossing the Delaware on Acct. of the Ice made our passage over it tedious, and gave the Enemy an opportunity of drawing in their Several Cantonments, and assembling their whole Force at Princeton. Their large Picquets, advanc'd towards Trenton; their great preparations, and some Intelligence I had received, added to their knowledge that the first of Janry. brought on a dissolution of the best part of our Army, gave me the strongest reasons to conclude that an attack upon us was meditating.

Our Situation was most critical and our strength [force] small; to remove immediately, was again destroying every dawn of hope which had begun to revive in the breasts of the Jersey Militia, and to bring those Troops which had first cross'd the Delaware, and were laying at Crosswixs under Genl. Cadwallader, and those under Genl. Mifflin at Bordenton (amounting in the whole to abt. 3600) to Trenton, was [to] bringing of them to an exposed place; one or the other however, was unavoidable; the latter was prefered, and these Troops [they] orderd to join us at Trenton which they did by a Night March on the first Instt.

On the Second, according to my expectation, the Enemy began to advance upon us, and after some skirmishing, the head of their Column reach'd Trenton about 4 O'Clock whilst their rear was as far back as Maidenhead; they attempted to pass Sanpinck Creek (which runs through Trenton) at different places, but finding the Fords guarded, halted, and kindled their Fires. We were drawn up on the other Side of the Creek. In this Situation we remaind till dark canonading the Enemy, and receiving the Fire of their Field pieces, which did us but little damage.

Having by this time discovered that the Enemy were greatly Superior in Numbers, and that their drift [design] was to surround us. I orderd all our Baggage to be removd silently to Burlington soon after dark, and at twelve O'Clock (after renewing our Fires, and leaving Guards at the Bridge in Trenton, and other passes on the same stream above March'd by a round about road to Princeton where I knew they could not have much force left, and might have Stores. One thing I was sure of, that it would avoid the appearance of a Retreat, which (was of Consequence) or to run the hazard of the whole Army's being cut of was unavoidable whilst we might, by a fortunate stroke withdraw Genl. Howe from Trenton, give some reputation to our Arms; happily we succeeded. We found Princeton about Sunrise with only three Regiments of Infantry and three Troops of Light Horse in it, two of which were upon their March for Trenton; these three Regiments (especially the two first) made a gallant resistance and in killed, wounded and Prisoners must have lost near 500 Men upwards of one hundred of them were left dead in the Field, and with what I have with me, and what was taken in the pursuit, and carried across the Delaware, there are near 300 Prisoners, 14 of wch. are Officers, all British.

This piece of good fortune, is counter ballanced by the loss of the brave and worthy Genl. Mercer, [Cols Hazlet and Potter, Captn. Neal of the Artillery, Captn. Fleming, who commanded the 1st Virginia Regiment and four and five] and several other valuable Officers who [with 25 or 30 Privates] were slain in the Field and have since died of their Wounds. Our whole loss cannot be ascertained, as many who were in pursuit of the Enemy (who were chased three or four Miles) are not yet come in. Our Slain in the Field was about 30.

The rear of the Enemy's army laying at Maidenhead (not more than five or Six Miles from Princeton) were up with us before our pursuit was over, but as I had the precaution to destroy the Bridge over Stony Brooke (about half a Mile from the Field of Action) they were so long retarded there, as to give us time to move of in good order for this place. We took two Brass Field pieces from them, but for want of Horses could not bring them of. We also took some Blankets, Shoes, and a few other trifling Articles, Burnt the Hay and destroyed such other things as the Shortness of the time would admit of.

My original plan when I set out from Trenton was to have pushed on to Brunswick, but the harrassed State of our own Troops (many of them having had no rest for two Nights and a day) and the danger of loosing the advantage we had gaind by aiming at too much, Induced me, by the advice of my Officers, to relinquish the attempt but in my judgment Six or Eight hundred fresh Troops upon a forcd March would have destroyed all their Stores, and Magazines; taken (as we have since learnt) their Military Chest containing 70,000 £ and put an end to the War. The Enemy from the best Intelligence I have been able to get, were so much alarmed at the apprehension of this, that they March'd immediately to Brunswick without Halting (except at the Bridges, for I also took up those on Millstone on the different routs to Brunswick) and got there before day.

From the best Information I have received, Genl. Howe has left no Men either at Trenton or Princeton; the truth of this I am endeavouring to ascertain that I may regulate my movements accordingly. The Militia are taking Spirit, and, I am told, are coming in fast from this State; but I fear those from Philadelphia will scarce Submit to the hardships of a Winter Campaign much longer, especially as they very unluckily sent their

Blankets with their Baggage to Burlington; I must do them the justice however to add, that they have undergone more fatigue and hardship than I expected Militia (especially Citizens) would have done at this Inclement Season. I am just moving to Morristown where I shall endeavour to put them under the best cover I can, hitherto we have lain without any, many of our poor Soldiers quite bearfoot and ill clad in other respects. I am &c.

The Papers of George Washington quoted from the on-line edition at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gwhtml/gwhome.html>

George Washington to Israel Putnam, January 5, 1777

Pluckemin, January 5, 1777.

Dear General:

Fortune has favoured us in an Attack on Princeton. Genl. Howe advanced upon Trenton which we Evacuated on the Evening of the Second of this instant, and drew up the Troops on the south side of the Mill Creek and continued in that position until dark, then Marched for Princeton which we reached next Morning by about nine O'Clock. There were three Regiments Quartered there, of British Troops, which we attack'd and routed. The number of the Killed Wounded and taken prisoners amounts to about 5 or 600. We lost Several Officers and about thirty privates. Genl. Mercer is badly Wounded, if not Mortally. After the Action we immediately marched for this place. I shall remove from hence to Morristown, there shall wait a few days and refresh the Troops, during which time, I shall keep a strict Watch upon the Enemy's motions; They appear to be panick struck, and I am in some hopes of driving them out of the Jerseys. It is thought advisable for you to march the Troops under your Command to Crosswix, and keep a Strict watch upon the Enemy upon that Quarter. If the Enemy continue at Brunswick, you must act with great Circumspection lest you meet with a Surprize. As we have made two successful attacks upon the Enemy by way of Surprize, they will be pointed with resentment, and if there is any possibility of retaliating, will attempt it. You will give out your Strength to be twice as great as it is. Forward on all the Baggage and Scattered Troops belonging to this division of the Army as soon as may be.

You will keep as many Spies out as you will see proper, a Number of Horsemen, in the dress of the Country, must be constantly kept going backwards and forwards for this purpose, and if you discover any Motion of the Enemy, which you can depend upon, and which you think of Consequence, Let me be informed thereof as soon as possible by Express. I am &c.

The Papers of George Washington quoted from the on-line edition at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gwhtml/gwhome.html>

George Washington to William Heath, January 5, 1777

Pluckemin, January 5, 1777.

Sir:

We have made a successful attack upon Princeton. Genl. Howe advanced upon Trenton, we evacuated the Town, and lay on the other side of the Mill Creek, until dark, then Stole a march and attacked Princeton about nine O'Clock in the Morning; There was three Regiments Quartered there, the killed, wounded, and taken prisoners amounts to about 500. The Enemy are in great consternation, and as the Panick affords us a favourable Opportunity to drive them out of the Jerseys, It has been determined in Council, that you should move down towards New York with a considerable force, as if you had a design upon the City. That being an Object of great importance, the Enemy will be reduced to the Necessity of withdrawing a considerable part of their force from the Jerseys, if not the whole, to secure the City. I shall draw the force on this side the North River together at Morristown, where I shall watch the motions of the Enemy and avail Myself of every favourable Circumstance.

You will retain 4,000 of the Militia coming on from the New England Governments, for the expedition, you will act with great precaution, but avail yourself of every favourable Opportunity of attacking the Enemy, when you can do it to advantage.

General Lincoln must cross the North River and come on with the remainder of the Militia to Morristown. Leave a sufficient Guard at the Highlands.

You will also have as many Boats collected together, or in such a Manner, as you may allways avail yourself of them, if it should be found expedient, for your Troops, or any part of them, to cross the North River at Dobb's ferry, or at any other of the Landings. I am etc.

The Papers of George Washington. Revolutionary War Series 7: October 1776 - January 1777 (Charlottesville, 1996), pp. 519-530, quoted from the on-line edition at <http://www.consource.org/index.asp?bid=582&fid=600&documentid=53714>

Pluckamin January 5th 1777

Sir

I have the honor to inform you, that since the date of my last from Trenton, I have removed with the Army under my command to this place. The difficulty of crossing the Delaware on account of the ice made our passage over it tedious, and gave the Enemy an opportunity of drawing in their several cantonments and assembling their whole Force at Princeton. Their large Picquets advanced towards Trenton, their great preparations & some intelligence I had received, added to their knowledge, that the first of January brought on a dissolution of the best part of our Army, gave me the strongest reasons to conclude, that an attack upon us was meditating.

Our situation was most critical and our force small. to remove immediately was again destroying every dawn of hope which had begun to revive in the breasts of the Jersey Militia, and to bring those Troops which had first crossed the Delaware, and were laying at Croswick's under Genl Cadwalader & those under Genl Mifflin at Bordenton (amounting in the whole to about 3600) to Trenton, was to bring them to an exposed place; One or the other however was unavoidable, the latter was preferred & they were ordered to join us at Trenton, which they did by a Night march on the 1st Instt.

On the 2d according to my expectation the Enemy began to advance upon us, and after some skirmishing the Head of their Column reached Trenton about 4 OClock, whilst their rear was as far back as Maidenhead. They attempted to pass Sanpink Creek, which runs through Trenton at different places, but finding the Fords guarded, halted & kindled their Fires—We were drawn up on the other side of the Creek. In this situation we remained till dark, cannonading the Enemy & receiving the fire of their Field peices which did us but little damage.

Having by this time discovered that the Enemy were greatly superior in number and that their design was to surround us, I ordered all our Baggage to be removed silently to Burlington soon after dark, and at twelve OClock after renewing our fires & leaving Guards at the Bridge in Trenton and other passes on the same stream above, marched by a roundabout Road to Princeton, where I knew they could not have much force left and might have Stores. One thing I was certain of, that it would avoid the appearance of a retreat, (which was of course or to run the hazard of the whole Army being cut off) whilst we might by a fortunate stroke withdraw Genl Howe from Trenton and give some reputation to our Arms. happily we succeeded. We found Princeton about Sunrise with only three Regiments and three Troops of light Horse in it, two of which were on their march to Trenton—These three Regiments, especially the Two first, made a gallant resistance and in killed wounded and Prisoners must have lost 500

Men, upwards of One hundred of them were left dead in the Feild, and with what I have with me & what were taken in the pursuit & carried across the Delaware, there are near 300 prisoners 14 of which are Officers—all British.

This peice of good fortune is counterballanced by the loss of the brave and worthy Genl Mercer, Cols. Hazlet and Potter, Captn Neal of the Artillery, Captn Fleming who commanded the first Virginia Regiment and four or five other valuable Officers who with about twenty five or thirty privates were slain in the feild—Our whole loss cannot be ascertained, as many who were in pursuit of the Enemy, who were chaced three or four Miles, are not yet come in.

The rear of the Enemy's Army laying at Maidenhead (not more than five or Six miles from Princeton) was up with us before our pursuit was over, but as I had the precaution to destroy the Bridge over Stoney Brooke (about half a mile from the Feild of action) they were so long retarded there as to give us time to move off in good order for this place. We took Two Brass Feild peices but for want of Horses could not bring them away. We also took some Blankets—Shoes—and a few other trifling Articles—burnt the Hay & destroyed such other things as the shortness of the time would admit of.

My Original plan when I set out from Trenton was to have pushed on to Brunswic, but the harrassed State of our own Troops (many of them having had no rest for two nights & a day) and the danger of loosing the advantage we had gained by aiming at too much induced me by the advice of my Officers to relinquish the attempt, but in my Judgement Six or Eight hundred fresh Troops upon a forced march would have destroyed all their Stores and Magazines—taken as we have since learnt their Military Chest containing 70,000£ and put an end to the War. The Enemy from the best intelligence I have been able to get were so much alarmed at the apprehension of this, that they marched immediately to Brunswick without halting except at the Bridges, (for I also took up those on Millstone on the different routs to Brunswick) and got there before day.

From the best information I have received, Genl Howe has left no men either at Trenton or Princeton. The truth of this I am endeavouring to ascertain that I may regulate my movements accordingly—The Militia are taking spirit and I am told, are coming in fast from this State, but I fear those from Philadelphia will scarcely submit to the hardships of a winter Campaign much longer, especially as they very unluckily sent their Blankets with their Baggage to Burlington—I must do them justice however to add, that they have undergone more fatigue and hardship than I expected Militia (especially Citizens) would have done at this inclement Season. I am just moving to Morris town where I shall endeavour to put them under the best cover I can. hitherto we have been without any and many of our poor Soldiers quite bear foot & ill clad in other respects.

I have the Honor to be with great respect Sir

Yr Most Obedt

Go: Washington

The Papers of George Washington quoted from the on-line edition at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gwhtml/gwhome.html>

George Washington to Jonathan Trumbull, January 10, 1777.

Head Quarters, Morris Town, January 10, 1777.

Sir:

I am honored with your favor of the 23d of last Month. I hope the Congress have, in consequence of your Application, ordered up a Supply of Money for the bounty to the New in listed Troops in your State; but least they should not have done it, I shall order Col. Palfrey to send what Cash he can spare, to the Deputy Paymaster at Peekskill, to be applied to the use of the recruiting Service to the Eastward. He, some little time ago, sent 150,000 Dollars to Peekskill, to be distributed by Genl. Heath among the recruiting Officers; if that Sum should not be expended, some Money may be drawn from thence; in the mean time, I must beg the favor of you, to advance the Necessary Sums, out of the Treasury of your State, assuring you it shall be refunded as early as possible.

I am very happy to hear that your Assembly have it in Contemplation to send a Body of Troops forward, to serve till your regular inlistments can be compleated. Nothing can be more distressing to the Enemy or serviceable to me, than an Army hanging upon the rear of New York, or move [sic] forward as Circumstances may require. Their Wishes and Views are certainly towards Philadelphia and valuable as the acquisition of that City would be; it would be paying too dear a price for it, were they to give up New York to a force that might be thrown into it, after their Army had moved Southward.

Our Success at Trenton, has been followed by another lucky Blow at Princetown on the 3d Inst--I lay with about five thousand Men at Trenton, the Enemy advanced a Superior force down upon me from Princetown on the 2d; not choosing to risque an Engagement there, I decamped as soon as it was dark, and marched along their flank to Princeton which lay directly in their rear. I arrived there about break of day and found three Regiments of British Troops, ready drawn up to march to Trenton, we immediately attacked them and in a short time put them compleatly to the rout.

We have already taken 300 prisoners and the Country People are daily bringing in Straglers; their loss upon the whole will amount to at least 500.

The Enemy confounded at this unexpected Stroke in their rear and fearing that their Baggage at Brunswick would fall into our Hands, marched back in the Greatest hurry from Trenton to Brunswick, where their Main Body now lays. They have Called in all their out Posts, so that their late Possession of the greatest part of Jersey is reduced to the Compass of a very few Miles. These Successes, tho' Comparatively small, have greatly inspirited the Inhabitants of this State and Pennsylvania, and I am in great hopes, if we can once put the Enemy into Winter Quarters and get some Little leisure, that our affairs may be put in such a train and upon such a footing, as will ensure success the next Campaign. I have the Honor to be &c

The Pennsylvania Packet, 22 January 1777.

ANECDOTE. — After the battle at Princeton on the 3d of this instant, General Washington perceiving a wounded soldier belonging to the enemy laying on the field, came up to him, and after enquiring into the nature of his wound, commended him for his gallant behaviour, and assured him that he should want for nothing that his camp could furnish him. — After the General left him an American soldier who thought he was dead, came up in order to strip him; the General see [ing] it, bid the soldier begone, and ordered a sentry to stand over the wounded prisoner till he was carried to a convenient house to be dressed.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 3rd Virginia Regiment
Colonel George Weedon

George Weedon to John Page, 6 January 1777. Weedon Papers, MSS Alpha 1W, Chicago Historical Society, Chicago.

Philadelphia, Janry 6th 1777

... Gen^l Washington's Manoeuvre that night [2/3 January 1777] at 12 o'clock, which must be allowed as great a piece of Gen^lShip as ever was performed, he left his fires standing and filed off in so private a manner that the rear Guard and many of his own Centenals never missed him - Cornwallis drew up next morning expecting him and remained under Arms five hours, he was not an Object of our Generals Noble mind, who had got Intelligence that Howe was on his march with 4,000 to reinforce him, and therefore determined to march and attack the main body of the Enemy, which he did next morning at 7 o'clock and Obtained a Compleat Victory after an Obstinate dispute with many lost on both sides. These two great Gen^{ls} Commanded their Troops in person, Howe could no longer stand the vigorous attacks of our American Heroe, he fled to Princetown after having his 17th & 27th Bat: cut to pieces, his 20th Bat: shut themselves up in Princetown College. Here another Action Commenced, but the Enemy were soon routed & the Students made prisoners to a man. - by this time Cornwallis found the Bird had flown he Immediately March's for Princetown, which place our Army remained no longer at than a proper Disposition could be made of the prisoners Baggage &c, and had proceeded for Brunswick before he got up. ... the exceeding Fatigue and Cold I under went in the xmas Expedition to Trenton has laid me up ever since I have been here ...

NOTE: Weedon had succeeded General Mercer as commanding officer of the 3rd Virginia Regiment.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Massachusetts Artillery, Col. Richard Gridley's Regt, Capt. Samuel Gridley's Coy
Sergeant Joseph White

“The Good Soldier White.” *American Heritage* 7 no. 4 (June 1956), pp. 73-79, p. 78.

About 9 or 10 o'clock, orders came by whispering, (not a loud word must be spoken), to form the line and march. We took such a circuitous rout, we were all night marching from Trenton to Princeton.

Capt. Benjamin Frothingham, came to me and said, you and I must march together; we marched some ways, I being exceeding sleepy, I pitched forward several times, and recovered myself. Said he, you are the first person I ever see, sleep while marching. Do you know that you are to command that left piece tomorrow morning? I expect we shall have some hard fighting; we are going to attack Princeton, the enemy's headquarters. I told him I could not; — I want to know where all the commissioned officers were? Whose orders is it? It is Col. Knox's, said he. I do not think that I am capable — the responsibility is too great for me; — I cannot think why he should pitch upon me; why, he remembers what you did at Trenton, said he. I began to feel my pride arising, and I said no more.

A little before we got in sight of the enemy, our whole army halted.

The captain sent me a sergeant with a bucket full of powder and rum, every man must drink a half gill. He came to me to know if I had drank any, I told him no: drink some, said he, I have, so I took a little.

We marched on a short distance, we see them all formed in a line, and ready to receive us.

We marched forward so did they, I ordered the limbers off, and to man the drag ropes – They were to the north of us, the sun shone upon them, and their arms glistened very bright, it seemed to strike an awe upon us.

The Capt: said to me, are we not nigh enough to give them a shot? I replied yes, I think so. You fire, and I will follow suit, I told the sergeant to get a strong man to take the spung. I took aim and said fire! Then he did the same. then the enemy began; - both armies advancing towards each other, firing as fast as possible, - We then loaded with cannister shot, they made a terrible squeaking noise. Both armies kept on marching towards

one another, until the infantry come to use the bayonets. Our company being on the extreme left, had to face the enemy's right; consisting of granadiers, highlanders, &c, their best troops.

Our left line gave way – but before I moved, saw the second line come up, and Gen. Mercer, who was killed, leading them. I never saw men looked so furious as they did, when running by us with their bayonets charged. The British lines were broken, and our troops followed them so close, that they could not form again. A party of them ran into the colleges, which is built of stone. After firing some cannon, they surrendered.

After the battle was over, I went into a room in the college, and locked myself in; I saw a plate of toast, a tea pot, and every thing handy for breakfast. I sat down and helped myself well. — I was very hungry, marching all night, and fighting in the morning, I felt highly refreshed; after I was done, I looked round the room, and saw an officer's coat — I went to it, and found it a new one; the paper never taken off the buttons, was plated or solid silver, I could not determine which, lined with white satin; there was a silk skirt, an elegant one. and a pair of silk shoes, and small a gilt bible; all of which, I took.

Orders came for all the men to throw away their dirty old blankets, and take new ones.—The barrels of flour were great indeed, after filling all the waggons, they knocked the heads out of the remainder and strewed it about the ground. The women came and looked at it, but seemed afraid to meddle with it. I being nigh, told them to scoupe it up by aprons full, before the enemy come.

I had rolled a barrel to the ammunition waggon, and told the captain that I was only going to that house, pointing to it, should be back in a few minutes. I engaged a woman to bake me some cakes.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Headquarters
James Wilkinson

James Wilkinson, *Memoirs of my own times* 3 vols. (Philadelphia, 1816), vol. 1, pp. 140-147. The letters and numbers D, G, b, 6 etc refer to a map accompanying the text.

The night, although cloudless, was exceedingly dark, and though calm most severely cold, and the movement so cautiously conducted as to elude the vigilance of [here begins p. 141] the enemy. Lieutenant colonel Sherman led the advanced guard, and the brigade of St. Clair, with two six pounders, followed, which placed me at the head of the column near General Washington. I have recently examined the route of this night's march, and with the assistance of several contemporaries have given it the direction of G, G, G, G,* which brought us to a small wood, A,† south of a Quaker meeting, B, on the left of Stoney brook, a little before sunrise, where the main column wheeled to the right, and turning the south-east corner of the wood, marched directly for Princeton, b, b, b, b, whilst General Mercer, accompanied by several volunteers, with a detachment consisting of the fragments of Smallwood's regiment, commanded by Captain Stone, ‡ the first Virginia regiment commanded by Captain Fleming, and two field pieces under Captain Neal, and probably other corps which I do not recollect, but in the whole certainly not exceeding 350 men, marched immediately up Stoney brook, f, as I was informed at the time, to take possession of the bridge, g, for the double purpose of intercepting fugitives from Princeton, and to cover our rear against Lord Cornwallis from Trenton. The morning was bright, serene, and extremely cold, with an hoar frost which bespangled every object. A brigade of the enemy, commanded by Lieutenant-colonel Mawhood, consisting of the 17th, 40th, and 55th regiments, with three troops of dragoons, had quartered in Princeton § the preceding night; the 17th had marched to join Lord Cornwallis, and its front had reached Cochran's on the hill, at d, whilst the head of our column had gained the point, h, when casting my eyes toward the Trenton [here begins p. 142]

* See Atlas, No. V.

† See Atlas, No. VI.

‡ Afterwards governor of Maryland.

§ I have always been staggered as to the fact of a British brigade having halted at Maidenhead, the night of the 2d of January, when Lord Cornwallis lay at Trenton, only six miles distant, with the intention to engage the next morning; yet it is so recorded in British and American history, though the inhabitants of that village now deny the assertion.

Road, I discerned the enemy, by the reflection of their arms against the rising sun, ascending the hill in the wood near Cochran's; and perceiving Colonel R. Harrison, the General's secretary, near me, I called him, and about to shew him the spectacle which had caught my eyes, when it suddenly disappeared, and two horsemen leaped a fence, and advanced to a, a, reconnoitred us a minute or two, and returned to the road, soon after which we observed the line come to the right about and descend the hill in quick time. When Colonel Mawhood, who commanded the 17th regiment, discovered the head of our column at h, he did not perceive General Mercer, who was marching up the creek near its left bank, and taking us for some light party, as the ground concealed our numbers, he decided to retrograde and cut us up; nor had General Mercer any suspicion of the proximity of Mawhood's corps, until he crossed Stony brook, when a mutual discovery was made at less than 500 yards distance, and the respective corps then endeavoured to get possession of the high ground on the right. The Americans [i.e., Mercer] marching by c, c, reached the house and orchard of William Clark, 5, 5, but perceiving the British line advancing on the opposite side of the height, and a worm fence between them, they pushed through the orchard, and anticipated their antagonists by about 40 paces.* the two lines are represented by 1, 2, and 3, 4; the Americans covered by the fence, the British in air, their left bearing on a large chesnut tree, then in vigour, now represented by the remains of a stump on the north-west edge of the turnpike, † about half a mile north of Stony brook, their right extending obliquely [45 degree angle] from the turnpike to a small knoll, on which the solitary oak is now standing, covered by two field pieces. The first fire was delivered by General Mercer, which the enemy returned with a volley, and instantly charged; and many of our [here begins p. 143]

* I have measured the ground.

† This road cuts the position of the American line obliquely about the centre

men being armed with rifles, they were forced after the third round to abandon the fence, and fled in disorder.

The head of our column had now arrived at D, and although my view of the combatants engaged in this short, sharp, close rencontre was obstructed by a swell in the ground, the retreat of the Americans by William Clark's house and barn, 5, 6, was under my eyes, and I noted it to General St. Clair, who charged me not to mention the circumstance, lest it should affect our troops. The time from the discharge of the first musket, until I perceived our troops retreating, did not exceed five minutes, and I well recollect that the smoke from the discharge of the two lines mingled as it rose, and went up in one beautiful cloud. On hearing the fire, General Washington directed the Pennsylvania militia to support General Mercer, and in person led them on with two pieces of artillery, under Captain William Moulder of the city of Philadelphia, who formed in battery on the right of Thomas Clark's house, 7; the enemy pursued the detachment of General Mercer as far as the brow of the declivity, o, o, o, o, when discovering our whole army, instead of a partisan corps, they halted and brought up their artillery; and being encouraged by the irresolution of the militia, notwithstanding the exertions of the commander in chief, and their immediate officers to press them forward, they attempted with a company of infantry to carry Captain Moulder's battery,*

* This company of militia artillery from Philadelphia was almost as much distinguished in its line, as the troops of dragoons, and on this day attracted the particular attention of General Washington; that honest man and good citizen, Colonel William Linnard, of Philadelphia, was a subaltern of the company, and stood by one of the pieces.

but being galled by his grape, and perceiving Hitchcock's and another continental regiment break off and advance from the rear of our column, after a few long shot with the militia, they retreated precipitately, leaving the artillery on the ground, which for want of horses we could not carry off. In this place I must be permitted to state a fact in contradiction of every historical account I have see: - be- [p. 149] fore the fire had ceased at the first onset, Lieutenant-Colonel Mawhood, mounted on a brown pony, with ten or twelve file of infantry, and a pair of springing spaniels playing before him, crossed our line of direction, the men being in a trot, at s, s, so near, that if our advanced guard had not unwarrantably halted, he must have been intercepted or driven from his course; on observing the halt of our guard, General St. Clair directed me to gallop forward and order a charge, but it was too late, as Mawhood had passed, yet the fire of the guard knocked down two of his party.

That this affair fell on the 17th regiment, I am satisfied from my own observation, which is supported by the Annual Register of 1777,*

* See pages 18 and 19.

however incorrect in other particulars; the 55th regiment had advanced no further than the small wood, C, when the action terminated, and they returned and joined the 40th left in quarters at the college; these corps then advanced and took the position, K, detaching a heavy platoon to C, which induced the American continental troops to display in i, i, the intermediate ravine, the head of which is crossed by the present turnpike, is somewhat deep and steep; two regiments were ordered to attack, and had crossed the ravine and were ascending the opposite side within sixty or 80 yards of the enemy, who were still concealed from our view by the acclivity, when they turned about and precipitated themselves into the college, they windows of which were immediately knocked out, and we expected warm work; but before we got within a quarter of a mile, they rushed out at the front and retreated by files in t, t, t, t, crossed Millstone at Rocky hill, and made good their escape to Brunswick; they made so long a rail and moved in such loose disorder, that two troops of dragoons would have picked up two regiments; unfortunately our whole cavalry consisted of twenty-two of the Philadelphia 1st troop, who were actively engaged in another quarter; there was but one gun fired at the [p. 145] college, and this from a six pounder, by an officer who was not advised the enemy had abandoned it; the ball recoiled, and very nearly killed my horse as I was passing in rear of the building.

At the time General Mercer engaged the 17th regiment, Colonel Hand endeavoured, by a rapid movement, to turn the enemy's left flank, and had nearly succeeded when they fled in disorder, not toward Maidenhead, as is stated by all historians, but up the north side of Stoney brook, over fields and fences, without regard to roads, and inclining towards Pennington;*

* For this fact I will refer to general Washington's letter of the 5th of January, who says, "they were chased three or four miles, and that the enemy from Maidenhead was up with us before the pursuit was over," and also to Mr. John Donaldson of Philadelphia, and to general Henry Miller, now residing in the forks of Juniata and the Susquehanna, who was on that day major of Hand's riflemen.

the riflemen were therefore the first in the pursuit, and in fact took the greatest part of the prisoners; they were accompanied by general Washington in person, with a squad of the Philadelphia troops, among whom Mr. John Donaldson distinguished himself in an eminent degree: in the ardour of the pursuit he had separated himself from the troop, and as the infantry could not keep up he found himself alone and liable to be shot by a straggler of the enemy who would not surrender; yet unwilling to slacken his pace, he mounted a Lieutenant Simpson behind him, who whenever a fugitive threatened to be refractory, jumped off and shot him, and in this manner three men, whilst taking aim at Mr. Donaldson, were knocked down and his life saved, but he made a score of prisoners, whom he sent to his rear after disarming them. - Simpson was afterwards a Captain, and I saw him at his seat on the Susquehanna in the year 1796. it was on this occasion the late David Harris, esq. of Baltimore, who was a captain of riflemen, informed me that the General, whilst encouraging the pursuit, exclaimed "*It is a fine fox chase, my boys!*" - Such was the impetuosity of [p. 146] the man's character, when he gave reins to his sensibilities.

In this affair our numerical loss was inconsiderable - it did not exceed thirty; fourteen only were buried in the field;*

* I had this fact from Joseph Clark, son of William, whose house still bears the marks of the enemy's shot, the lowest of which is eight or ten feet from the ground; his barn shews the mark of a cannon shot twenty feet from the ground.

but it was of great magnitude in worth and talents; Colonels Haslet and Porter, Major Morris, and captain William Shippen were respected in their grades; Captains Fleming and Neal presented fair promises of professional excellence; but in General Mercer†

† [here Wilkinson inserts a long account of General Mercer]

we lost [p. 147] a chief, who for education, experience talents, disposition, integrity and patriotism was second to no man but the commander in chief, and was qualified to fill the highest trusts of the country. The manner in which he was wounded, is an evidence of the excess to which the common soldiery are liable in the heat of action, particularly when irritated by the loss of favorite officers; being obstructed when advancing by a post and rail fence, in front of the orchard, it may be presumed the general dismounted voluntarily, for he was on foot*

* Joseph Clark informs me that his horse was observed after the action, with a fore leg broken by a shot.

when the troops gave way; in exerting himself to rally them he was thrown into the rear, and perceiving he could not escape, he turned about somewhere near William Clark's barn, 6, and surrendered, but was instantly knocked down, and bayoneted thirteen times, when feigning to be dead, one of his murderers exclaimed, "Damn him he is dead, let us leave him." After the retreat of the enemy, he was conveyed to the house of Thomas Clark, 7, to whom he gave this account, and languished until the 12th, when he expired.†

† I had this account recently from Joseph Clark, who occupies the field of battle, and is a nephew to Thomas.

The loss of the enemy was much more considerable in point of numbers, and Captain Leslie's death appeared to afflict the prisoners very sensibly. At their instance his body was conveyed to Pluckemin, and there was interred with the honours of war; ... ¹

¹ The expression "buried with military honors" in the sense here used means: "The funeral of a commander-in-chief - saluted with three rounds of 11 pieces of cannon, 4 battalions, and 6 squadrons; that of a lieutenant general with three rounds of 9 pieces of cannon, 3 battalions, and 4 squadrons; that of a major general with three rounds of 7 pieces of cannon, 1 battalion, and 2 squadrons; that of colonel by his own battalion (or an equal number by detachment), with three rounds of small-arms; that of a lieutenant colonel by 300 men and officers, with three rounds of small-arms; that of a major by 200 men and officers, with three rounds of small-arms; that of a captain by his own company, or 70 rank and file, with three rounds of small-arms; that of a lieutenant by a lieutenant, 1 sergeant, 1 drummer, 1 fifer, and 36 rank and file, with three rounds of small-arms; that of an ensign by 1 ensign, 1 sergeant, 1 drummer, and 27 rank and file, with three rounds of small-arms; that of a sergeant by 1 sergeant and 10 rank and file, with three rounds of small-arms; that of a corporal, musician, private man, drummer, or fifer by 1 sergeant and 13 rank and file, with three rounds of small-arms. The pall is supported by officers of the same rank as that of the deceased; if that number can not be had, officers next in seniority are to supply their place. Benson J. Lossing, *The Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution* 2 vols., (New York, 1860) vol. 2, p. 259.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 20th Connecticut Regiment, Captain Robinson's Coy, Col. John Durkee's Regt
John Willis

Pension Application of John Willis No. S 36848 at www.footnote.com

I John Willis of Lebanon in the County of Windham and State of Connecticut now a Resident Citizen of the United States do depose declare and say That I enlisted into the Continental Army some time about the month of January 1776 in the company commanded by Captⁿ Robinson in the Regiment commanded by Col^l John Durkee in the Connecticut line for the term of one year - that I joined the Continental Army in the State of New Jersey - that I continued in the Service for thirteen months and was with the Army under General Washington in the Retreat thro' New Jersey and was in the battles of Trenton, and Princeton. I was discharged at Trenton from the year's service and continued one month longer and was then discharged at Cohattam in New Jersey - but by some accident have lost my discharge and it is not now in my possession. I am sixty five years old, without any property, and from my reduced circumstances have need of the Assistance of my Country for my support -

Dated at Windham the 14th day of April 1818

his
John X Willis
Mark

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 1st Virginia Regiment, Col. Read's
Lieutenant Bartholomew Yates

William S. Stryker, *Documents relating to the Revolutionary history of the State of New Jersey* (Trenton, 1931), vol. 1: 1776-1777, p. 332.

Extract of a Letter from Princeton, dated 7 January 1777:

Lieutenant Yates of Col. Read's Virginia regiment, died on Friday last at Princeton. The circumstances of death merits attention: In the action on the 3d instant, he received a wound in his side, which brought him to the ground. Upon seeing the enemy advance towards him, he begged for quarters; a British soldier stopped, and after deliberately loading his musket, by his side, shot him through the breast. Finding that he was still alive, he stabbed him in thirteen places with his bayonet; the poor youth all the while crying for mercy. Upon the enemy being forced to retreat, either the same or another soldier, finding he was not dead, struck him with a butt of a musket on the side of his head. He languished a week in the greatest anguish, and then died (I declare it upon my honour, as a man and a physician) of the wounds he received after he fell and begged for quarter. The savages murdered a Clergyman (chaplain to a regiment of militia) in cold blood at Trenton, after he had surrendered and begged for mercy; his name was Rosborough. It is a prostitution of language and truth, to attribute a fibre of humanity to General Howe's heart; the nature of the service he is engaged in has made him a mere Jeffries for every species of political iniquity. I write from good information, having picked up a number of anecdotes which justify the picture I have given of him.

Bartholomew Yates, son of the Reverend Robert Yates, of Gloucester County, Virginia, was but eighteen years of age at the lime of his death, and maternally was descended from the Randolphs of that Province. The *Pennsylvania Journal* of February 19th, 1777, contains this tribute:

But oh! Again my mangled Yates appears
Excites new vengeance and provokes new tears;
Behold my wounds! he says, or seems to say.
Remember Princeton on some future day;
View well this body pierced in every part
And sure Twill fire the most unfeeling heart.

William S. Stryker, *Documents relating to the Revolutionary history of the State of New Jersey* (Trenton, 1931), vol. 1: 1776-1777, p. 363.

Princeton, January 9, 1777.

Lieut. Yates, of Col. Read's regiment of Virginia forces, being sworn upon the Holy Evangelists, declares, That after he was wounded in the battle of third January, 1777, near Princeton, a British soldier came up to him, and said to him, " Oh, damn you, are you there," and snapped his musket at him, upon which Mr. Yates begged for quarters. The soldier loaded his musket deliberately, and shot him through the breast, and afterwards stabbed him in thirteen places with his bayonet. Some time after this, either the same or another soldier came up to him, who perceiving some signs of life in him, struck him with the club of his musket.

Attested by Benjamin Rush, Anthony W. White. A true copy of the original in the hands of his Excellency. G. Johnston, A. D. C.

The *Pennsylvania Journal* of Feb. 14, 1777, states that Yeates was only twenty-one years of age, possessed of wealth, that he received fourteen stabs and was knocked on the head with a musket after he fell, and that this affidavit was forwarded by Washington to Howe. A friend, in a poetical tribute which appeared in the same paper, wrote

But oh I again my mangled Yeates appears,
Excites new vengeance and provokes fresh tears;
Behold my wounds! he says, or seems to say,
Remember Princeton on some future day;
View well this body, pierced in every part,
Aud sure 'twill Ore the most unfeeling heart.

This in turn led to an exchange of letters in which Howe somewhat lackadaisically accepted responsibility for the event on 23 January 1777:

... Altho' I cannot contradict the Account you have been pleased to transmit of the cruel Treatment of Lieutenant Yeates I can aver my Abhorrence of the Barbarity therein set forth, and am satisfied that the Officers under my Command are equally inclined to discourage such Behaviour, and to prevent it in every possible Degree; but the Heat of Action will sometimes produce Instances that are only to be lamented."

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Third Battalion, Philadelphia Associators, Captain Thomas Fitzsimmons' Coy
Sergeant William Young

“Journal of Sergeant William Young” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 8 (1884), pp. 255-278, pp. 265-266.

Young served in Captain Fitzsimmons' Company, 3rd Battalion, Philadelphia County Associators. At the time of the Battle of Princeton it was commanded by Lt.-Col. John Nixon.

[Friday] January 3, one o'clock [A. M.] ordered to move out with the Baggage and proceed to Burlington, such a hurry skurry among all our waggoners. Some of our horses a good deal [] often got stalled which Retarded our March so that we didn't get to Burlington [until] 12 o'clock. march the whole way, found myself a good deal tired Blessed God am very well. Got to Mrs. Annes at Burlenton. Mrs. Annes and Mrs. Bullock Received me & sons kindly. Lay down and slept as soon I got to Mrs. Annes's, as did my two sons. Lay at Mrs. Annes, and am very much Refreshed.

[Saturday] January 4. Rose Early went to see our men found them much Refreshed, then went to get provisions for them.

Wrote to my Dear family. Sent a Box and 2 Gun Barrels home. 7 o'clock, not much news from our people to-day, it is said they are at Prince town. Saw Mr. John Handay, took him home to my Quarters, where he is to stay till I join our Battalions. He tells me that our people surrounded 50 Light Horse at Prince town College yard and took them, also our people were attacked by the Regulars, and that Captain Lee Deserted his gun but it was soon Retaken again, with two of the Enemy's. Mr. Miffling with party way Laid and took from the Hessians 7 wagon Loads of the Baggage that they stole from the Inhabitants, and our people Burnt a good Deal of Baggage of the Enemy's at Prince town, and considerable slaughter among the kings forces. Blessed be the God and father of my Lord Jesus Christ for his protecting care over me and mine through this day. Give me a sense of pardoning Love through the atoning Blood of Jesus, then thy will be Done Respecting me, Amen and Amen. I hear our people are advancing to Brunswick and Carrying all Before them. Go with them Blessed God and give success, for thy Dear name. Oh Let a fear of thee fall on all our Enemies. And Bless our people, and Lord with the out pouring of thy Spirit, that a fear of thee and of thy name may be among our people Grant it blessed God for Jesus sake — amen.

Sunday January 5. Rose as soon as Light, took a walk to see our Company. Came home to my Quarters again before any of the family were up, had the pleasure of Shaking hand with General Putnam. Waited on Colonel Penross [Penrose] for a ticket to draw provision. The news is that our people have suffered a good deal. Mr. Dushe son of Anthony Dushe came to town wounded in the thigh, has got a pass to go home; and that the 2 and 3 Battalion stood firm and to it, and the New England men behaved very manly and got much honor; this day I was obliged to stand Baker. Blessed be God I find myself very well as are my sons. 2 of our men came home to my Quarters that were at Prince town that lost their Company.

Monday January 6. Slept but poorly last night it being Cold, this day went about the Business of the company. Got passes for Mr. Bowes and Serril of our Company, my son William got a pass and is gone home as is Mr. Frederick Williams. Had the pleasure of seeing 26 Tories Brought into town, and 7 wagon loads of goods they had taken from their Neighbors. About an hour after another party were Brought in, in number between 30 or 40 and put on Board the Row Galley and sent to Philadelphia. News came to head Quarters that the English were Scattered abroad through the country and were in great fear of our people. God grant that fear may seize them, that one may put a thousand to flight, and two ten thousand, and that the time may shortly come that peace may once more flourish in our American Land. And that the glory of God may be advanced that Jesus may rule gloriously in the Gospel of peace. Even so amen.

6 o'clock. Went to jail to see a number of wounded men just come from Prince town. 9 in number, that are mostly wounded in the legs, who say the soldiers were very cruel. One officer who was wounded in one of his Legs a soldier came and knocked his Brains out with the Butt End of his gun. A young Lad that was wounded they stabbed 3 times in his side with his Bayonet, which so Exasperated our men that seeing two Hessians behind a tree ran at them, shot one and Run the other through and that the Militia behaved to [a] Miricle.

Appendix II:
Primary Sources- Crown Forces

PRIMARY SOURCES:

CROWN FORCES

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Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Headquarters
General Sir Jeffery Amherst

Amherst, Sir Jeffery, "Letter to unknown recipient, New York, 7 January 1777." Correspondence and Papers of Sir Jeffery Amherst, 1717-1797 U/1350/077/7. Microfilm copy in the David Library of the American Revolution; the account of the Battle of Princeton is on Reel 12.

New York 7 Jany 1777

... Genl Lord Cornwallis who had embark'd his baggage on board the Bristol to go to England went & join'd the Army, he left three Regiments at Princetown a Brigade at Maidenhead and with the rest advanced near Trentown, where he saw Washington's Army of 10 or 12,000 men form'd in order his Lordship sent for the Reg^{ts} at Princetown to join him Washington detached a large body wch went by Allen's town, & early in the morning fell upon our Troops at Princetown the 17th Reg^t had moved forward in consequence of Lord Cornwallis order - the Rebels fell in between them & those who were still in Princetown the 17th lost Capⁿ Leslie & 20 Men, had many wounded, got forward to join Cornwallis, the 55th & 40th retired with some precipitation to Brunswick Lord Cornwallis on hearing the firing return'd to Princetown, & soon after with the whole forces to Brunswick, the Rebel Army by the last accounts were at Rocky hill.

NOTE: The letter is not signed but endorsed "R_d with G_1 C_s 24 Feby 1777".

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 28th Regt. of Foot
Captain William C. Hall

Time	Location
05:00	at five in the morning [Mawhood] began his march, with four pieces of cannon, about fifty light horse, and some stragglers
07:35	He had scarcely advanced more than a mile on the road, when the light horse, who formed his advanced guard, discovered a large column of the enemy moving towards Prince Town: as this was in the grey of the morning
07:40	the enemy, who marched in columns, were but imperfectly seen in the woods and thick cover through which they passed
07:45	he advanced, with the light dragoons and the 55th regiment, to gain some heights which the rebels were making for in their way to the town, and over which they must necessarily pass
07:50	No sooner had he gained those heights ... the enemy ... advancing in a large column, threw in their fire upon the right of the 17th ... when the 17th regiment rushing forwards, with their bayonets drove the enemy back
07:55	
08:00	
08:05	
08:10	[hold orchard for 20 minutes]
08:15	
08:20	[retreat]
08:25	
08:30	
08:35	
08:40	
08:45	
08:50	

Source:

An Officer of the Army, *The history of the Civil War in America* vol. 1 (London, 1780), pp. 245-252.

The author is Capt. William C. Hall of the 28th Regt. of Foot.

The enemy abandoned Trenton on our approach, after a faint resistance in which a few were killed on both sides. This happened on the 2d of January, late in the day, when the rebels, on evacuating the town, withdrew their whole force over a rivulet [p.245] which runs by the place, and took their position on some high grounds near it, with a seeming determined countenance to defend them. The weather was at this time extremely severe; both armies lay on their arms in the snow, without tents or cover – ours, with a determination of beginning the attack at day-break. About two in the morning, the enemy drew off with profound silence, leaving their fires burning, and part of their pickets advanced, amounting to about four hundred men; and quitting the main high road, by a compass through Allen Town, continued their march to Prince Town.

Mr. Washington, whom we have already seen capable of great and daring enterprise, conceived the idea of stealing a march on the royal army – harassed and jaded by the long march, and the bad roads – and surprising the intermediate posts of communication by unexpected and rapid movements; - to encourage him in this design, his troops were fresh, his intelligence good, and his knowledge of the country, through all the cuts and bye-roads, perfect. It must be allowed, the deception was admirable, and it was conducted in a masterly manner; it deserves a place amongst distinguished military [p. 246] achievements, and was worthy of a better cause.

Although this movement of the enemy was masked under the veil of night, and with all possible secrecy, yet it did not pass quite undiscovered – the centries, who were advanced, heard the rattling of the carriages, and the patrols, in going their rounds, made their reports of an uncommon hurry in the enemy's camp, that indicated they were in motion, which was visible also at times thro' the glimmering of their fires; and though these reports were confirmed, and carried to head-quarters, where some officers had communicated their suspicions of the enemy's forming some design, yet both the one and the other were disregarded, and the enemy permitted to proceed in the execution of their plan. A heavy cannonade, a little after day-break, effectually roused us from our slumbers, and announced the rebels attack on Prince Town. Three regiments of the fourth brigade had been left at that place, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Mawhood, of the 17th regiment – that officer had received orders, in the night of the 3d instant, to leave the 40th regiment as a garrison to take charge of the stores in Prince Town, and to proceed with [p. 247] the 17th and 55th regiments to take post at Maidenhead, a village about half way between Prince Town and Trenton. – at five in the morning he began his march, with four pieces of cannon, about fifty light horse, and some stragglers from various regiments, who had been differently employed, and were so far on their way to join their respective corps. He had scarcely advanced more than a mile on the road, when the light horse, who formed his advanced

guard, discovered a large column of the enemy moving towards Prince Town: as this was in the grey of the morning, at the first appearance they were mistaken for Hessians; but their movements, and other circumstances, soon proved the mistake. Colonel Mawhood, who on the first intelligence rode forwards to reconnoitre, presently perceived that it was part of the rebel army making for Prince Town, and as readily suggested, what was really the case, that the enemy had slipt Lord Cornwallis in the night, and by stealing a march meant to surprise that place.

As a brook lay between him and the enemy, over which there was a bridge, the cutting away of which would have retarded the enemy so far as to favour his flight, if [p. 248] he chose to push on and join the army, he thus had it in his power to secure his convoy, and fulfil his orders; but reflecting, that by such conduct the 40th regiment, with the town, and everything in it, must fall into the enemy's hands – and incapable of reconciling to himself the idea of a flight, before the people he had long since been accustomed to conquer and despise – these considerations determined him to make a stand, and put it to the issue of an action.

As the enemy, who marched in columns, were but imperfectly seen in the woods and thick cover through which they passed, their numbers could not be guessed at with any degree of precision; and from this uncertainty, and the probability of its being a strong detachment rather than the body of their army, he formed this resolution, in hopes that a noble exertion of three British battalions might insure him some success, if not a victory. Having hurried his wagons to repass the bridge, and make back to the town, and at the same time sent to the 40th regiment to march out and sustain him, he advanced, with the light dragoons and the 55th regiment, to gain some heights which the rebels were making for in their way to the town, and over which they must necessarily [p.249] pass; the 55th regiment having orders to begin the attack with him. No sooner had he gained those heights, than it was clear that he had been deceived in regard to their numbers, and that nothing less appeared to oppose him than the whole rebel army. From this situation he began to cannonade the enemy as they were forming; who soon after advancing in a large column, threw in their fire upon the right of the 17th regiment, which did considerable execution; this fire was returned with great spirit, and, after two or three volleys, the column of the enemy began to give way; when the 17th regiment rushing forwards, with their bayonets drove the enemy back in their charge, on a line formed in their rear; great numbers of the rebels fell in endeavouring to pass a fence which separated them from the rest of their army, and over which they had moved to attack.

Had the 55th regiment acted at the same time, and with equal ardour – whose commanding officer either did not comprehend the order distinctly given, or thought it too dangerous to execute; and had the 40th regiment moved out to sustain the attack, as it ought to have done, and was expected – in all probability the enemy would have [p. 250] been foiled, and the day would have been ours: - unfortunate as it was, such was the shock the enemy received from this rude encounter, that they suffered the remains of this shattered battalion to retreat, near one half was left upon the field, intermixed with double the number of the enemy. Amongst their dead was General Mercer, one of the best they had. – What contributed to the preservation of this gallant handful of men, and reflects immortal honour on Mawhood, the commanding officer, was his admirable coolness and address in conducting the retreat, before at least thirty times his number.

2)

Captain Truwin, of the Queen's light horse, distinguished himself also eminently on this occasion, by opposing the squadron he commanded to the enemy, and covering the foot in their retreat. – This service he executed most effectually, at an angle that two roads formed in a wood, through which the flying battalion passed. -

Colonel Mawhood, who was every where, had knowledge of the ground, and ordered the cavalry to make front at the head of the angle, which kept the enemy for a time at a certain distance, and retarded the pursuit. – This circumstance, and a thick wood, prevented [p. 251] the enemy discovering immediately which road the fugitives took, and by this manoeuvre, worthy the man that commanded, he gave the foot time to escape; for as the rebels concluded that the horse brought up the rear, they followed their route until they saw them strike across the country, to join the battalion now got too far to be overtaken.

The 40th and 55th regiments retired to Brunswick, having lost near one half of their battalions in their flight, who were either killed or made prisoners ...

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 17th Regiment of Foot Lieutenant William Armstrong

"Lt. Armstrong's Account of the Engagement of the 3rd January" GD 26/9/513/5, National Archives of Scotland.

According to an e-mail dated 6 December 2009 from Prof. Marianne Gilchrist this "is only a transcript by Lord Leven (Willie's father) of *part* of a letter. I gave it in its entirety in the piece in 'Military Miscellany'."

The letter Dr. Gilchrist is referring to is printed in "Captain Hon. William Leslie (1751-77). His Life, Letters and Commemoration." Marianne M. Gilchrist, ed. Military Miscellany II; Manuscripts from Marlborough's wars, the American War of Independence and the Boer War. David G. Chandler, ed., Army Records Society 23 (Stroud, 2005), pp. 133-196, p 170.

14

Lieutenant William Armstrong,¹²⁷ 17th Foot, to his sister
(transcribed by Lord Leven)

Extract of a Letter
from Lieut. Armstrong,
17th Reg^t. Foot

Lieut Armstrong after giving an acc^t. of the Engagement of the 3rd. Jan^y, adds –

You will forgive my Dwelling so long on this Subject, But I own I am not a little vain of it, nor would I on any Consideration have been absent when the Reg^t. was engaged – But my pleasure was not unmixt with pain – The Distress I felt on the Death of my much valued friend Capt. Leslie (who fell on the first fire) cast such a Damp on my Spirits that I was for some time insensible to every Object around me. A more amiable Young man never existed, Now that he and Sir A Murray¹²⁸ are gone, I have no particular Intimates in the Reg^t. – Altho I am happy to say, that – with every one I am on the best footing.

But these were the Companions of my Early Years, my Schoolfellows – On their friendship I could depend, but they are now no more – ! – Nor need even a Soldier be accused of weakness in dropping a tear to the memory of such friends. They fell honourably – fighting for their King & country and if we may judge from the Conduct of their Lives they are now happy – Grudge not a tear my Dear Sister to the memory of two as worthy young men as ever breathed – who possessed every manly virtue that ever filled the human Breast – than whom as none ever lived more Beloved – so none ever died more regretted –

NAS, GD 26/9/513/5

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

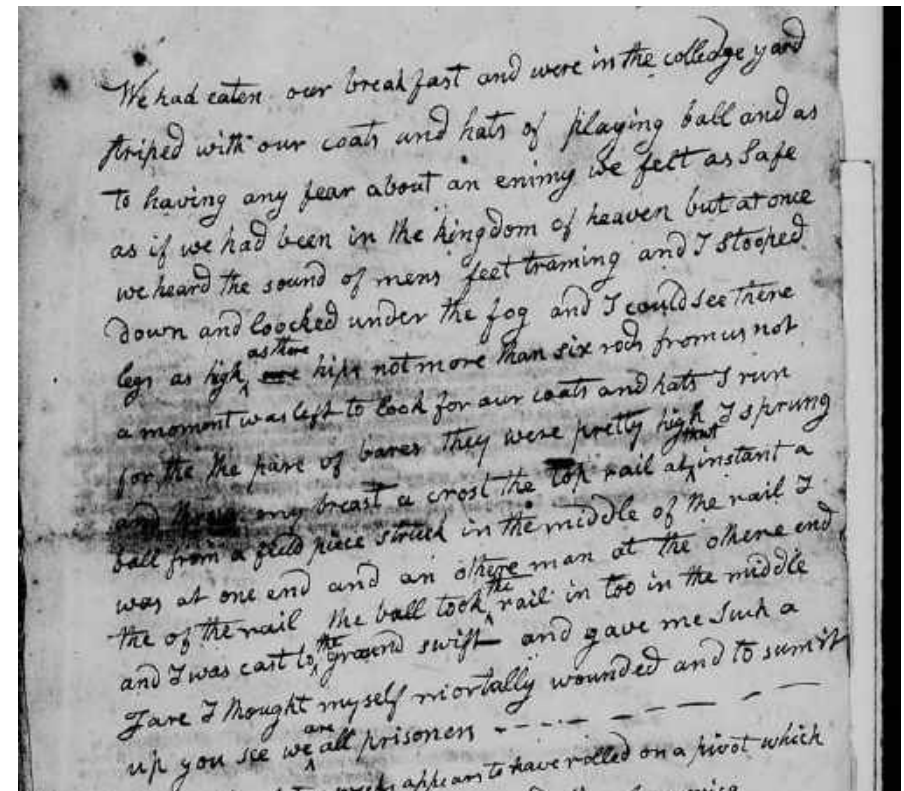
Unit: Unknown
Sergeant Birk

Samuel DeForest Pension Application No. W 16559, available at www.footnote.com. Also in John C. Dann, ed., *The Revolution Remembered. Eyewitness Accounts of the War for Independence* (Chicago, 1980), pp. 40-47, p. 46-47.

On 6 January 1777, DeForest and John Parent are charged with escorting two prisoners to Hartford.

One of the prisoners name was Birk Serjent Birk a smart intelligent likly young man I do not remember the others name this was an interesting and Joyous Scene when contrasted with the dreadful scenes which flashed in our eye and stoned our ears in New York. ... Serjent Burk said after Genl. Washington had made such a suding and successful assault in taking 3 or 4 Regmts of Hessians at trinton and as many as twelve thousand of there best troops was in full pursuit of him and it was thought they would most assuredly get hold of him when we were taken it was a warm very foggy morning.

We had eaten our breakfast and were in the colledge yard, striped with our coats and hats of playing ball and as to having any fear of the enemy we felt as Safe as if we had been in the kingdom of heaven but at once we heard the sound of men's feet traming, and I stooped down and looked under the fog, and I could see there legs as high as there hips not more than six rods from us not a moment was left to look for our coats and hats I run for the two pare of bares they were pretty high I sprung and threw my breast a crost the top rail at that instant a ball from a fieldpiece struck in the middle of the rail I was at one end and an othere man at the othere end the of the rail the ball took the rail in too in the middle and I was cast to the ground swift and gave me such a jare I thought myself mortally wounded and to sum it up you see we are all prisoners ...



Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Fourth Battalion, Royal Artillery
BG Samuel Cleaveland

Brigadier General Cleaveland's (commander of the Fourth Battalion Royal Artillery) despatch to the Board of Ordnance. New Jersey. Revolutionary War Miscellaneous Bound Books, 1776-1783, Book 43 B, Number 122, David Library of the American Revolution.

The most particular action that has happened since Washington's recrossing the Delawar, was an attack made by him with 4000 men, upon the Battalion of the 17th Regiment at Princeton, in which action the 17th has gained great honour and the Lieutenant-Colonel Mawhood, great reputation. The heavy fire of the enemy at the first of the attack obliged the Regiment to retire, under cover of four 6-pounders advantageously posted. Here the Regiment formed and made a general charge upon the enemy, whom they forced wherever they advanced, leaving a piece of cannon behind them. Colonel Mawhood observing the enemy increasing greatly in their numbers, thought proper to march from Princeton, where they were obliged to leave two 6-pounders, all the horses belonging to the guns being shot and the axle-tree of the other carriage broke by firing.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Hessian Jäger Corps
Colonel Count Carl Emilius von Donop

James Grant Papers of Ballindalloch Castle, Scotland; Microfilm, Library of Congress, Reel 37, Correspondence, January, 1777.

Traduction

Cantonement Brunswick 6^e Janvier 1777

Mon sejour à Princeton a été court mais bien incommode aussi bien en egard des quartiers non avais que de l'allarme continuel.

Le 1^r de ce mois après midi General Grant arriva avec les Grenadiers Anglois et la 4^{me} Brigade, sur quoi je devais avances jusqu'au pont avec ma Brigade incl. le Regt 42^e et le Bataillon Köhler arrivé justement avec le Corps du General Grant.

J'etois obligé de faire bivouac à cette place, les Chasseurs devaient faire des patrouilles jusqu'a Maidenhead sous la protection d'un Detachment des Grenadiers de 125 hommes pour comprendre à quelle distance les Rebelles etaient avancés. Ils rencontraient là un Bataillon et se relivaient suivant leur Ordres à une distance de quelques Miles sans que l'ennemi devait les poursuivre.

À celle occasion j'ai perdu le Sergeant Brehm des Chasseurs à Cheval qui etant avancé trop hardiment est tué avec son Cheval par une Troupe des Rebelles cachée dans une maison.

La nuit suivante Lieutenant General Cornwallis arriva à Prince Town. Le 2^e matin a 8 heures les deux Bataillons d'Infanterie legere me joignoient, et je me mettois en marche pour Trentown. A l'approche de mon Avant-Garde les Rebelles se retiraient sans tirer un fusil et ruinoient le pont de bois qui se trouve entre Maidenhead et Prince Town; mais je le faisais reparer bientot.

A l'autre coté de ce pont sur l'hauteur nous tirames des Canons et des fusils l'un contre l'autre, mais cela ne durait pas long tems l'ennemi se retirant par Trentown en bon ordre, et se placant sous la protection de ses Canons au delà du pont.

Les deux Bataillons des Grenadiers Linsing et Block avec le Corps des Chasseurs étaient les premiers qui pénétraient jusque dans la ville. Le Bataillon Minnigerode avec le reste de la Brigade Rall je devais poster sur l'hauteur à la gauche un Corps des Rebelles se trouvant au de là de la rivière qui est ici. Dans et devant Trentown nous avions à souffrir de l'ennemi une Canonade bien forte, mais nous ne postames que des Piquets des Chasseurs et d'Infanterie legere dans la ville, et retirames les autres troupes dans les bois sur l'hauteur, pour n'avoir plus de perte par les mortier canons des ennemies.

Les Grenadiers Anglois suivaient ma Brigade et furent placés sur l'aile gauche auprès la Bataillon Minnigerode. La Brigade du General Leslie s'étoit avancé jus qu'à Maidenhead, et par consequent il n-y-avait à Princetown que quelques Bataillons de la 4^e Brigade, Mr Washington qui a toujours des avertissements surs de nos moindres mouvements faisait marcher 5 ou 6 milles hommes sur Allentown et surprenoit ainsi la garnison de Prince Town, et nous aurions une Affaire Trentownienne si cette place n'avait pas été situe avantageusement sur une hauteur.

Cependant 150 hommes, à ce qu'on dit, sont faits prisonniers et un nombre considerable blessé ou tué. Par cet Manoeuvre Lord Cornwallis était contraint de se retirer aussi vite que possible pour suivre Washington, qui avait pris sa route directement sur Kingstown à Brunswic.

A 3 heures après midi j'arrivais avec ma Brigade qui faisoit l'arrier garde de Trentown à Prince Town; après un peu de demeure tout le Corps se mettant en Marche pour Brunswic sur le Chemin on l'on (?) avertissoit que Washington avait pris sa route sur la main gauche à Milstown et Boundbrook: Bonheur pour nous que nous n'avions point d'affaire avec lui car nos hommes étaient extremement fatigués.

Le 4^e matin à 8 heures j'arrivais sur les hauteurs de Brunswic, où je faisois halte et rassemblois les Bataillons. Si l'ennemi avait connu notre situation et envoyé seulement 400 hommes sur notre route, une considerable partie de la Bagage Angloise auroit été perdue, et un grand nombre des nos marodes faite prisonniers. La liste jointe contient la perte de ma Brigade dans ces mauvais jours, quoi qu'on ne peut pas encore determiner precisement le nombre des prisonniers parce que au tems de la surprise il-y-avait à prince Town des malades et marodes, qui se sont sauvés comme on dit, mais je ne scais pas encore s'ils ont echapé heureusement où non. Mon neveu le Lieutenant Donop du Battⁿ Minnigerode avec le Lieutenant Donop du Corps des Chasseurs ont été malades et resté aussi à Princetown. Le premier s'est en assé (? illeg) au tems de la surprise de Rebelles, sans que je puis comprendre, où il est à present, l'autre est fait prisonnier sa maladie l'ayant empeché de se sauver.

A notre retour de Trentown j'ai été obligé aussi de lasser la le Lieutenant de Grothausen, blessé par la poitrine de forte qu'il n'echapera par apparemment.

Lord Cornwallis m'a demander de laisser ici encore pour quelques jours le reste de la Brigade Rall, puisqu'il attend une attaque tous les moments. Je souhaite de voir les hommes en marche pour New York puis qu'il n-y-a pas assés des maisons ici pour faire des quartiers pour les Soldats. Le bon

6)

Dieu scait ce que deviendra de ma Brigade, si elle ne vient pas bientôt dans une autre situation. Dans les alarmes continuel il est impossible que les hommes rapierent leur habits, et se remettent, particulièrement ayants si peu de place qu'ils ne peuvent pas se mouvoir. Car chaque Compagnie n'a qu'une petite maison.

On nous fait esperer tous les jour de meilleurs tems, mais s'ils ne viennent bientôt la fois se diminuera extremement. Mr le General Grant m'a fait donner les couvertures et souliers necessaires du Commissariat Anglois qui est ici, ce qui est un soulagement considerable en quelque maniere. J'espere que le prix des souliers ne sera trop grand.

La grande uniforme est en telle situation qu'il est absolument impossible de la porter la Campagne suivante. Comment se pourroit il autrement? Le drap etant mauvais et les hommes n'ayant été deshabetues depuis si long tems.

Je demande donc V.E. de procurer une autre uniforme pour cette Brigade du moins, aussi quand on etoit obligé de la prendre d'un autre Couleur.

Pour le reste j'espere que le porteur sera le bien venu pour V.E. mais je souhaite de l'avoir ici aussi tot que possible, ayant grand besoin de ses services particulièrement le Lieutenant Donop etant prisonnier pour le quel je pris V.E. de s'interesser auprès de S.E. le Commandant en Chef, afin qu'il soit ranzioné aussi tot qu'il gueri.

J'ai l'honneur d'etre

Mr de V.E.

&c &c &c

Donop

NOTE:

The header: "Traduction" i.e., "Translation", indicates that this letter was originally written in a different language, most likely in German, and then translated into French by an officer on Donop's (or Howe's ?) staff to enable Sir William Howe to read it.

The assumption that the letter was translated by a German-speaker is based on the frequent writing of the letter "d/D" as δ or Δ as it would have been written in the German script.

Translation

Cantonement Brunswick 6 January 1777

My stay at Princeton was short but quite uncomfortable both regarding the not available quarters as well as the continuous alarms.

In the afternoon of the first of this month General Grant arrived with the English Grenadiers and the Fourth Brigade, which I accordingly made advance up to the bridge with my brigade incl. the 42nd Regiment and the Battalion Köhler which had also arrived with the corps of General Grant.

I was obliged to bivouac at this place, the Jäger had to make patrols from there to Maidenhead under the protection of a detachment of 125 Grenadiers to find out to what distance the rebels had advanced. They found a battalion there and they disengaged according to their orders to a distance of a few miles without the enemy being able to pursue them.

At that occasion I lost Sergeant Brehm of the Mounted Jäger who, having advanced too boldly, is killed with his horse by a group of rebels hidden in a house.

The next night Lieutenant General Cornwallis arrived in Princeton. At 8 o'clock in the morning of the 2nd the two battalions of Light Infantry joined me, and I set out to march for Trenton. At the approach of my advance guard the rebels retired without firing a musket and destroyed the wooden bridge between Maidenhead and Princeton, but I had it soon repaired.

On the height on the other side of the bridge we pulled up cannon and muskets one next to the other but that did not last long since the enemy retired toward Trenton in good order, putting itself under the protection of its cannon on the other side of the bridge.

Note: The phrase *tirer un canon* in the original text can mean both "fire a cannon" as well as "pull a cannon". The expression *l'un contre l'autre* literally means "hand in hand". The sentence therefore could also mean: "On the height on other side of the bridge we fired cannon and muskets concurrently but that did not last long since the enemy"

The two Grenadier Battalions Linsingen and Block with the Jäger Corps were the first to enter into the city. I posted the Battalion Minnigerode with the rest of the Brigade Rall on the height on the left since a Rebel Corps was beyond the river which is there. Inside and outside Trenton we

had to suffer a rather strong cannonade from the enemy, but we only posted Jäger and Light Infantry piquets in the city and retired the other troops into the woods on the height so that we would not suffer any more losses from the mortar cannon of the enemies.

The English Grenadiers followed my Brigade and were placed on the left wing next to the Battalion Minnigerode. The Brigade of General Leslie had advanced to Maidenhead and therefore only a few battalions of the Fourth Brigade were at Princeton. Mr. Washington, who always has sound information of our smallest movements, had 5 or 6 thousand men march onto Allentown and thus surprised the garrison at Princeton, and we would have had a Trenton-like affair if that place had not been advantageously situated on a hill.

Around 150 men, it is said, were made prisoners and a considerable number was wounded or killed. By that maneuver Lord Cornwallis was forced to retire as quickly as possible to follow Washington, who had taken the direct route via Kingston to Brunswic.

At 3 in the afternoon I arrived with my brigade, which formed the rear-guard from Trenton, at Princeton; after a brief rest the whole corps set out to march to Brunswic; on the road we were informed that Washington had taken the left-hand (road) at Milltown and Bound Brook: good fortune for us that we did not have an engagement with him because our men were extremely fatigued.

On the 4th at 8 o'clock I arrived on the heights of Brunswic where I made halt and re-assembled the battalions. If the enemy had known our situation and sent only 400 men along our route a considerable part of the English baggage would have been lost and a large number of our stragglers (Donop uses the term *marode*, which means pilferers, plunderers) been made prisoners. The attached list contains the loss of my brigade during these bad days, what can not yet be precisely determined is the number of prisoners because at the time of the surprise there were sick and stragglers at Princeton, which, it is said, saved themselves, but I do not know yet whether they were fortunate to escape or not. My nephew Lieutenant Donop of the Battalion Minnigerode with the Lieutenant Donop of the Jäger Corps were sick and also remained at Princeton. The first was (illeg.) at the time of the surprise by the rebels and I can not know where he is right now; the other was made a prisoner, his sickness having kept him from saving himself.

Upon our return from Trenton I also was obliged to leave Lieutenant de Grothausen there, badly wounded in the chest who apparently could not escape.

Lord Cornwallis has asked me to leave here for a few days the rest of the Brigade Rall because he expects an attack any moment. I expect to see the men march for New York because there are not enough houses here to provide quarters for the soldiers. The good Lord knows what will become of my brigade if it does not move into a different position soon. During the continuous alarms it is impossible for the men to mend their uniforms and to rest up, especially when they have so little space to move around in because each company only has one small house for itself.

Every day hopes are raised in us for better times, but if they don't arrive soon trust will diminish extremely. General Grant has ordered that I be given the necessary bedding and shoes from the English commissary which is here, which is a considerable relief in some ways. I hope that the price of the shoes will not be too high.

Our great coat is in such a shape that it is absolutely impossible to wear it in the next campaign. How could it be otherwise? The cloth was bad and the men have not had it off in a long time.

I ask Your Excellency therefore to procure at the very least another uniform for this brigade, even if one should be obliged to take it from a different color (cloth).

Beyond that I hope that the bearer (of this letter) will reach Your Excellency safely but I wish to have him back as soon as possible, having great need of his services especially with Lieutenant Donop being a prisoner, for whom I ask Your Excellency to interest yourself with His Excellency the Commander in Chief so that he will be exchanged as quickly as feasible.

I have the honor to be
Your Excellency's
&c &c &c
Donop

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 1st Battalion Foot Guards
Captain Thomas Dowdeswell

J. E. Tyler, "The Operations in New Jersey. An English Officer describes the Events of December, 1776." *Proceedings of the New Jersey Historical Society* (April 1952), pp. 133-136; the description of the Battle of Princeton is on p. 135.

On the 1st of January, the B: Grenadiers, the Guards and the 2d Brigade under Genl: Leslie received orders to marched [sic]. we marched that night to Princetown where we came up with the Hessian Grenadiers, Chasseurs and Light Infantry, the next morning (Lord Cornwallis having joined us in the night) the Army marched towards Trentown, expecting either to engage the Rebels, or drive them over the Delaware with considerable Loss to them. But, Genl: Washington, by a Manoeuvre which does him the Greatest Credit, found means in the night of the 2nd Inst: to pass upon our left, quite unperceived, & march'd that whole night towards Princetown, which place he attacked before Daybreak on the morning of the 3rd Inst. the 17th Regt. Under Col: Mawhood stationed there, with part of the 55th and the Dismounted Men of the 16th L: Drag^{ns}: made a most gallant Defence, drove the Enemy's advanced Guard, which consisted of a very large Body, and took three of their Cannon but the main army of the Rebels, coming up to support their advanced party, the Brittish were obliged to retreat, & in return lost four of their field Pieces. the 40th Regt: did not do themselves any Credit by the early Retreat they made towards Brunswick on the first Alarm.

Upon the report of the fire arms, the B: Grenadier's, the 16th L: Dragoons, and the 1st Battⁿ. Of G^{ds} (the 2d Battⁿ. Being left to take care of Brunswick, and Genl. Lee) were order'd to return towards Princetown, which we did with the utmost Expedition, but did not arrive soon enough to come up with the Rebels, as [here begins p. 136] they still continued their march. However we retook all the Guns we had lost in the action. In a few Hour's the whole Army joined us, & we made a forced march to Brunswick, where we arrived two Hour's before Day-Break ...

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 16th Regiment of Dragoons
Court-Martial

Great Britain, Public Record Office, War Office, Class 71, Volume 87, Pages 343-361.

At a General Court Martial held at Brooklyn on Long Island, in the Province of New York on Thursday the 22nd Octr. and Continued by Adjournment to Wednesday the 28th Octr. 1778, by Virtue of a Warrant, bearing date the 20th Instant from His Excellency Sir Henry Clinton, Knight of the most Honorable Order of the Bath, General and Commander in Chief of all His Majesty's Forces with[in] the Colonies laying on the Atlantic Ocean, from Nova Scotia to West Florida inclusive &c. &c. &c.

		Lieut. Col. Samuel Birch 17 th Dragoons President
Major Charles Graham 42 nd Foot	M	Major Willm. Dansey 33 rd Foot
Capt. James Wm. Bailie 7 th Foot	E	Capt. Francis Graham 37 th Foot
Capt. William Myers 26 th Foot	M	Capt. James Graham 57 th Foot
Capt. Willm. H. Talbot 17 th Dragoons	B	Capt. George Kelly 64 th Foot
Lt. John Robertson 42 nd Foot	E	Lt. Robt. Potts 42 nd Foot
Lt. Gideon Sharpe 17 th Foot	R	Lt. James Hussey 17 th Dragoons
	S	
		Stephen Payne Adye Esqr. D. Judge Advocate

Cornet Henry Evatt, of His Majesty's 16th Regiment of light Dragoons, came prisoner before the Court and was accused by Lieutenant Simon Wilmot of the same regiment of Disobedience of Orders and Misbehaviour before the Enemy, and the following Witnesses were examined in support of the accusation Vizt.

Lieutenant Wilmot being duly Sworn deposed that on the 3rd Jany. 1777, a Detachment under the Command of Lieutenant Colonel Mawhood marched from Prince Town, the Queens dismounted Light Dragoons flanked the Detachment; on ascending the

Hill on the Trenton side of the Stoney Bridge, Cornet Evatt discovered a Column of the rebel Army, as they were marching thro' a wood on the left Flank; that he (the witness) immediately acquainted Lieutenant Col. Mawhood of it, who sent him down to the Edge of the wood to see what they were; that he knew them to be a part of the Rebel Army, but Lieut. Col. Mawhood not being Sufficiently satisfied, but taking them to be a body of Hessian Troops sent him down a second time; that he advanced so near, as to find his retreat hazardous and difficult, he however returned to Lieut. Col. Mawhood with the discovery of two Columns more, on which he told the witness to tell Capt. Trewerin to retreat over the Bridge with the mounted Dragoons and to retreat himself with the Dismounted; that he called in both Flanks and retreated over the Bridge, where he found Cornet Evatt with his Division; to whom he expressed some concern fearing the rebels would Cut off the right flank, before they could retreat over the Bridge, on which Cornet Evatt made answer that it was nothing to him, if they were cut off and that he would not stay for them; that if they were taken, he would not be taken or words to that effect; on which the witness told him to halt, untill he had received an Order to move forward; both Flanks having retreated over the Bridge, the Witness received Orders from Lieut. Col. Mawhood to take possession of the height on their right flank; on gaining the summit, he found the 17th Regiment of Foot Engaged, he wheeled to the left to support the 17th regiment, and found his right Flank exposed to the fire from the rebels, who had gained an advantageous piece of Ground, and were playing upon them with Grape Shot from two Pieces of Artillery which obliged him to wheel to the right, to prevent their further advancement and thereby kept open a Communication between them and Lord Cornwallis; that after making the best disposition he was capable of with a Small party, he sent Serjeant Tudor to the Officers Commanding Divisions to tell them that it was his Order that no random shot were fired, and not to fire till the Enemy were on the points of their Bayonets, and not to even then without his order for it, that seeing the rebels were filing from their left by the river side, he turned to Order Cornet Evatt to Check them with his Division, when Serjeant Tudor informed him that Cornet Evatt was retreating with his Division, and to his (the Witness's) very great surprise, he saw Cornet Evatt retreating with his Division in very great Confusion; he called out to Cornet Evatt to halt, but his calls were ineffectual; he then ordered Serjeant Tudor to call to Cornet Evatt to halt and bring back his Division; his calls were also ineffectual, and he seemed rather to increase his pace; that so much were the Soldiers enraged again him, that it was not without the utmost difficulty that he kept them from firing at him; that Cornet Warham asked the witness if he had given an order for them to retreat, he told him, that by God he had not, having received no Order for it; that the rebels encouraged by success, advanced with such impetuosity, as to have nearly surrounded them, owing to the neglect of Col. Mawhood, who retreated with the 17th regiment a Considerable time before him, and left him with his party to fall a sacrifice to the Enemy; his horrid Situation without the least prospect of relief, obliged him, (the witness) with his party to make a very precipitate retreat; that after he wheeled to the right, he told Cornet Evatt to move forward to the fence, which was in their front, and their [sic] wait for further Orders; that in the retreat he came up with Cornet Evatt, and asked him how he came to retreat without any Order for it; he answered that he (the witness) had injured his Character, he therefore should demand satisfaction; the witness told him that he should have satisfaction given him by a Court Martial; and he then left him, and he (the Witness) was soon after wounded and taken by the rebels, and has but lately been Exchanged.

Q. At the time that he called to Cornet Evatt to halt was there any firing that might have prevented his hearing him?

A. The rebels were firing, but he was near enough to hear.

Q. When he asked Cornet Evatt why he had retreated did he give him any reason for doing so?

A. He did not.

Q. Was Cornet Evatt immediately under his Orders that Day?

A. Yes.

Lieut. David Howell, of the 16th regiment of Dragoons being duly Sworn was examined.

Q. (*by Lieut. Wilmot*)— Did he not on the 3rd of Jany. 1777 see Cornet Evatt retreating?

A. He did.

Q. (*by the Court*)— What was the situation of the King's Army and that of the rebels at the time?

A. He cannot speak of the Situation of any part of the rebel army, except what was immediately in their front; the fire was so exceeding heavy; there were many of their party laying down and others kneeling and keeping up a constant fire.

Q. Did he hear Lieut. Wilmot or Serjeant Tudor call to Cornet Evatt to halt?

A. He did not.

Q. Was he the witness near Lieut. Wilmot at the time that he saw Cornet Evatt retreating?

A. No.

Q. Was the fire of the Enemy more heavy on Cornet Evatt's Division, than any other part of the Detachment?

A. It appeared equally heavy on the whole as near as he can Judge.

Q. Was Cornet Evatt's Division with the rest of the Detachment under Lieutenant Wilmot's Command; or detached from it at the time he retreated?

A. The whole detachment was formed in a line behind a rail, at the open distance light Troops generally form, and under the orders of Lieutenant Wilmot.

Q. Was Cornet Evatt's a flank Division?

A. It was on the right of the whole.

Q. Was there any part of the Enemy then moving round their right, that endangered the retreat of the right Division under Cornet Evatt?

A. The situation of the ground was such that it was impossible for him to see what was doing to the right, previous to Cornet Evatt's retreating, but soon after he had moved off, his (the Witness's) Division becoming then the right hand division; and

upon looking to the right he saw that the Enemy had gained their right flank considerably, and were running as he imagined to endeavour to gain possession of Stoney Bridge, which was then in a line with them.

Q. Did Lieutenant Wilmot or any of the Detachment fall into the hands of the Enemy on the Ground that Cornet Evatt retreated from?

A. He cannot say whether there were any; he never saw Lieutenant Wilmot after they retreated.

Q. At the last, when the whole detachment retreated, did he hear Lieutenant Wilmot give Orders for their retreating?

A. He heard no such Order given.

Q. Did he (the witness) retreat in Consequence of Cornet Evatt's retreating?

A. His own duty leading him to look to the left, he seldom looked to the right, but casting his Eyes that way sometime after Cornet Evatt had retreated, and finding he had moved off, and seeing no Troops near them except a few Grenadiers and light Infantry, the 17th regiment of Foot having already retreated, he ordered the Division under his Command to make the best of their way to a hollow way and not to wait for him, as he could not run as fast as them.

Q. Did the other Divisions retreat at the Same time?

A. He had not got ten paces before he looked back and saw the other Divisions fileing off to the right also.

Q. At the time that he saw Cornet Evatt retreating, was the Division going off in greater Confusion than the rest?

A. No he did not perceive that they did.

Cornet Joseph Warham of the 16th Regiment of Dragoons, being duly Sworn, and desired to relate what he saw relative to the behaviour of Cornet Evatt on the 3rd Jany. 1777 at Prince Town, he deposed, that he Commanded the left Division of the Queens dismounted Dragoons on that day, and that his attention was entirely taken up by the Men of his own Division and the Enemy in Front so that he did not observe when the right of the Dismounted Dragoons retreated, but upon looking to the right, he saw that they were gone from their post, but how long they had been gone, or for what reason they had quitted their post, he knew not; that when he observed that they had quitted their post, Lieutenant Wilmot was near him; he (the witness) asked him if he had given an Order for their retreat, his Answer was that he had not; that seeing some of the men within Call, who were retreating, (he does not know what Division they belonged to) he called to them to face to the right about and form, but it had no effect, as he could not get them [to] obey those Orders; that the Enemy then came down upon them with a heavy fire (Lt. Wilmot being still with him) and obliged them to quit their post and retreat after the others who were gone.

Q. When he (the Witness) retreated was it by his own authority, or by an Order from Lieutenant Wilmot?

A. He don't recollect but Lieut. Wilmot was with him the whole time.

Cornet Laurence Staples of the 16th or Queens regiment of Light Dragoons being duly sworn was examined.

Q. (by Lieut. Wilmot)— Did he not see Cornet Evatt retreat some considerable time before the rest of the Division of the Dismounted Dragoons?

A. He did not.

Q. Did he (the Witness) retreat at the same time that Cornet Evatt Did?

A. He retreated immediately after him, for the firing having ceased on the left, he went towards the right and then saw the Enemy filing off to their right, that he went up to Lieut. Wilmot, who was nearly on the left, to inform him of this, and he then heard Cornet Warham ask Lieut. Wilmot if he had given an Order for their retreating, and he answered he had not; that looking round, he (the Witness) saw the three right hand Divisions had retreated, and the fourth was going off, and he does not recollect but thinks he mentioned to Cornett Evatt as he passed along, that there was a Column gaining their right flank.

Q. (by the Court)— What Division did he (the Witness) Command?

A. The third Division.

Q. Did he give Orders for his own Division to retreat?

A. He did not.

Q. Did he receive any Orders from Lt. Wilmot to retreat?

A. He did not.

Q. What Orders did Lt. Wilmot give before the firing began?

A. The Orders he received from Lieut. Wilmot were, to form in that field (having before been flanking) as they would be immediately engaged.

Q. Did he hear Lieut. Wilmot or Serjeant Tudor call to Cornet Evatt as he was retreating to halt?

A. He did not.

Q. Did they retreat to the rear, or did they file off to the right?

A. He does not know how his own Division retreated, as he was gone to the left at the time; but he saw no regular retreat that day except by the mounted Dragoons.

Q. How long after seeing Cornet Evatt on the right, did he make his report to Lieut. Wilmot of having seen a Column of the Enemy moving to their right?

A. Not a Minute.

Serjeant Charles Tudor, of the 16th regiment of Light Dragoons being duly sworn, deposed that upon the dismounted Dragoons being formed in the morning of the 3rd January 1777, he was Ordered by Lieutenant Wilmot, who Commanded the Party to go along the Line and inform the men they were not to fire a Shot, till such time as he gave the Order, which he accordingly did; that upon his return to Lieutenant Wilmot, on the left, a body of the Enemy came pretty close, and the dismounted Dragoons fired a Volley amongst them; that the Enemy then retreated very precipitately, and Lieutenant Wilmot gave an Order speaking pretty loud, that the dismounted Dragoons should Charge the Enemy, when to his great Surprise and he believes to that of Lieutenant Wilmot, he saw the right Division retreating with Cornet Evatt at the Head of them; that Lieutenant Wilmot Called out as loud as he well could to Cornet Evatt, to form his Division again, his breath being apparently almost expended with hollowing; that Lieutenant Wilmot then Ordered the Witness to call to Cornet Evatt to form his Division, by his Order, which he did, but to no effect.

Q. (by the Court)— At the time that he saw Cornet Evatt and his Division retreating, what position did the three other Divisions take; did they advance to Charge the Enemy as Order'd by Lieut. Wilmot, or did they also retreat?

A. There was a fence in their front, and he (the Witness) had got upon that fence, when looking round he saw the other Divisions following Cornet Evatt's Division.

Q. What Space was there at this time between Cornet Evatt's Division and the next Division on the right?

A. Not ten Yards.

Q. When he saw Cornet Evatt on the retreat, what distance had he got from the ground, on which they formed?

A. About fifty Yards.

Q. Does he imagine that Cornet Evatt heard him when he called to him?

A. Cornet Evatt once turned about his head, but he does not know whether he heard him or not.

Q. What distance was he from them then?

A. He supposes about 70 Yards.

Q. At the time that Cornet Evatt retreated, did he see a Column of the Enemy coming upon their right?

A. He did not he saw one coming in front.

Q. Was he with Lieut. Wilmot the whole time?

A. He was

Q. Does he recollect Cornet Staples coming to Lieutenant Wilmot, at the time of the retreat, and telling him that the Enemy were endeavouring to gain his right flank?

A. He does not.

Q. Was there any Order given that day for a retreat?

A. Not that he heard of; he is sure there was none given by Lieutenant Wilmot.

Q. In what manner did they retreat?

A. They retreated by files from the right; there was some Confusion, and he Cannot say that their files were quite regular.

Q. Did he observe more confusion in Cornet Evatt's Division than in any other?

A. No he did not.

Q. What sort of Ground was it on their right?

A. There was. he thinks a Wood, on their right.

Q. Did they Cannonade then that day with Grape Shot?

A. Yes.

Q. At what time of the day?

A. It was before he saw Cornet Evatt retreat.

The Prisoner being put upon his defence, Said that on the 3rd Jany. 1777, upon coming upon the Hill after passing the Bridge, as he flanked to the left of their party, he saw the flankers of the Enemy on his left; he then halted his men and immediately perceived a Column of the Enemy; he sent to Captain Trewin, who Commanded the mounted Dragoons, and as he supposed the whole at that time, who immediately came to him; he told him of a Column of the Enemy marching to their left, and desired that he would report it to Colonel Mawhood and several other Officers went immediately to reconnoitre, but could not be certain who they were, whether the Enemy or Hessians; Captain Munro of the 71st regiment was at that time looking thro' a spying Glass, which he begged he would lend him, and upon looking thro' it he perceived their Colours, and then sent word to Colonel Mawhood that he had done so, and that they were white he was therefore very certain that they were Rebels; he then received Orders from Colonel Mawhood to follow the 17th Regiment of Foot which he did by Countermarching from his right; he does not recollect receiving any orders from Lieutenant Wilmot on that head before they Engaged; he received Orders again from Lieut. Colonel Mawhood, after they had passed the Bridge which was to this purpose, Sir, you will immediately take your men to that Hill, pointing to one then on his [i.e., Cornet Evatt's] right which was the ground that they engaged on; he told Colonel Mawhood that he was not the Commanding Officer of the Dismounted Dragoons, but that he would acquaint him with his orders as soon as he came up, and in the mean time proved with the men as fast as he could, Lieutenant Wilmot being then in the rear; and when Lieutenant Wilmot came up he gave him the Orders.

Q. (from the prisoner to Lieut. Wilmot)— Did he receive a Letter from Cornet Evatt, at Huntington, since his coming Home?

A. He did.

Q. What was the Substance of that Letter?

A. He does not immediately remember, as he took but little notice of it, and sent a verbal answer by the person who delivered it.

Q. Would he recollect the Contents were they repeated to him?

A. He can't positively say, perhaps he might recollect them.

Q. Was they to this purpose, "Sir, I understand that you have "censured my Conduct on the 3rd January 1777, when engaged with the rebels; any thing "that you have to say on that Subject, I beg that you will commit immediately to the "Commanding Officer of this Regiment, in order that it may be cleared up immediately "in the most public manner."

A. They were to that purpose.

Q. Does he remember any thing that Cornet Evatt observed to him when they were drawn up in a line; but not close to the 17th regt. of Foot, there being a small field between them?

A. He does not.

Q. Does he not recollect that Cornet Evatt told him that the Enemy were then gaining the right flank of the 17th Regiment of Foot, and that if he gave Orders for the dismounted Dragoons to Charge their front and throw in a fire, it might be the means of preserving that flank?

A. He does not.

Q. Did not Cornet Evatt tell him after they had performed that manuvre and it had the desired effect that the Enemy were then gaining their right flank and that it was necessary to Charge their front, Orders for which he gave?

A. He did not.

Q. Did every Officer remain with his Division, during the time of the action?

A. He believes that all did, except Mr. Staples; and he never knew till this day, that he had left it.

Q. Did he observe that the 17th regiment of Foot had retreated a Considerable time before Cornet Evatt retreated?

A. He did not immediately see the 17th regt. retreat, but they were retreating at the time that Cornet Evatt was.

Q. Did he observe that the Enemy had gained Cornet Evatt's right flank considerably, before he attempted to retreat?

A. He did not observe that they had gained his flank, but they were endeavouring to do it, upon which he was turning to Cornet Evatt to order him to Check the Enemy that was coming up.

Q. Of how many men did that Detachment of Light Dragoons consist, on going into the field?

A. According to the best of his knowledge of about 70 men.

Q. How many of the rebels does he think were advancing upon them?

A. About 1,500 or 2,000.

The Prisoner further added in his Defence, that Cornet Staples came upon his right during the Action, and had not remained long there before he said “Mr. Evatt, the 17th Regiment and the Cannon are retreating” he then looked to the left and perceived that they were, and also perceived an Officer with white facings, which was Captain Hatfield of the 43rd Grenadiers, making signals to them to go off; when he saw that, he looked again to his right and perceived that the Enemy had considerably gained his right flank, in order as he supposed to cut them off, from retreating over the Bridge; he then Jumped up and desired his Division to follow him, an Example that was immediately followed by the whole, but he does not recollect hearing Lieutenant Wilmot or any body else give Orders to form, ‘till they had passed the Road, when Lieut. Campbell of the 44th Light Company now Captain in Lord Rawdon’s Irish Volunteers, addressed himself to Lieutenant Howel and said, that if there was any possibility of being of Service, that was the place for the men to take the Trees; but seeing the situation that they were in, and not being able to collect above a dozen men, they all thought that it was best to move off, and that he never received the Smallest Order from Lieutenant Wilmot befor[e] the Action.

The Court Adjourned till 10 o’Clock next morning.

Friday the 23rd Octor. 1778.

The Court being met pursuant to Adjournment.

Lieutenant Howell, already Sworn was again examined.

Q. (by desire of Cornet Evatt)— Does he not think that their retreating at the time the rest of the army retreated, would have been the means of saving more men?

A. If they had gone off Sooner they certainly Should not have lost so many men.

Q. Did he perceive any misconduct in him on that day or at any other time that they have been in Service together?

A. He saw no misconduct in him on that day or any other, but rather an anxiety to be engaged on every occasion, and he has served with him sometime.

Serjeant William Sparry of the 16th Regiment of Dragoons, being duly Sworn was examined.

Q. Did he hear Cornet Evatt give any Orders to his men on the 3rd Jany. 1777, whilst they were engaged with the rebels?

A. Yes, whilst they were engaged and before.

Q. What were those Orders?

A. Before the Engagement began he told them that he saw a party of the rebels, and desired them to be very Cool and Steady, and that his Division should take Orders from nobody but himself, and repeated these Orders whilst they were Engaged.

Q. Did not Cornet Evatt remain constantly with his Division and pay the strictest attention to them?

A. Yes, he did.

Q. Did not Cornet Staples, come upon Cornet Evatt's right before he retreated?

A. Yes.

Q. What did Cornet Staples say whilst he was there?

A. According to the best of his recollection he called to Cornet Evatt and told him that all the artillery and Infantry had retreated.

Q. Did he not perceive before Cornet Evatt retreated, that the Enemy had gained his right flank considerably?

A. Some had got on his flank but not very far.

Q. Did not Cornet Evatt upon perceiving that the 17th Regiment and the artillery had left them, get up and desire his Division to follow him?

A. Yes he did.

Q. Did not all the dismounted Dragoons immediately follow the example?

A. Yes they did.

Robert Burford, private Soldier in the 16th Regiment of Dragoons, being duly sworn was examined.

Q. Did he not belong to Cornet Evatt's Division when engaged with the rebels at Princes Town on the 3rd January 1777?

A. Yes.

Q. Did he hear Cornet Evatt receive any Orders from Lieutenant Wilmot?

A. He cannot say that he did.

Q. Did he hear Cornet Evatt give any order to his Division, whilst they were engaged or before?

A. Yes.

Q. What were those Orders?

A. He bid the men to behave Cool and not to waste or throw away their ammunition, and to be attentive to the Officer who Commanded them.

Q. Did he perceive that the Enemy had considerably gained their right flank, before Cornet Evatt retreated?

A. Yes.

Q. Did not Cornett Evatt, when they were in that Situation give Orders for the men to follow him immediately?

A. Yes, he ordered them to go to the right about and follow him.

Q. Was not that example immediately followed by the whole of the dismounted Dragoons?

A. According to the best of his opinion it was.

Q. Has he ever been engaged with Cornet Evatt since that and how often?

A. He has been engaged with him since.

Q. Was not the first engagement that he was in afterwards with Cornet Evatt the 1st Febry. following?

A. He believes that it was.

Q. Was not the 42nd regiment engaged then and the British and Hessian Grenadiers called to reinforce them?

A. Yes.

Q. Did he not see Cornet Evatt speak to Sir William Erskine as the Column was marching down to reinforce the 42nd regt?

A. Yes he did.

Q. Did he hear what Cornet Evatt said to Sir William Erskine?

A. No.

Q. Did not Cornet Evatt on his return from Sir William Erskine fall in with his men in the front of the first Battalion of Grenadiers?

A. Yes they were then considerably in the rear and he made them go forward and join the Grenadiers.

Q. When the Action was over did he see Colonel Harcourt come to where Cornet Evatt was?

A. Yes.

Q. What did Colonel Harcourt say to Cornet Evatt then?

A. He said that they made but a Small Company of Grenadiers.

Q. Did not Colonel Harcourt say to Cornet Evatt that he had acted very well and got into very good Company.

A. Colonel Harcourt made use of words to that Effect.

Q. Was not he (the witness) under the Command of Cornet Ferry at the middle Ferry on the day of the Battle of German Town?

A. Yes.

Q. Was there not a pretty Smart Engagement for sometime between Cornet Evatt's detachment and the rebels?

A. Yes, there was.

Q. Were not the Rebels obliged to abandon the Gun that they brought to the Waters Edge?

A. Yes they were.

Major Francis Edward Gwynne, Commanding the 16th (or Queens regiment of Light) Dragoons, being duly sworn, was examined.

Q. What has been Cornet Evatt's general behaviour in the field?

A. Cornet Evatt has been frequently under his Command in the field, and he never saw any thing improper in his Conduct.

John Powell, private Soldier in the 16th Regiment of Dragoons, being duly sworn, was examined.

Q. Did he belong to Cornet Evatt's Division on the 3rd of January 1777, when engaged with the rebels at Prince Town?

A. He did; he was the right hand man of the rear rank.

Q. Whilst they were engaged was it not Cornet Evatt's constant cry to the men to keep themselves cool & steady?

A. Cornet Evatt desired them to be steady, not to fire away their amunition without cause, and to mind the word of Command.

Q. Did not Cornet Staples come upon Cornet Evatt's right, during the action?

A. Yes, he did.

Q. Did not Cornet Staples tell Cornet Evatt, that the Artillery, and the 17th Regiment of Foot had retreated?

A. He did.

Q. Did he not perceive that the Enemy had considerably gained their right flank before Cornet Evatt retreated?

A. They had greatly.

Q. (by the Court)— How soon after Cornet Evatt retreated did the other Division retreat?

A. He did not see Cornet Evatt retreat before the rest; when they went to the right about they were alltogether, and rather in Confusion, and all retreated together, and when they got into the road Cornet Evatt desired them to Form.

Q. Did they retreat in Line or file off to the right?

A. They retreated alltogether in a Line.

Serjt. Charles Tudor of the 16th regiment of Dragoons, already sworn was again examined.

Q. Was the particular Orders he received from Lieutenant Wilmot to go round to the Officers and bid them not fire without his Orders?

A. Lieutenant Wilmot's Orders were to go along the Line and bid the men not fire, 'till they received his Orders.

Q. What position were the dismounted Dragoons in, when they made the first Attack?

A. He thinks that they were first in front of the Enemy, that they afterwards moved to right and then to left.

Q. Did the Enemy fire upon them first or they upon the Enemy?

A. He thinks that the Enemy fired first.

Q. Was it upon that attack that the Enemy retreated?

A. No, it was not.

Q. Was it at that time that Lieut. Wilmot gave Orders to Charge?

A. No it was not till the Enemy came nearer and fired upon them again and the Dragoons fired a Volley upon them and they retreated; then it was that Lieutenant Wilmot gave the Order to Charge.

Q. Were the dismounted Dragoons at that time in a Line with the 17th regiment of Foot, or in what position were they?

A. They were in a line with the 17th regiment of Foot, who were formed upon their left.

Q. Was it whilst they were in that position that he came along the Line and desired them to preserve their fire till they received Lieutenant Wilmot's Orders?

A. Yes.

Q. Did not they make another attack after the first?

A. Yes.

Cornet William Boyce of the 16th regiment of Dragoons, being duly sworn was examined.

Q. Was he ever with Cornet Evatt, when it was Supposed that they should be immediately engaged with the rebels?

A. Yes.

Q. What was Cornet Evatt's conduct on the 28th of June last?

A. Cornet Evatt shewed as much presence of mind as any person could have done, and behaved like an Officer.

Q. Was not his Situation rather Critical at the time?

A. The Enemy were pressing upon them very close and in great force; they had already opened their artillery and given them scattering shot from their musquetry.

Capt. George Munro, of the 71st regiment of Foot being duly sworn was examined.

Q. Did he see Cornet Evatt on the 3rd of Jany. 1777 whilst he was retreating, or at any other time that day?

A. He saw him in the morning before the Action began, and he again saw him whilst he was retreating and spoke to him.

Q. Did he not behave with the proper Conduct of an Officer, in bringing his men off under a heavy fire?

A. When he (the Witness) came up with the dismounted Dragoons, they were rather in a Straggling manner and Cornet Evatt was endeavouring to collect them, and behaved as he thought in a very Spirited manner.

Q. (by the Court)— At the time that he met Cornet Evatt, were the whole detachment of dismounted Dragoons together?

A. No, he had but a small body of them with him, perhaps about Twenty.

Q. Did he see any other Officer of Dragoons at that time?

A. No, he did not.

Lieut. David Howell, already sworn was again examined.

Q. Did he ever hear Captain Hatfield say that he had made Signals to the dismounted Dragoons to come off?

A. He has heard him repeatedly say, that after he had retreated a little way, he turned about and waved his hat to them, calling out, come off, or you will be all cut to pieces.

Q. Did he (the witness) see Captain Hatfield make this signal or hear him call?

A. He did not, there was a great noise besides the fire of the Enemy's Cannon.

The Court having considered the Evidence for and against the prisoner Cornet John Evatt, together with what he had to offer in his Defence, is of Opinion that there has not appeared any Evidence in the course of the trial that Lieut. Wilmots Orders were delivered to Cornet Evatt, or that Cornet Evatt heard Lieut. Wilmot call to him to halt, on which the Charge of Disobedience of Orders seems to have been founded, the Court doth therefore acquit Cornet Evatt of the said Charge of Disobedience of Orders.

The Court is further of Opinion that Cornet Evatt is Not Guilty of the second Charge exhibited against him vizt. that of misbehaviour before the Enemy and therefore doth Honorably Acquit him of the Charge.

Saml. Birch Lt. Col. President

Step. P. Adye

D: Judge Advocate

Confirmed

H. Clinton

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Hessian Jäger
Captain Johann Ewald

Johann Ewald, *Diary of the American War. A Hessian Journal* Joseph P. Tustin, ed., (New Haven, 1979), pp. 49-50.

We intended to renew the battle at daybreak, but Washington spared us the trouble. This clever man, who did not doubt that Lord Cornwallis would realize his mistake and would dispatch a corps to the left beyond Crosswick, whereby he would be forced by circumstances to surrender, had decamped at nightfall. Since he could not risk returning across the Delaware, he made such a forced march under cover of darkness that he arrived at daybreak at Princetown, where he overwhelmed the corps under General Leslie, took six 6-pounders and a part of the baggage, and withdrew past Rocky Hill into the mountains.

At daybreak on the morning of the 3rd, we suddenly learned that Washington had abandoned his position. At the same time we heard a heavy cannonade in our rear, which surprised everyone. Instantly we marched back at quick step to Princetown, where we found the entire field of action from Maidenhead on to Princeton and vicinity covered with corpses. Colonel Mawhood and the 17th Regiment had contributed much to saving the stores, the guns, and the baggage. With a part of the regiment he had thrown himself into the college building, which was situated advantageously, and since Washington dared not to delay for long, he was unable to force this post.

This brilliant coup which Washington performed against Lord Cornwallis, which raised so much hubbub and sensation in the world and gave Washington the reputation of an excellent general, derived simply and solely from Lord Cornwallis' mistake of not marching in two columns from Trenton. But the enemy was despised, and as usual we had to pay for it.

In the afternoon the entire army reached Princeton, marching in and around the town like an army that is thoroughly beaten. Everyone was so frightened that it was completely forgotten even to obtain information about where the Americans had gone. But the enemy now had wings, and it was believed that he had flown toward Brunswick to destroy the main depot, which was protected by only one English regiment.

Hurriedly, the army was issued three days' rations of biscuits and brandy, left behind the stores, all the sick, the wounded, and the greater part of the baggage, and moved with such haste toward Brunswick that, although it was only a five-hour march, over one thousand wagoners first reached Brunswick toward evening on the 4th. If the enemy had pursued them with only a hundred horsemen, one after another would have been captured.

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Several days later it was learned that after the coup at Princetown, General Washington and his army had camped in the woods at Rocky Hill, two hours from Princetown, until the morning of the 4th - completely exhausted, without ammunition and provisions - and only then had resumed the march past Bound Brook and Basking Ridge to the mountains of Morristown where the army had a main depot.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: First Regiment, British Foot Guards
Ensign Thomas Glyn

"Ensign Glyn's Journal on the American Service with the Detachment of 1,000 Men of the Guards commanded by Brigadier General Mathew in 1776." Varnum Lansing Collins, Revolutionary War Papers, 1913-1932, Manuscript Department, Princeton University Library, Princeton, NJ.

Glyn served as an ensign in the detachment of 1000 men commanded by Brig. Gen. Matthew in 1776/77.

Head Quarters Prince Town Janry. 2d

The Light Infantry, Col. Donops Corps, British Grenadiers, and the 1st Battalion of Guards to be ready to march at eight this morning, likewise the 2d Brigade of British under General Leslie & the Dragoons. The three Regiments under Lt. Col. Mawhood, the dismounted Light Dragoons & and Detachments which may join, to march from Prince Town to Morrow Morning, & follow the Army. We marched about noon through Maidenhead where the 2d Brigade halted, the rest of the Troops continued the road to Trenton till Lord Cornwallis established his Outposts at two Miles from the Town opposite the Enemies, intending the next morning by break of day to have began the Attack, some of the Chasseurs were wounded [?] on the March, the 2d Brigade had orders to join us the next Morning.

General Washington since Colonel Railles defeat had received Reinforcements from Virginia, Maryland, and the Militia of Pennsylvania, the People North of the Delawar had flocked to his Standard, and his formerly dispirited Army began now to feel they were equal to capture German Auxiliaries; he was determined not to recross the Delawar; he formed his Camp out of Trenton to the South side of Trenton Creek, stationed Guards during the Night of the 2d as a feint made fires so as to give every appearance of no alteration in his Posts, being perfectly aware the recovery of Trenton & driving his forces across the Delawar, was o have been Lord Cornwallis's object the next Morning; he therefore during the Night of the 2d marched his Army through Allens Towns taking the road to Prince Town, & fell in a little after day on the 3d with Lt. Colonel Mawhoods Corps who were on their March to join us, this Corps General Washington with 15,000 Men attacked, the very unexpected appearance of the Enemy caused much confusion amongst part of our Troops, the 40th & 55th Regts. retreated to Brunswick having very few killed, or wounded, but 155 Rank and file Missing; Lt. Col. Mawhood shewed great skill and bravoury & with the 17th Regt. dismounted Light Dragoons, & other Detachments opposed the Enemy, (whose force was so greatly superior) and retreated to Maidenhead; the 17th Regt had one Captain and 12 Men killed, 46 Wounded and 33 missing. the three Regiments were weak having left a strong Detachment with their Baggage at Hillsborough under Captain Scott

of the 17th Regt. General Washington proceeded to Princetown burnt our Magazines made several of our sick Officers Prisoners the took the Road to Kingston, & having passed the Bridge over the Millstone River destroyed it, halted for some hours to give his Troops some refreshments, and continued his March by Bound Brook and the Mountains to Morris Town on the 4th where he established his Head Quarters during the Winter. Had our Light Dragoons patrolled the Allens Town Road during the Night of the 2d the Enemys movement round the Left of Lord Cornwallis's Corps could not have taken place without our notice.

Janry 3d

The very heavy firing caused by the engagement near Prince Town this morning __d__ed [?] Brigadier Genl Leslie with the 2d Brigade then at Maidenhead to march to the assistance of our Troops. Lord Cornwallis's advanced Corps was immediately under Arms & the first Battalion of Guards leading, marched with all possible dispatch through Maidenhead forded the Rivulett, & came to the Ground where the action had commenced, none of the Enemy were to be found, Lord Cornwallis formed our Battalion and detached Lt. Col. Sr John Wrottesleys Company and Lt. Col. Coxe's then commanded by Captain Bayley into a wood where from our finding several wounded Men of the 17th a Battalion Gun and an Ammunition Waggon which we secured, the action had been warm, but we could not find any of the Enemys parties; Brigadier General Leslie was too late to render any assistance. The Magazines at Prince Town were burning. The Hessian Grenadiers from almost the Houses of Trenton & Lt. Col. Mawhood from Maidenhead joined us. Lord Cornwallis having left a Flag of Truce with the sick and wounded in Prince Town was determined to make a forced March to relieve Brunswick had Genl. Washington marched to possess it or to recover General Lee. We marched at five in the Evening a very hard frost and Snow on the ground

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 45th Grenadier Company, 2nd Battalion of Grenadiers
Lieutenant William Hale

Time	Location
07:30	
07:35	? About a mile and a half from that place we discovered the Rebel Army in two columns, entering a wood on the other side of a Rivulet we had just passed [no time is given by Lt. Hale]
07:40	? We drew up on a woody eminence and looked at them for a considerable time
07:45	
07:50	? we suffered them however to extend their right between us and Princetown, we sent off the 55 th to alarm the 40 th , and then marched down with 330 to attack 8000 drawn up in regular order, and strongly posted in an orchard covered with some Barns.
07:55	The advanced guard of 800 reserved their fire till we advanced within 40 yards, and then gave us a very heavy discharge, which brought down 7 of my platoon at once, the rest, being recruits, gave way. I rallied these with some difficulty, and brought them on with bayonets, the Rebels poured in a second fire, and killed Capt. Williams[on] of the 52 nd Grenadiers and Leslie of the 17 th ... we drove them through the railings, barns and orchards, back on their main body
08:00	We kept possession of the orchard for 20 minutes,
08:05	We kept possession of the orchard for 20 minutes,
08:10	We kept possession of the orchard for 20 minutes,
08:15	We kept possession of the orchard for 20 minutes,
08:20	they ... brought three pieces of Cannon in play on our right with grape and case, but our nearness, 100 yards, saved us greatly.
08:25	a resolution was taken to retreat i.e. run away as fast as we could
08:30	
08:35	
08:40	

Sources:

“Letters written during the American War of Independence. By the late Capt. W. Hale, 45th Regt.” In: *1913 Regimental Annual. The Sherwood Foresters. Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment.* Col. H. C. Wylly, ed., (London, 1913), pp. 9-59.

Also published in an edited version by W. H. Wilkin, *Some British Soldiers in America* (London, 1914), Chapter 9: “Hale”.

This letter describing the Battle of Princeton is on pp. 16-19:

Brunswick, 15th Jan. 1777

... the next morning we left Princeton with the 17th, and 55th, a troop of mounted and other dismounted Dragoons, the 40th remaining in the College at Princeton. About a mile and a half from that place we discovered the Rebel Army in two columns, entering a wood on the other side of a Rivulet we had just passed. They had been driven out of part of Trenton the preceeding day, but having broken down the Bridge over a Creek of the Delawar, which runs through the Town, our Troops could not pursue them that night, of which they took the advantage and filed off to attack Brunswick and Princetown imagined defenseless. We drew up on a woody eminence and looked at them for a considerable time, during which Colo. Mawhood had two choices, either to retire back to Princetown, where with the other Brigade [sic., i.e., regiments] we might have defended the works about it, or push on to Maidenhead where the 2nd Brigade lay; we suffered them however to extend their right between us and Princetown, we sent off the 55th to alarm the 40th, and then marched down with 330 to attack 8000 drawn up in regular order, and strongly posted in an orchard covered with some Barns.

The advanced guard of 800 reserved their fire till we advanced within 40 yards, and then gave us a very heavy discharge, which brought down 7 of my platoon at once, the rest, being recruits, gave way. I rallied these with some difficulty, and brought them on with bayonets, the Rebels poured in a second fire, and killed Capt. [Thomas] Williams[on] of the 52nd Grenadiers and Leslie of the 17th which Regiment advanced in a most excellent order, and at length we drove them through the railings, barns and orchards, back on their main body which also fell into confusion and I am convinced that had the other Brigade been with us, we might have defeated the whole army. We kept possession of the orchard for 20 minutes, turning one of their own guns upon them; during this time they discovered our weakness, and brought three pieces of Cannon in play on our right with grape and case, but our nearness, 100 yards, saved us greatly. I now expected their flanks would wheel in and attack our rear, which had they done every man must have been cut to pieces. Our whole force was reduced to 240 when a resolution was taken to retreat i.e. run away as fast as we

could; our loss is about 100, 15 out of 30 Grenadiers and a Captain, I was shot through my coat, and received a Contusion on the leg, but am now very well and able to walk. We went 20 miles round that day to join our troops and marched all the following night to Brunswick, in all upwards of 40 miles without halting two hours; our quarters are now contracted and bad enough in reason, but we may live in them; [Capt. Edward] Drew takes the 35th Grenadiers in the room of Phillips, he is quite well [he had been seriously wounded with the 35th Light Infantry at Bunker Hill] as are Simon Buxton and Kelvin Anderson, who is at New York. I am now preparing to pay my debt. God bless you,

Believe me your ever Affct.

W. Hale

In an e-mail of 3 February 2000, in which he sent a transcript of Hale's letter to John Mills of Princeton Battlefield State Park, Stephen Gilbert wrote:

Hale had a platoon of 15 men, Williamson probably had the same for a total of 30 men. It seems probable there were also two light infantry officers and a similar number of men in that company. Lieutenant Martin Hunter of the 52nd Light Infantry suggests that there were 200 Grenadiers and Light Infantry with Mawhood that day. Hunter, however writes his journal 20 years after the fact and is often unfortunately in error in points of time and location. ...

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Head-Quarters
General Sir William Howe

William S. Stryker, *Documents relating to the Revolutionary history of the State of New Jersey* (Trenton, 1931), vol. 1: 1776-1777, pp. 369-371.

LETTER FROM GEN. SIR WILLIAM HOWE TO LORD GEORGE GERMAIN, DATED NEW YORK, JANUARY, 5th, 1777.

In consequence of the advantage gained by the enemy at Trenton on the 26th of last month and the necessity of an alteration in the cantonment, Lord Cornwallis deferring his going to England by this opportunity, went from thence to New Jersey on the 1st instand reached Princeton that night, to which place General Grant had advanced with a body of troops from Brunswick and Hillsborough. Upon gaining intelligence that the enemy on receiving reinforcements from Virginia and Maryland and from the militia of Pennsylvania, had repast into Jersey. On the 2d Lord Cornwallis having received accounts of the rebel army being posted at Trenton advanced thither, leaving the 4th brigade under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Mawhood at Princeton, and the 2d brigade with Brigadier-General Leslie at Maidenhead. On the approach of the British troops the enemy's forward post was drawn back upon their, army which was formed in a strong position behind a creek running through Trenton. During the night of the 2d the enemy quitted its situation and marching by Allentown and from thence to Princeton, fell in on the, morning of the 3d with the 17th and 55th Regiments on their march to join Brigadier-General Leslie at Maidenhead. Lieutenant-Colonel Mawhood, not being apprehensive of the enemy's strength, attacked and beat back the troops that first presented themselves to him, But finding them at length very superior to him in numbers, he pushed forward with the 17th regiment, and joined Brigadier-General Leslie. The 55th regiment retired by the way of Hillsborough to Brunswick, and the enemy proceeding immediately to Princeton, the 40th Regulars retired to Brunswick. The loss on this occasion to his Majesty's troops is seventeen killed and nearly two hundred wounded and missing. Captain Leslie of the 17th was among the few killed. For further particulars I beg leave to refer your Lordship to the enclosed return. Captain Phillips of the 35th Grenadiers, returning from here to join his Company was on this day beset, between Brunswick and Princeton, by some lurking villains, who murdered him in a most barbarous manner, which is a mode of war the enemy seem, from several late instances to have adopted with a degree of barbarity that savages could not exceed.

It has not yet come to my knowledge how much the enemy has suffered, but it is certain there were many killed and wounded, and among the former a General Mercer from Virginia. The bravery and conduct of Lieutenant-Colonel Mawhood and the behavior of the regiments under his command, particularly the 17th, are highly commended by Lord Cornwallis. His Lordship finding the enemy had made this movement, and having heard the fire made by Colonel Mawhood's attack, returned immediately from Trenton; but the enemy being some hours march in front, and keeping

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the advantage by an immediate departure from Princeton, retreated by Kingston, breaking down the bridge behind them, and crossed the Millstone river at a bridge under Rocky Hill, to throw themselves into a strong country. Lord Cornwallis seeing it would not answer any purpose to continue his pursuit, returned with his whole force to Brunswick, and the troops on his right being assembled at Elizabethtown, Major-General Vaughn held that command. It appears by the Muster-Master-General, Sir George Osborn's return of the Hessian troops at the affair of the 26th December at Trenton, that the prisoners and misseing amounted to about seven hundred.

Return of the Killed, wounded, and missing, of the following corps of his Majesty's forces, in the Jerseys, Friday January 3, 1777.

17th Regiment.—1 captain, 12 rank and file, Killed ; 1 captain, 1 lieutenant, 1 ensign, 4 serjean's, 46 rank and file, wounded; 1 serjeant, 1 drummer, 33 rank and file, missing.

40th Regiment—1 lieutenant wounded; 1 ensign, 3 Serjeants, 1 drummer, 88 rank and file missing.

55th Regiment—1 serjeant, 4 rank and file, killed ; 1 ensign, 1 serjeant, 2 rank and file, wounded ; 1 captain, 1 lieutenant, 1 ensign, 1 serjeant, 2 drummers, 66 rank and file, missing.

Total—1 captain, 1 serjeant, 16 rank and file, killed ; 1 captain, 2 lieutenants, 2 ensigns, 5 serjeants, 48 rank and file, wounded; 1 captain, 1 lieutenant, 2 ensigns, 5 Serjeants, 4 drummers, 187 rank and file, missing.

W. Howe.

Hon. captain Leslie, of the 17th regiment of foot, killed.

Captain Philips, of the 35th grenadiers, killed on his way to join the battalion.

N. B. Since the above return many of the men missing have joined their corps.

James Grant Papers of Ballindalloch Castle, Scotland; Library of Congress Microcopy, Reel 37, Army Career Series, Correspondence, January, 1777.

N. York Jan: 9th [1777]
11 o'clock A.M.

Dear Sir

This morning I got yr. letter of yesterday. It was much against ye grain yr. quitting Elizabethtown; But as ye 42nd did not go with Stirling as I took into my head they had, & as Washington was so superior in Cannon, none having been sent from Brunswick to that post as I supposed they had with ye 42nd, no time was to be lost in sending Vaughan to Amboy.

By ye best information I can get, I do not find Washington had more than 5000 men at Princetown & do not think with that number he could have forced Vaughan at Elizabethtown with 2500 men including ye 42nd & 10 Pieces of Cannon, when I am told Maud [Mawhood] would have beat him off had ye whole of his brigade behaved like ye 17th. If your Capt. Lt. Lucas would have a vacant Compy. witht. waiting for one in ye 55th he shall be appointed; be so good therefore to let me know.

You say Washingtons army is trifling to yrs. when collected, but formidable when you are divided in Cantonments – No doubt – But Cantonments are only occupied when ye Enemys army is not collected, when it is, the Cantonned army must also collect.

But surely ye force you have now at Brunswic is full sufficient to drive Washington to ye D—I if you could get at him. An army you well know does not go into Cantonments to fight, but with intentions to be left quiet, & being no fortified Places here, we have no other resource untill we can get to Philadelphia. At ye same time I think ye Enemy will be as much tired of a winter Campaign as we can possibly be. I heartily agree with you in Washington's wretch'd behavior in not either following up his advantage over ye 4th Brigade or waiting to receive you at Princetown. It plainly indicates ye inability of his ever standing against us when we are in force & what kind of figure would he make in ye attack of a fort possibly occupied?

We have a report here this morning that Capt. Luke is dead of his wounds.

With my best Compts. to ye amicable Earl & to Sr. Willm. I am my Dr. Sir

Ever Yrs.

W Howe

What is yr. opinion of Donop's
report which I sent to Ld. Cornwallis
yesterday? He does us much credit
and does not seem to have been alarmed himself.

M.G. Grant

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 52nd Regiment of Foot Ensign Martin Hunter

Lawrence H. Curry, ed., "Martin Hunter's Journal: America 1774-1778." *The Valley Forge Journal* 4 no. 1 (June 1988), pp. 1-34, p. 20.

The original journals of Sir Martin Hunter (1757-1846) which cover the years in America, 1774-1778; England, 1778-1783, India, 1783-1793, Gibraltar, 1798-1799, Malta, 1800, and his journey back to England, are held by the New Brunswick Museum Archives, Saint John.

General Washington had marched out of Trent Town a few hours before we arrived, it was supposed to recross the river into Pennsylvania. We remained all night lying upon our arms, in expectation that he would attack us if he had not recrossed the Delaware, but he certainly made a much better manoeuvre than either, by marching during the night to Princetown, and at daybreak attacked the 17th and 40th Regiments. In the morning we were astonished to hear heavy fire of cannon and musketry, we supposed at Princetown, on our rear, and immediately marched back there; but before we could arrive, General Washington had completely defeated these two regiments, and two hundred Grenadiers and Light Infantry that were on the march to join their battalions. Nearly the whole were killed, wounded, or taken prisoners. I was quite shocked to find poor Captain Williamson was among the killed. He had received orders the day I left New York to march the recovered men that were in Hospital to join their regiments, and arrived at Princetown just as the action began. Poor Williamson was a most accomplished young man, and was the third captain that the 52nd Grenadiers had killed since the commencement of the war. We only halted two hours at Princetown, and continued our march all night in hopes of coming up with Washington, but he was too far before us, and got into the Blue Mountains. I never experienced such a disagreeable night's march in my life. It was as dark as possible, and a very cold hard frost, and the horses being tired, the guns got on so slowly that we did not arrive at Brunswick before ten the next morning. We had been eighteen hours in marching sixteen miles.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 17th Regiment
George Inman

George Inman's "Narrative of the American Revolution." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 7 no. 3 (1883), pp. 237-248; his account of the battle of Princeton is on p. 240.

The advance of the Army having proceeded to Trenton we were ordered on the 3d January 1777 from Prince Town as an Escort to Stores and at sunrise a large Body of the Enemy were discovered on our left wch Col. Mawhood immediately determined to attack, we having the 55th and a party of convalescents with a few of the 17th Dragoons, the enemy proved too powerful for us, the 55th giving way and retired to Prince Town, where the 40th Reg't were posted and both Reg'ts quitted that Town, retiring before the Enemy to Brunswick; we attacked their Centre Column and drove them to their main body, but, they rallying we were obliged to retire, after making such an exertion as we were able to proceed to our Army then lying at Maidenhead. We suffered much, out of 224 Rank and file that marked off the Parade at 5 o'Clock that Morning we sustained a Loss of 101 Rank and file, Killed and wounded and *much* the greater part by the first fire received, I being the only Officer in the Right wing of the Battalion that was not very much injured receiving only a Buck shot through my Cross Belt wch just entered the pit of my Stomach and made me sick for the moment. We had a very severe march that day and all following night, passing over the field of Action abt 4 o'Clock that afternoon through Prince Town and with the whole Army to Brunswick ...

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Head-Quarters
Lieut.-Col. Stephen Kemble

"Journals of Lieutenant-Colonel Stephen Kemble." *Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1883* 16 (New York, 1884), pp. 105-247, p. 106.

Wednesday, Jan. 1st. & 2d. Our Troops in motion at and near Prince Town.

Friday, Jan. 3d. Our Troops advanced beyond Prince Town; the 17th. 40th. and 55th. Regiments, having arrived at Prince Town the Evening before, were attacked this morning by a very superior body of the Rebels, but defended themselves bravely, tho' with the loss of about two hundred Men Killed, Wounded, and Missing, and several Officers, Capt. Leslie of 17th. Regiment of the Number. Several Officers within these few days Killed or taken Prisoners by the Rebels, Capt. Williamson, 52d. and Philips, 35th. both Grenadiers, among the number.

Saturday, Jan. 4th, to Tuesday, 7th. Nothing Extraordinary; our Troops in advance of Brunswick assembled at that place,

"Order Books of Lieut.-Col. Stephen Kemble, Adjutant General and Deputy Adjutant General to the British forces in America, 1775-1778."
Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1883 vol. 16 (New York, 1884), pp. 248- 603, p. 431 and pp. 434-435.

Head Quarters, New York, Dec. 27th., 1776.
Parole, Durham; Countersign, Newcastle.

The Recovered and Convalescent Men belonging to the Troops in Jersey are to be immediately sent over to their respective Regiments.

Head Quarters, New York, Jan. 8th., 1777.

General Howe desires Lieut.-Col. Mawhood will accept his thanks for his Gallantry and good Conduct in the Attack made upon the Enemy on the 3d. Instant. He desires his thanks may also be given to the Officers and Soldiers of the 17th. Foot, to part of the 55th. Regiment, and other Detachments on their march, who on that occasion supported the 17th. Regiment and Charged the Enemy with Bayonets in the most Spirited manner.

The General desires his public Approbation may be signified to Capt. Scott, of the 17th. Foot, for his remarkable good conduct in protecting and securing the Baggage of the 4th. Brigade on the above Occasion.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Civilian living in Scotland
John Belsches

"Captain Hon. William Leslie (1751-77). His Life, Letters and Commemoration." Marianne M. Gilchrist, ed. *Military Miscellany II; Manuscripts from Marlborough's wars, the American War of Independence and the Boer War*. David G. Chandler, ed., Army Records Society 23 (Stroud, 2005), pp. 133-196, pp. 171-172.

See also Marianne McLeod Gilchrist, "'Here Leslie fell, the gentle & the brave; And Rush, the generous Foe, wept o'er his grave': The Tragedy of Captain William Leslie & Dr. Benjamin Rush." *The Griffin (Clan Leslie Magazine)* 17 (1997-98), pp. 10-19.

In an e-mail of 10 February 2010, Stephen Gilbert wrote:

"Captain William Leslie does not appear on the muster rolls as a grenadier with the 17th regiment, which [i.e., the Grenadier Company] belonged to [Captain] William Brereton. [At Princeton Leslie, who held a regular commission in the 17th Foot, may have acted as a substitute for Brereton, the captain of the Grenadier Company] Leslie may have been positioned adjacent to Lt [William] Hale's grenadier platoon [45th Grenadier Coy, 2nd Batt. of Grenadiers]. There is only the vaguest clue for the Light Infantry - [Lt. Martin] Hunter [52nd Regt] makes a comment of his fellow 52nd Lieutenant, Richard St. George being wounded at Princeton. It was at Germantown that in fact he was hurt, but I wonder if it was not a Freudian slip of the pen by Hunter? Perhaps St George was present?

Captain Erasmus John Phillips of the 35th Grenadiers was with the travelling party, but he rode on ahead and was murdered and his body mutilated, so perhaps he was not specifically ordered to command the group. I suspect it was [Captain Thomas] Williamson [of the 52nd] who had charge of the entire group. [Williamson was killed at Princeton]

It's not clear who were the officers guiding the convalescents and recruits for the flank companies. This was a pick-up group with no cohesion; perhaps four day's duty together on a march. They didn't even submit a casualty return to Headquarters. Captain Thomas Williamson of the 52nd, Lt William John Hale of the 45th, ... "

Among the flank officers who testified at the court-martial of Cornett Henry Evatt were Captain Hatfield of the 43rd Grenadier Coy, Captain Munro of the 71st Foot (possibly serving in the Light Infantry Coy), and Lt Campbell of the 44th Regt, Light Infantry Coy.

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John Belsches¹²⁹ to his father-in-law, Lord Leven
 To The Earl of Leven
 Melvill
 Cupar Fife¹³⁰

Edinburgh 21 May 1777

I have been made happy by being informed by Several letters to Lady Jane, that your Lor^h. and all the family got safe home, & continued in good health. The enclosed, for Lady Leven, came today, I suppose it will inform that Lord B.¹³¹ is in good health as his letter to me mentions nothing to the contrary she proposes making a trip to Portsmouth about this time: This good Town affords no news – Mr. Wardrobe¹³² who was surgeon to the 17th is come here, tho' I have not conversed with himself yet I have had every information that he can give relative to the fall of our lamented dear freind his account exactly corresponds with what we have heard before, Wardrobe was not with him but at about a hundred yards distance in the rear & could be of no service, as he no sooner received the shot than he instantly expired without a

groan, the only motion he made was to give his watch to his servant, who put the body on a baggage cart & conducted it for a considerable time in spite of a very heavy fire from the Enemy but at last he was obliged to abandon it & follow the regt. or must have given himself up as prisoner to the provincials which wd. have served no good purpose – Wardrobe's account of the affair is that the 17 & 56 [*sic* 55]¹³³ were on their march from Princetown to join a detachment of the army at Trentown when they were about a mile and a half from the former the advanced guard discovered a body of Americans which tho' superior in number Coll. Mawhood had no doubt of defeating, however he went himself to reconoitre them & discovered their vast superiority in numbers w^h. made him wish to retreat to the Town from whence he had come but this he found impossible as the Enemy were so near, Their was a rising ground which commanded the country about half a mile back & about a quarter of a mile off the road this he wished to gain & drew up the two regts with 50 light horse on one flank & (50, who were dismounted), on the other; The Americans endeavoured also

to gain this rising ground & their first Column reached the one side of it rather before the two regts. got to the other, so that first when the 17th reached the top they received the fire of this column composed of about 2000 men by which all the mischief was done. The 56 (who w^d not advance in a line with the 17th in spite of Coll. Mawhood frequently calling out to Capt. ¹³⁴ who commanded them to mind his orders & come up) as soon as they saw such a slaughter among the first rank of the 17th, immediately run off, on their commanding officer saying it was all over with the others; The 17th returned a very well levelled fire ag^t. the provincial col.^m & instantly leaped over some rails which were bet[wixt] them & charged them w^t. their bayonets upo[n them] tho' ten times their number almost, they ru[n] off & retreated to the other col.^{ms} of the rebels four in number, & consisting of 2000 men each when the provincials first fired they were about 25 paces he thinks from the 17th & is certain they were not above 30. Upon the whole rebel army advancing, the 17th Regt. & the 50 light horse who were mounted, (& who behaved very well) retreated as fast as possible leaving their killed & wounded, when Washington came up he assured Capt. McPherson & the other wounded that their was not a private man in that regt. but should be used like an officer on account of their gallant behaviour – The 56th run off in the greatest confusion to Princetown – the 40th who were left to guard Pr.^m never came up with the 17, Altho' Col. Mawhood sent for them as soon as he suspected the strength of the enemy. So far as to what relates to the 17 my paper will admit of no more.

All here are in good health & desire to be kindly remembered to all at Melvill.

I Ever am Yours most sincerely, Belsches

NAS, GD 26/9/513/8

¹³¹ Lord Balgonie, lately returned from his Grand Tour.

¹³² Andrew Wardrop served as surgeon to the 17th Regiment from 15 July 1772. On his return to his native Edinburgh in 1777, he was made a burghess of the city. John Horne replaced him as regimental surgeon.

¹³³ Belsches mistakenly writes '56' throughout the letter, instead of 55th Foot.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Civilian

Report in *New York Gazette and Weekly Mercury*, January 18, 1777. *London Morning Chronicle*

New York Gazette and Weekly Mercury, 18 January 1777; repr. in *London Morning Chronicle*, 4 March 1777.

New York, January 13, 1777.

Several skirmishes between the King's troops and the Rebels have lately happened in the Jerseys. But the most distinguished rencounter occurred on the 3d instant, near Princeton.

The 17th regiment, consisting of less than three hundred men, full in with the rebel army, of very superior force, whom they attacked with all the ardor and intrepidity of Britons. They received a fire from behind a fence, over which they immediately leaped upon their enemies, who presently turned to the right-about with such precipitation as to leave their very cannon behind them. The soldiers immediately turned their cannon and fired at least twenty rounds upon their rear; and had they been assisted with another regiment or two the rebels would have found it rather difficult to make good their retreat.

This has been one of the most splendid actions in the whole campaign, and has given a convincing proof that British valor has not declined from its ancient glory. Of Col. Mawhood, their gallant commander, and of his conduct in the affair, too many encomiums cannot be said. The loss was about twenty killed and eighty wounded of the troops. Of the rebels above four hundred were killed and wounded. Among the slain were eleven officers.

Mr Mercer, (one of the wounded rebel officers, since dead.) when he was taken up by our people, asked how many the numbers were who had thus attacked him, and, upon being told, he cried out with astonishment, " My God, is it possible? I have often heard of British courage, but never could have imagined to find such an instance as this."

Another account says that the 17th regiment, just before they charged the rebels, deliberately pulled off their knapsacks and gave three cheers, then broke through the rebels, faced about, attacked and broke through them a second time. Col. Mawhood then said it would be prudent, as they wore so few, to retire, upon winch the men, one and all, cried out, "No, no; let us attack them again." And it was with great difficulty their Colonel could induce them to retreat, which at length they performed in the utmost order.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Royal Engineers
Lieutenant-General Archibald Robertson Officer

Harry Miller Lydenberg, ed., *Archibald Robertson, Lieutenant-General Royal Engineers, his diaries and sketches in America, 1762-1780* (New York, 1930), p. 120.

3d. At Day Break reported that the Rebels were all gone which it was greatly thought was towards Borden's Town. Untill about 8 o'clock a very Brisk fire of Small Arms and Smart Cannonading was heard in our Rear towards Prince Town, upon which the Guards and the Grenadiers British had Orders to go back as quick as possible and the Light Infantry and Hessian Grenadiers to follow. Also orders sent to General Leslie to march when we were Certain where the Attack was, but before we got there the Affair was over. The Rebels were in Possession of Prince Town. Our loss in killed and Wounded was not very considerable, only in some Good Officers. The 17th behav'd very well, the 55th lost few, the 40th but one man. On our approach and firing a few Cannon on the Stragglers the Rebels retired precipitately, towards Kingston with the greatest Body and some to the Right and left to the woods. As our Rear did not come up untill near 4 in the Evening we could not pursue them as quickly as it was said they intended the same Coup upon Brunswick. They had not time to destroy either our Ammunition or Stores. About 1/2 after 4 we again began our march towards Brunswick and after a most fatiguing forced march all night long in frost and ice we reach'd Brunswick about 6 in the morning the 4th. ... [I] hope it will serve us as a lesson in future never to despise any Enemy too much.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 46th Regiment of Foot, Light Company
Samuel Russell

Great Britain, Public Record Office, War Office, Class 71, Volume 86, Pages 311-312.

Extract of the General Court Martial of which Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Musgrave of the 40th Regiment of Foot was President, held at Philadelphia between 28 May — 2 June 1778.

William King, Follower of the Army, was brought before the Court accused of advising Samuel Russell private Soldier in the light Company of the 46th Regiment of Foot, to desert from the said Company, and the following Witnesses were examin'd in Support of the accusation Vizt.

Samuel Russell being duly Sworn deposed, that accidently meeting the Prisoner in the Street on Wednesday last, he (the Prisoner) ask'd him to go and drink with him, which he did, and after they came out of the House they had been drinking in the Prisoner told him that if he would go with him and stay behind the Rear of the Army, he would be done for; that he did not make him any answer or take any notice of what he said at that time, but walk'd on with him till he met his Brother to whom he related the Circumstance, and desir'd him to assist in securing him, that they then took him prisoner and Carried him to Major Maitland's Quarters, but in his way he attempted to make his escape from them.

Q. Did any other Conversation pass between them?

A. No.

Robert Russell, private Soldier of the Light Company of the 46th Regiment of Foot, being duly Sworn, deposed that about five or Six oClock on Wednesday Evening as he was walking along Front Street, his Brother (Samuel Russell), call'd to him and told him that he had got a prisoner, and upon asking him who he was, he said that he was a man who had been advising him to Stay behind the Army, and added that it was one whom he had never to his knowledge seen before, and on coming up

he found the prisoner to be the man; that he assisted in bringing him along, and when they had got near Major Maitland's Quarters, the prisoner attempted to get away from them.

The Prisoner being put upon his Defence said that he did drink with Russell, but never mention'd any thing to him tending to advise him to stay behind the army, nor does it seem probable that he Should, as he has been employ'd for sometime past in Inlisting men for the King's Service and has been on board a Privateer, sent down the River, and has been the means of distressing the Rebels, and bringing off Stock; and intended to have gone with the army in case of their going away; that he was a guide to the British Troops at Prince Town, and that he was Confin'd in Carlile Goal, and made his escape and got on board one of the English Ships at the Capes of the Delaware; that both the Russells were very drunk and used him ill, and he ran over to the Guard room to desire the Officer to prevent it, which is what they call attempting to make his escape.

Isaac Egleton, Serjeant in the Light Company of the 40th Regiment of Foot being duly Sworn, deposed that he knew the prisoner to have marched with the British Troops, and particularly with the Battalion of Light Infantry to which he (the Witness) belong'd, at the time Trentown was retaken; that he was also at Princetown whilst the King's Troops lay there, and he has often heard him say that he was a friend to Government, and that he would do every thing to oppose and distress the Rebels.

The Court, having consider'd the Evidence for and against the Prisoner William King; together with what he had to offer in his Defence, is of Opinion that he is Not Guilty of the Crime laid to his Charge and doth therefore Acquit him.

Thos. Musgrave
President

Step: P. Adye
D. Judge Advocate

Confirmed
H. Clinton

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: Light Infantry
Lieutenant Henry Stirke

S. Sydney Bradford, ed., "A British Officer's Revolutionary War Journal, 1776-1778." *Maryland Historical Magazine* 56 No. 2 (June 1961), pp. 150-175, pp. 166-167.

15th [December 1776] The 1st and 2^d Battalions of Light Infantry, arriv'd at Prince Town; appointed for their Winter Quarters. That unlucky affair of Colonel Rall's, at Trent-Town, happening soon after; caus'd a Gen^l change of Quarters in the Jerseys, to the Whole army. The Light Infantry took post at the Bridge of Brunswick,¹⁰¹ about a mile above the Town; where we spent a very Disagreeable Winter, continually harrass'd in Observing the motions of the Enemy, collecting forage &c. On an expedition of the latter * [* on Feb^y 1st] L^t Cuningham¹⁰² of the 22^d Light Comp^y was kill'd.¹⁰³

1777
July

2d The Army abandon'd the Jerseys and Landed on Statten Island.

¹⁰¹ New Brunswick

¹⁰² Probably Lt. George Augustus Cunningham, 22nd Regiment.

¹⁰³ This foraging party of about a thousand British had marched towards Metuchen and suffered an American attack just after its wagons had been loaded, losing thirty killed and wounded. Robertson, 123-24.

NOTE: Lieutenant Henry Stirke of the 10th Regt served in the Light Infantry.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 49th Regiment of Foot
Sergeant Thomas Sullivan

"The Battle of Princeton." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 32 no. 1 (January 1908), pp. 54-57.

Princetown is a compact tho' small town, in which is a good College, built of stone, sufficient to hold four hundred students; but our army when we lay there spoiled and plundered a good Library that was in it. There was an organ, and a nice Chapel in the College. It is built in a plentiful but woody country, and seen at a great distance.

Kingstown, which is a small village, lies within two miles of Princetown, in which latter the Light Infantry were stationed.

1777. January 1st.—A Batallion of Grenadiers, a Battalion of Guards, the Hessian Grenadiers, and a company of Chasseurs, with the 42d. Regiment, which last were obliged to quit their station and retreat from Burlington, came to Princetown, where the main body of the Army lay. Colonel Donop, who commanded the Hessians there, was so exasperated against the enemy, especially for the aforesaid Corps, being taken prisoners by them, that he resolved to be revenged; he therefore went thro' the ranks and declared openly to his men, that any of them who would take a Rebel prisoner would receive 50 stripes; signifying to them they were to kill all the Rebels they could without mercy.

In consequence of the advantage gained by the enemy at Trenton, and the necessity of an alteration in the cantonments, Lord Cornwallis deferring his going to England, went to the Jerseys, and reached, Princetown this night; the troops being ordered there by Major General Grant, upon gaining intelligence that the enemy, on receeving reinforcements from Virginia, Maryland, and ye Militia of Pennsylvania had repassed the Delaware into Jersey.

January 2d.—Lord Cornwallis, with the 1st. and 2d. Batallions of Light Infantry; 42d. Regiment; and Colonel Donop's Hessian Grenadiers, having received accounts of the Rebel army, being posted at Trenton, advanced thither early in the morning, leaving the 4th. Brigade British under command of Lieut. Colonel Mawhood, in Princetown, and the 2d. Brigade with Brigadier General Leslie remained at Maidenhead, from which place the First party drove the enemy that same day. On the approach of the British troops, the enemy's forward posts were attacked by the Royal Highlanders in front, and the Hessian Grenadiers on their flanks, supported by the Light Infantry, and after some minutes engagement, drove them back upon their army with loss. They were formed in a strong position, behind a creek runing through Trenton.

During the night of this day, the enemy quitted this position, and marched by Allenstown, and from thence to Princetown.

January 3d.—They fell in on this morning with the 17th. and 55th. Batallions, on their march to join Brigadier General Leslie and our Brigade, at Maidenhead.

Lieut. Colonel Mawhood, not being apprehensive of the enemy's strength, attacked and beat back the troops that first presented themselves to him, which was their advance guard, from whom he took a 6 pounder, which was played upon their main body; but finding them at length very superior to him in numbers, he was obliged to leave this piece of cannon and their own also; and after a sharp and obstinate contest, pushed forward with the 17th., and part of the 55th. Batallion, forcing through the enemy's ranks, and marched towards Maidenhead. The main part of the 55th. regiment retired by the way of Hillsborough to Brunswick, and the enemy entered the Town immediately.

The 40th. Regiment formed in the College Yard, and upon their seeing the Rebels advancing on every side, they made the best of their way back to Brunswick, without making much resistance. The bravery and conduct of Lieutent Colonel Mawhood, and the behaviour of the regiments under his command, particularly the 17th., was highly commendable and meritorious.

Upon our hearing the firing from Princetown at Maidenhead, Brigadier General Leslie sent an immediate express to Lord Cornwallis, who was with the advance troops; and our Brigade and the Guards got on our march, being followed by the rest of the army under his Lordship's command.

Lord Cornwallis finding the enemy had made this movement, and having also heard the reports of the enemy's cannon, and the firing occasioned by Colonel Mawhood's attacks, returned immediately from before Trenton. When we came to the river that is near Princetown, a party of the Rebels were formed on one side of the bridge, and another party cutting it down. The 5th. Batallion, which marched in front of the Brigade with two 6 pounders, engaged them from the opposite side; and in a few minutes drove them from the bridge, which they had cut down, and retreated into the woods. We crossed the river, wading it up to our waists, and formed upon the hill near Princetown. But the enemy's body being some hours march in front, and keeping this advantage by an immediate departure from the town, retreated by Kingstown, breaking down the bridge at that place behind them, and crossed the Millstone River at a bridge under Rocky Hill, to throw themselves into a strong country. Lieut. Colonel Mawhood taking a lower road to Maidenhead, missed our Brigade and passed by us unobserved in the morning, joined us in the afternoon, after we crossed the river near Princetown.

The loss upon this to His Majesty's Forces was 17 killed and near 200 wounded and missing. It is certain that the enemy had many killed and wounded; among the former General Mercer from Virginia.

Lord Cornwallis seeing it could not answer any purpose to continue his pursuit, returned with his whole force to Brunswick.

Our Regiment had the army's Baggage guard from Princetown, and marched all night without any molestation from the enemy.

Return of the killed, wounded, and missing, of the following Corps of his Majesty's Forces in the Jersey's January 3d. 1777.

17th. Regiment. 1 Captain, 12 rank and file, killed; 1 Captain, 1 Lieutenant, 1 Ensign, 4 Sergeants, 45 rank and file wounded; 1 Sergeant, 1 Drummer, 33 rank and file missing.

40th Regiment. 1 Lieutenant wounded; 1 Ensign, 3 Sergeants, 1 Drummer, 88 rank and file missing.

55th Regiment. 1 Sergeant, 4 rank and file, killed; 1 Ensign, 1 Sergeant, 2 rank and file wounded; 1 Captain, 1 Lieutenant, 1 Ensign, 1 Sergeant, 2 Drummers, 66 rank and file missing.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 17th Regiment, Light Company
Lieutenant Frederick Augustus Wetherall

"Operations of the Army under Lt. G. Clinton (beginning on 12 February 1776)." David Library of the American Revolution, Sol Feinstein Collection No. 132 (Card No. 409).

Jany 1st Lt Gen^l Grant Lord Cornwallis arrived at Princetown - reinforced with 2 Batt^{ns} of British Grenadiers one Battlion of Guards, Battⁿ of Koelher 17th 40th & 55th Reg^{ts}

2nd Army mov'd forward to Trenton & drove the Rebels on the other side of the Mill Creek.

Co^l Mawhood with 3rd/B^d dismount^d Dragoons, Squadron of Dragoon, 4 Six Pounders & Convalescent & Recruit for the Flank Corps was left at Prince Town. Gen^l Leslie remained at Maidenhead with his Brigade.

Jany 3rd Col Mawhood being order'd to March to join the Army left the 40th Reg at Prince Town fell in with the Rebel Army near Prince Town & attack'd them but from Superiority of Force was obliged to Retreat.

4th The Army before Day returned To the Heights at Brunswicke.

Note: The identification of Lt. Frederick Augustus Wetherall of the 17th Regiment Light Company ("Officer 409" or "Officer B") as author of this account is based on Thomas J. McGuire, *The Philadelphia Campaign* vol. 2., (Mechanicsburg, 2007), p. 312, fn 41.

Timeline for the Battle of Princeton

Unit: 63rd Regiment
Sergeant Thomas Willis

Sir Henry Clinton Papers, William L. Clements Library at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Request for pension

To His Excellency Sir Guy Carlton
K.B. Commander in Chief &c &c &c

Memorial of Serjeant Thomas Willis's Servitude Humbly Sheweth

That in the Year 1754 he enlisted in the 51st Regt. Commanded by Sir William Pepperell

...

He received Lieut Colo Moncktons thanks at the Battle of Bedford for his good conduct that Day, receiving then a desperate Wound in the head ~ Recovering from his Wounds he stood the Campaign in Jersey until the taking the Hessians at Trenton where he was wounded desperately in the Right arm, as he was crossing the River near Prince Town ~

NOTE:

In an e-mail of 10 February 2010, Stephen Gilbert wrote:

Reviewing my WO12 Company Pay rolls, "Sergeant" Thomas Willis was a convalescent corporal in the grenadiers of the 63rd Foot at the time of Princeton. The compliment by Lt Colo Henry Monckton (of the 45th Foot, who commanded the 2nd Grenadier Battalion at the time) of Bedford (Long Island) and Princeton confirms it. Nothing on the muster roll suggests he was injured at any time. Three grenadier privates with the 63rd were listed as "Prisoner [circumstances unknown] with the enemy" and were returned by February 1778. Willis continues as a corporal through mid-1778, when my records trickle out.

Appendix III:
Notes on the composition of the Crown
Forces transfers and recruits

NOTES ON THE COMPOSITION OF THE CROWN FORCES TRANSFERS AND RECRUITS ON 3 JANUARY 1777

On 1 January 1777, Lieutenant Frederick Augustus Wetherall of the 17th Regt of Foot recorded in his journal that "Genl. Grant & Lord Cornwallis arrived at Princetown reinforced with 2 Battns of British Grenadiers one Battalion of Guards, Battn of Koelher 17th 40th & 55th Regts." As they continued on their march to Trenton the next day, "Col. Mawhood with 3rd/3^d dismounted Dragoons, Squadron of Dragoon, 4 Six Pounders & Convalescends & Recruits for the Flank Corps was left at Prince Town."¹ Captain Hall of the 28th Regiment of Foot wrote that in the morning of 3 January, Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Mawhood "began his march, with four pieces of cannon, about fifty light horse, and some stragglers from various regiments, who had been differently employed, and were so far on their way to join their respective corps."² Lieutenant William Hale of the 45th Grenadier Company, 2nd Battalion of Grenadiers, too reported the presence of this disparate group in Mawhood's forces when he wrote that during the initial phase of the battle the American "advanced guard of 800 reserved their fire till we advanced within 40 yards, and then gave us a very heavy discharge, which brought down 7 of my platoon at once, the rest, being recruits, gave way. I rallied these with some difficulty, and brought them on with bayonets".³ But the "recruits" in Hale's account are not the same kind of "recruits" Wetherall accused of giving way after the first fire.

One of the least known aspects about the strength and composition of Crown Forces under Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Mawhood at Princeton concerns the convalescents, new recruits, either for regular line regiments under Lord Cornwallis in Trenton or transfers to Flank Companies, who were marching in Mawhood's detachment in the morning of 3 January 1777. These men, and the officers among them, had temporarily joined Mawhood either, in the case of the convalescents, in order to catch up with their units or, in the case of transfers or new recruits, to be integrated into their units to compensate for losses they had sustained in the 1776 campaign. The standard list of Crown Forces under Mawhood gives his strength at around 1,200 officers and other ranks, but these numbers do not include possibly as many as 200 convalescents, transfers and recruits. In a series of e-mail exchanges between Linnea Bass, Steve Baule, Stephen Gilbert, Don Hagist, John Mills, Robert Selig, Will Tatum and Mark Tully an attempt was made to outline the composition and strength of this group in the battle of Princeton.⁴

The best brief definition of a "Flank Company" is provided by Don Hagist on his blog and is quoted here in full:

Most British regiments serving in America were composed of 10 companies. At the beginning of the war, the established strength of each company consisted of 38 private soldiers, two serjeants (using the period spelling), three corporals, one drummer and three commissioned officers. During the course of the war

¹ "Operations of the Army under Lt. G. Clinton (beginning on 12 February 1776)." David Library of the American Revolution, Sol Feinstein Collection No. 132 (Card No. 409). Ensign Martin Hunter of the 52nd Regiment of Foot wrote: "I was quite shocked to find poor Captain Williamson was among the killed. He had received orders the day I left New York to march the recovered men that were in Hospital to join their regiments, and arrived at Princetown just as the action began." Lawrence H. Curry, ed., "Martin Hunter's Journal: America 1774-1778." *The Valley Forge Journal* 4 no. 1 (June 1988), pp. 1-34, p. 20.

² An Officer of the Army, *The history of the Civil War in America* vol. 1 (London, 1780), pp. 245-252.

³ "Letters written during the American War of Independence. By the late Capt. W. Hale, 45th Regt." In: 1913 Regimental Annual. The Sherwood Foresters. Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment. Col. H. C. Wylly, ed., (London, 1913), pp. 9-59, p. 15.

⁴ These many individual e-mails will not be identified separately but are for review upon request.

this establishment was increased twice, then reduced again in the closing years, but when hostilities broke out in earnest on 19 April 1775, this was the established or 'paper' strength of a British company.

Two companies of each regiment were composed of men selected for their experience and fitness. The grenadier company was supposed to contain men suited for vigorous assaults, retaining their traditional name from a bygone era when they hurled grenades over the walls of enemy fortifications; although grenades has long since been set aside, their uniforms retained some vestiges of this honorable service and tall men were preferred for this company. The light infantry company was new to the regimental establishment, having been warranted in 1771 to provide each regiment with a corps of skirmishers; as such, men selected for it tended to be fit and agile, and their uniforms were adapted to their specialized roll. When a regiment formed on parade these companies formed on the right and left flanks, for which reason they were collectively called flank companies.

Men were put into flank companies only after they had mastered the basic duties of a soldier, generally after at least a year of service with their regiment.⁵ The requirement for both fitness and experience meant that they consisted mostly of men in their late twenties to early forties. It also meant that men were frequently transferred out of these companies due to illness, wounds, or other conditions that limited their activity; replacements were selected from the regiment's eight battalion companies.

Operationally, the flank companies of British regiments were generally detached and put together into composite grenadier and light infantry battalions.⁶ These flank battalions, which varied in size and composition throughout the war depending upon which regiments were in which locations, formed the tactical spearhead on most British campaigns in America. Their first use was on 19 April 1775, when the grenadier and light infantry companies of the regiments in Boston were sent to destroy military stores in Concord.⁷

These men were clearly not recruits in the traditional meaning of the word but rather experienced soldiers for whom the transfer to an elite company constituted an important recognition of their abilities as soldiers and a significant event in their military careers. "Recruits for the Flank Corps" were soldiers who had been selected for transfer to the elite flank companies who were not likely to 'give way' easily, to paraphrase Wetherall.

Information on the men serving in flank companies is contained in Record Group "War Office 12, Company Pay (or Muster) Rolls" in the National Archives of Great Britain, formerly known as the PRO.⁸

⁵ Other experts such as Steve Baule pointed out that this was a general rule rather than the norm, e.g., in 1771, the light company of the 18th Regiment of Foot was created from nearly all new recruits. In some regiments men went to the flank companies without prior service, in other regiments no new men ever went to the flank companies.

⁶ A "composite" grenadier or light infantry battalion denotes a unit which is formed by combining the grenadier (or light infantry) companies of a number of infantry (or guards) regiments into a separate unit.

⁷ Quoted, with permission from author Don Hagist, from <http://redcoat76.blogspot.com/2009/12/flank-companies-38th-regiment-19-april.html>, posted on Thursday, 31 December 2009.

⁸ "For regiments serving in America during the 1775-1783 war, rolls were prepared once every six months for each company of each regiment. One muster roll covered the period from 25 December to the following 24 June, the next roll from 25 June to 24 December. Ideally, muster rolls were prepared very soon after each six-month muster period; in practice, regiments sometimes fell behind by months or even years, they caught up with the missing rolls all at once; for this reason it is not unusual to find rolls for several muster periods all prepared on the same date. ... Each roll listed the names of each officer and soldier in the company. Next to each name was an annotation of anything that occurred during the muster period to change the man's status in the company - notations such as "joined", "discharged", "deserted", "died", as well as indications of transfers to or from other companies or regiments - along

With few exceptions, however, these files are not available in the United States.⁹ Secondly, sick, wounded or convalescents troops, though usually identified as such, were a) not taken off the pay-rolls of their regiments and b) not usually recorded on the rolls with information as to whether they were still with their units or recuperating at a different location, and c) the recordation date is usually that when the event became known to the regiment rather than the date when the event occurred. The same qualification applies to Captain Hall's "stragglers from various regiments" in Mawhood's column who were "on their way to join their respective corps." Detached for a specific purpose, their names would have remained on the company pay rolls and, especially if it was only for a short time period between the preparation of muster rolls, might never even be recorded as absent from their regiment. This makes it extremely difficult to identify these men as and into a separate group. Thirdly, as Gilbert pointed out, for the purposes of the march to Trenton, new recruits, convalescents and transfers to Flank Companies were organized into ad-hoc units under company-grade officers who in turn stood under the command of the senior officer available.

"It's not clear who were the officers guiding the convalescents and recruits for the flank companies. This was a pick-up group with no cohesion; perhaps four day's duty together on a march," Gilbert wrote. Captain William Leslie, son of the Earl of Leven and a family friend of Dr. Benjamin Rush, probably the most famous British casualty at Princeton, "does not appear on the muster rolls as a grenadier with the 17th regiment, which [i.e., the Grenadier Company] belonged to [Captain] William Brereton. [Leslie, who held a regular commission in the 17th Foot, may have acted as a substitute for Brereton, the nominal captain of the Grenadier Company, at Princeton] Leslie may have been positioned adjacent to Lt [William] Hale's grenadier platoon [45th Grenadier Coy, 2nd Battalion of Grenadiers]. There is only the vaguest clue for the Light Infantry - [Lt. Martin] Hunter [52nd Regiment] makes a comment of his fellow 52nd Lieutenant Richard St. George being wounded at Princeton. It was at Germantown that in fact he was hurt, but I wonder if it was not a Freudian slip of the pen by Hunter?"

Captain Erasmus John Phillips of the 35th Grenadiers was also with the party travelling to join with Cornwallis, but he had ridden ahead on 2 January, was killed and his body mutilated, which seems to indicate that he had not been specifically ordered to command the group. Among the other officers known to have served in flank companies at the time and who testified at the court-martial of Cornett Henry Evatt were Captain John Hatfield of the 43rd Grenadier Company, Captain George Munro of the 71st /2 Foot Light Infantry Company, and Lieutenant John Campbell of the 44th Regiment, Light Infantry Company. Their testimony at the trial is the only source that places them at Princeton. As mentioned earlier, it is unknown who commanded the various detachments of grenadiers, Light Infantry and recruits. Gilbert suspected at one point that on the morning of 3 January "it was Williamson who had charge of the entire group", but Captains Hatfield and Phillips were senior to Williamson.¹⁰ Phillips was killed on 2

with the date that the event occurred." Quoted, with permission from author Don N. Hagist, from his blog entry [Deserter: John Bolton, 35th Regiment of Foot](#) Posted on Thursday, 6 August 2009.

⁹ The exception are WO12/6998-6999, 7033, 9967, 10491, 10684, 10722, 10821, 11015, 11020, 11035, 11099. Muster rolls of 60th Regiment of Foot, Third and Fourth Battalion, 105th Regiment of Foot, Barbados Rangers, Duke of Cumberland Regiment, Royal Garrison Battalion, Kings American Regiment, Captain Murison's Troops, Newfoundland Fencibles, Queen's Rangers, Tarleton's British Legion, 1757-1809, 4 reels, in the David Library of the American Revolution, Film 650.

¹⁰ The order of seniority for the known Captains present at Princeton was:

John Hatfield (43 rd G)	25 May 1772	
Eramus John Phillips (35 th G)	25 March 1775	Killed 2 January 1777
Thomas Williamson (52 nd G)	28 August 1776	Killed 3 January 1777
William Brereton (17 th G)	24 May 1775	Uncertain; likely absent
George Munro (71 st /2 LI)	4 December 1775	

January in a militia ambush, Captain Thomas Williamson of the 52nd was killed at Princeton on the 3rd, but if he even compiled a morning report by name, rank and unit of the troops marching to Trenton his report has not been found. More importantly, neither Mawhood nor the officer in charge, possibly Captain John Hatfield of the 43rd Grenadiers as next senior captain who would/may have succeeded Williamson, are known to have submitted a casualty return to Headquarters.

Even less is known of the other ranks in this group. In the course of his research, Mr. Gilbert collected the names of many men e.g., from the 35th and 45th Regiments of Foot who were captured and/or killed on 3 January 1777, e.g., Private Charles Martin of the 15th Light Infantry Company, while the 10th Grenadiers lost John Latham on the same date. In his WO12 grenadier files he identified other men killed or taken prisoners from the 35th, 44th, 52nd, 55th, and 64th Grenadier companies alone. This spread across many units suggests that these individual grenadiers may have been convalescents rather than new recruits. This is confirmed in one of the primary sources collected for this report. WO12 Company Pay rolls list Sergeant Thomas Willis as a convalescent corporal in the grenadiers of the 63rd Foot at the time of Princeton. The compliment by Lt.-Col. Henry Monckton of the 45th Foot, who commanded the 2nd Grenadier Battalion at the time of Princeton, in Willis' pension application confirms this. Three other grenadier privates of the 63rd are listed as "Prisoner [circumstances unknown] with the enemy" but returned to their units by February 1778. Based on his as yet incomplete and unpublished research, Gilbert estimates that at "a ratio of 1 killed to 3 present, that's 30 convalescent grenadiers probably present at Princeton. I know that's inexact, but there are 40 flank companies in the Army." The 4th and 5th flank companies also list privates and musicians "prisoners with the rebels" who may also have been captured at Princeton though no place or date of capture is given. Lieutenant Hale had a platoon of 15 men, Williamson probably had the same for a total of at least 30 men. The two light infantry officers Munroe and Campbell probably had a similar number of men in their ad-hoc company.

At this point (March 2010) of his search in WO12 records, Gilbert has identified these casualties and Prisoners of War from Flank Companies in the Spring of 1777, keeping in mind that not all prisoners had necessarily been captured at Princeton.

4th Grens 2 Pvts PoW at an unknown date
 5th Grens 3 Pvts PoW at an unknown date
 5th LI 2 Pvts PoW at an unknown date
 10th Grens Pvt Latham KiA
 10th LI Pvt Martin KiA; 2 pvts discharged 22 February (Princeton wounds?)
 17th Grens 2 Pvts PoW at an unknown date
 23rd Grens 2 Pvts PoW at an unknown date
 23rd LI 1 Pvt PoW at an unknown date and 1 pvt died of wounds (Princeton?)
 27th Grens 4 Pvts & 1 Drummer PoWs at an unknown date
 27th LI 1 Pvt PoW at an unknown date
 35th Grens 6 PoWs at an unknown date
 38th LI 1 Cpl PoW at an unknown date
 44th Grens 2 killed (Gillan & Stephenson [a recent transfer from the battalion])

William Leslie (possibly sub 17 th G)	26 February 1776	Killed 3 January 1777
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Known seniority of lieutenants present at Princeton:

John Campbell (44 th LI)	5 July 1772
William John Hale (45 th G)	2 March 1776
Richard St George (52 nd LI)	23 December 1776

45th LI 1 Cpl PoW at an unknown date
 49th LI 1 Pvt PoW at an unknown date
 52nd Grens Pvt Hamilton KiA
 55th Grens Pvt Taylor KiA
 55th LI 1 Drummer PoW at an Unknown date
 63rd Grens Cpl Willis P.O.W, 3 Pvts PoW with the rebels date unknown
 63rd LI 2 Pvts PoW at an unknown date
 64th Grens Pvt Couper KiA; 1 Pvt prisoner with the rebels unknown date
 64th LI 6 Pvts PoW at an unknown date
 71st/2 LI 1 Cpl, 1 Drum, 6 Pvts PoW with the rebels at an unknown date

Who then was "the rest" in Hale's platoon who, "being recruits, gave way"? Thanks to the diligent research of Don Hagist we have considerable knowledge about the recruits in Mawhood's forces. "Soon after the war began," writes Hagist, "the established size of British regiments in America was increased by almost 50%, requiring an additional 18 men for each of a regiment's 10 companies."¹¹ Since that manpower was not available in Britain, sending recruiters into the Holy Roman Empire of German Nation was one way of meeting the manpower needs of Britain's regiments. "The result was that nearly every regiment in America received a number of German recruits, most of whom arrived in American in October 1776." Quite a few had prior military service while others had none. Very few, if any, spoke English. "Some regiments received as few as five, while others received over 100." Since many of them were sick from the long voyage, they remained in New York until they could join their regiments.

In the fall of 1776, the 17th Regt of Foot received 40 German-speaking recruits; of the other regiments fighting at Princeton the 40th Regiment received seven and the 55th had eighteen in its ranks.¹² Besides these recruits, Mawhood's column possibly also contained some recruits on their way to Trenton to join regiments serving with Cornwallis, i.e., the 28th Regiment of Foot had received 40 recruits in late October and the 49th Regiment 17, while the 5th, 35th, 42nd and 71st are not known to have received any German-speaking recruits. Hagist's research has shown that "unlike the 22nd Regiment which distributed the German recruits evenly among the eight battalion companies [...] the 17th Regiment put all of the Germans into Lt.-Colonel Mawhood's company. This may have been simply to keep them together because of their language; perhaps one of the company officers spoke German. Regardless, muster rolls and a surviving orderly book confirm that 17 German recruits joined the company on 23 October, immediately after embarking in New York. Another five joined on 18 November, and another 9 on 27 December. We speculate that the stragglers had remained in New York to recoup their health after the voyage (they had originally embarked on transports in German in mid-May, then sailed to England before proceeding to America; they may have remained on board transports for the entire time from May to October). This is, however, only a guess. We cannot yet account for the other nine recruits that had been directed to the 17th." Based upon the time of their arrival in New York, these recruits could have been in the Battle of Princeton Were they? In response to this question Don Hagist responded in an e-mail of 30 November 2009:

¹¹ Don Hagist, "Pensioner: Peter Fetherham, 17th Regiment of Foot." Posted on Monday, 13 July 2009, at <http://redcoat76.blogspot.com/2009/07/pensioner-peter-fetherham-17th-regiment.html>

¹² On the recruits in the 22nd Regt see Don N. Hagist, "Forty German Recruits: The Service of German Nationals in the 22nd Regiment of Foot, 1776-1783." *Journal of the Johannes Schwalm Historical Association*, vol. 6, No. 1 (1997), pp. 63-66, and vol. 7, No. 3 (2003), pp. 58-61. "Each of the forty German recruits in the 22nd is annotated as having joined the regiment on 16 May 1776, the day that they boarded transport ships in Germany." See <http://revwar75.com/library/hagist/FORTYGERMANRECRUITS.htm>.

"Yes, I think it is safe to say that the German recruits who joined the 17th Regiment were available to serve at Princeton. I don't know if all of the men who were available to the regiment were actually committed to the battle. Will Tatum sent me a batch of information from the muster rolls of the 17th, from which I see that none of the German recruits were returned as 'prisoner with the enemy' on the rolls prepared in May 1777, while many other men in the regiment were, including two in the same company that received the German recruits. Unfortunately the rolls do not indicate where or when men were taken prisoner, only that they were prisoners when the rolls were prepared. I also see that the company containing the German recruits did not have any men killed on 3 January 1777. Only six companies indicate men killed on that day, although two of the remaining companies do have men prisoner with the enemy and one has men who died soon after 3 January which suggests that they died of wounds. The grenadier and light infantry companies [of the 17th Regiment] have no men killed that day and also no prisoners with the enemy, suggesting that they were not [my emphasis] heavily involved in the battle. What I'm getting at is that the muster rolls do not prove that the German recruits, or the company that they were in, were involved in the battle."

Though as yet incomplete, our research into convalescents, stragglers, recruits and transfers in Mawhood's column shows a sizeable but very disparate group of soldiers with a wide ethnic, linguistic and skills background. Our estimates place the number of convalescents, recruits and flank company transfer at Princeton at possibly as high as 200 men, 15% of Mawhood's total force. This number corresponds closely to that given by Martin Hunter about 20 years after the battle. Hunter had been with Lord Cornwallis in Trenton and reported that prior to their arrival in Princeton "Washington had completely defeated these two regiments [the 17th and 55th], and two hundred Grenadiers and Light Infantry that were on the march to join their battalions." We know that these men were not all experienced soldiers on their way to join elite companies as Hunter remembered it. The fact that many of them were convalescents, stragglers and raw recruits who had received but a few weeks of training at most, who were serving under unfamiliar officers and barely spoke the language of the temporary, improvised units they served in, makes their combat performance against overwhelming odds at Princeton ever more remarkable.

Appendix IV:
Notes on the movements of
Colonel Hausegger's detachment on
3 January 1777

NOTES ON THE MOVEMENTS OF COLONEL HAUSEGGER'S DETACHMENT ON 3 JANUARY 1777

Both contemporary as well as modern accounts of the Battle of Princeton tend to focus on the initial phase of the engagement, i.e., the death of Mercer, Washington's successful efforts to rally the troops and to lead them, in cooperation with troops under Sullivan on the right flank, to victory. What is usually overlooked is Washington's third column in the Battle of Princeton: Continental Army forces and Pennsylvania Militia under Brigadier General Thomas Mifflin and even more so those of the German Regiment under Colonel Nicholas Hausegger,¹ re-enforced by the Third Battalion, Philadelphia Associators.² The reasons for this are manifold: the battle was decided on the plains between the William and Thomas Clarke farms through the leadership of Washington, there is but one known account by a member of the Associators,³ and whatever Hausegger may have had to say about his role in the battle is considered *a priori* suspect due to his alleged desertion to the enemy, though there seems to be no agreement whether he deserted prior to, during, or after the battle of Princeton.⁴

That Washington divided his forces into three divisions is confirmed by observers on both sides. In his diary account of the Battle of Princeton, Captain Thomas Rodney recorded that in the pre-dawn hours of 3 January one division consisting of "two Brigades were ordered to wheel to the Left, to make a circuit and surround the town on that side and as they went to break down the Bridge and post a party at the mill on

¹ On 27 June 1776, Congress authorized the German Regiment to be formed as part of the Continental Army. It initially comprised eight companies, four from Maryland and four (later five) from Pennsylvania. Nicholas Hausegger, a major under General Anthony Wayne, was commissioned as its colonel.

On 19 March 1777, Congress transferred command of the regiment to Henry Baron de Arendt.

² Upon Washington's recommendation the three battalions of the Philadelphia Associators had been consolidated into a single brigade of 1,200 men under Colonel John Cadwalader as Brigadier-General in early December 1776. John Nixon became Colonel of the Third Battalion, Samuel Meredith its Lieutenant-Colonel. They left Philadelphia for Trenton on 10 December 1776. It is unknown who commanded the (detachment of?) the Third Battalion that marched with Hausegger.

³ The account of its Lieutenant-Colonel Samuel Meredith written from Morristown on 9 January is of no use for the reconstruction of the battle. "The Greatest stroke of Generalship that has been shown in this war was exhibited by General Washington in our march from Trenton to Prince Town. It entirely disconcerted the progress of the enemy, who knew nothing of our march till the firing happened at Prince Town between them and us, for we went a back road all the way. What was done there you have heard I don't doubt, with a good deal of exaggeration. It was, however, a very capital stroke, for those who were not taken or killed retired with utmost precipitation. Those from Trenton did so likewise ... Our Baggage, when we left Trenton, was all sent down to Burlington, so that we have no shift of clothes at all. But it is expected in a few days." William S. Stryker, *The Battles of Trenton and Princeton* (Boston, 1898), pp. 468-469.

The third known account by a member of the Third Battalion does not mention the battle since Young had been sent to Burlington with the baggage of the battalion. See "Journal of Sergeant William Young" *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 8 (1884), pp. 255-278, pp. 265-266.

⁴ The date of Hausegger's desertion and/or switching of his allegiance to the Crown is itself a matter of dispute, ranging from 25 December 1776 (Pension application of Conrad Beam of 27 May 1833, No. W 25323: "we were attached to what was called the dutch Batallion under the command of Col. N Hosacker from Philadelphia we remained until the night of the 25 of December 1776 when we marched to Trentown thru hail rain & sleet out cloaths now frozen to our back. He was in the battle of Trenton and took a large number of prisoners & arms & six field pieces - in this action Col. N Hosicker deserted - we were then placed under the command of Col. Stricker.") to 1 January 1777 [Henry J. Retzer, *The German Regiment of Maryland and Pennsylvania* (Westminster, 1991), p. 74] to July 1778 [(*Warren-Adams Letters: Being chiefly a correspondence among John Adams, Samuel Adams, and James Warren* 2 vols., vol. 1: 1743-1777, p. 76, fn. 2) Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society vol. 76 (Boston, 1917)].

the main road, to oppose the enemy's main army if they should pursue us from Trenton."⁵ On the British side Ensign George Inman of the 17th Regiment wrote that "we attacked their Centre Column and drove them to their main body", implying that there were both a left and a right column as well.⁶

In Rodney's account this Second Division of Washington's forces was composed of Brigadier Generals Mifflin's and Roche-Fermoy's brigades. Mifflin's brigade consisted of the 2nd, 4th, 10th, 11th and 12th Pennsylvania Regiments and was some 1,500 men strong. Roche-Fermoy's Brigade consisted of the German Regiment, likely the largest intact unit available, re-enforced with the 3rd Battalion, Philadelphia Associators, to a strength of a little over 500 men.⁷ Both contained large numbers of German-speaking troops, an aspect of great importance for command and control on the battlefield. Washington's battle-plan had this Second Division march north along the Stony Brook and across the Princeton-Trenton Road and into the back of Princeton, thereby performing the flanking maneuver he needed to achieve to encircle Crown forces in Princeton. To perform its task this 2nd division had to be strong enough to seal off escape routes to the north-east, and it was. At close to 2,000 men, mostly Continental Line troops, this two-brigade strike force was almost as large as Washington's attack division.

Eyewitness accounts of the activities and whereabouts of these two brigades confirm that they attempted to do as they had been ordered until the battle plan went awry due to the fact that Mawhood's forces had left their quarters early in the morning and were on the march to Trenton. British accounts of the battle report that a detachment of Mifflin's Brigade was still headed toward the bridge across the Stony Brook while the majority of the brigade had left the road and was rushing to support Mercer and Cadwalader. But where was the other brigade? In a diary-like account, a "Mr. Hood" of the 3rd Battalion, Philadelphia Associators, records marching north from the jump-off point south of the Quaker Meeting House to the bridge across the Stony Brook, crossing the Princeton-Trenton Road, and standing on top of a hill to the

⁵ *Diary of Captain Thomas Rodney, 1776-1777*. (Wilmington, 1888), p. 33. That the second brigade consisted of forces under Mifflin's command marching on a road distant, and not visible, from the main encounter, tasked with breaking down the bridge over the Sawmill River, is confirmed in pension applications, e.g., that of William McCracken (Pension Application No. R 6665) who wrote that "a short time anterior to the Capture of the Hessians at Trenton there was a draft of Militia in Chester County Pennsylvania that he resided at that time near New London Cross Roads and was drafted under Captn Thomas Strawbridges Company ... and that he belonged to General Mifflin's brigade. that his company immediately proceeded to Philadelphia where he heard of the Capture of the Hessians that his company went up the Delaware to Bordentown or Burlington he is not certain which after staying there two nights he went with his company across the country to Princestown & as they marched on heard the firing of the compheting armies and was ordered to break down a bridge which they in part cut down & set fire to repose of it when the British fired field pieces from an adjoining Hill, they went from thence to Princeton & followed the regular Army & went from thence to Somerset Court House."

Strawbridge served as a captain in the 2nd Regiment, Chester County Militia.

⁶ George Inman's "Narrative of the American Revolution." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 7 no. 3 (1883), pp. 237-248, p. 240.

⁷ Numerous eyewitness account, e.g., John Borrows, show that the 2nd Battalion fought under the direct command of John Cadwalader: "After crossing Stoney brook a little after sun rise, we ascended a hill within one mile of Princeton, and were attacked by about 500, of the enemy, who had secreted themselves behind a thick thorn hedge, when within a few paces they rose and gave us a warm reception. The Philadelphia Militia were in front & broke and gave way, but were rallied & formed again by the exertions of Genls Cadwallader and Mifflin. Our army moved forward again under very disadvantageous circumstances, as the hedge prevented them from extending their lines, a rush was made through the only gate in that quarter, General Mercer led the van & he and twelve others were bayoneted by the British before they were put to flight, they retreated towards the College, but were intercepted by the Massachusetts flying camp ..." Pension Application No. S 22134.

north-west of Princeton from where he watched as the battle between Mercer and Mawhood unfolded in and around the orchard at the William Clarke farm.⁸

"abt 12 oClock at Night [2/3 January 1777] they were ordered under Arms - they were then ordered to lay down their arms & return to their fires. - a little after One ordered to Arms again, they united the several Brigades together & the Artillery advanced before them & the army followed, this was all done with greatest Silence - they continued their March round the head of the Mill Creek dam, & pass'd a Bridge and so continued their rout to the Princetown Road, & then Cross'd it & pass'd into a bye road & proceeded about 1 mile to the northward of Princetown - and continued this rout till day light when they saw Princetown - and came through the Woods & field on the Back of the town and perceived the Enemy abt 700 on the rise of a Hill abt 3/4 of a Mile from the town, - a firing began by the Virginia Brigade, and then it was supported by Genl Cadwaladers brigade which was at first put in a little confusion, but rallied under the Hill immediately. - in the meantime a New England Brigade advanced and the Riffle Men flanked the Enemy, and they broke & run immediately upon wch our people pursued them, advanced to the Town, they fired one Shot into the Colledge, when a man waved his Hat, another Shot was fired & a flag was sent out & they surrendered, to the number of 86 - afterwards a number more was brought in to the ammo' of 200 - in this action abt 100 of the Enemy was killed & abt 14 of ours."

Where were Hausegger and the German Regiment? There can be little doubt that the German Regiment participated in the Battle of Princeton. In his pension application of 19 February 1835, George Stottlemeyer wrote how he and his regiment had remained in Philadelphia "until about two weeks before Christmas 1776 - sailed in a vessel from Philadelphia up to Trenton affiant aided in the capture of the Hessians at Trenton on the glorious December 25 1776 - same night recrossed the Delaware & came up to Coryell's Ferry - recrossed the river from this last place & advanced on the enemy as far as a little place called Maidenhead in Jersey here we were attacked by the British - we relocated to Trenton around at this last place about night - engaged the enemy January 1 1776 (2 January) - on the 2nd day of Jan 1776 (3 January) our regiment and the Philadelphia militia were ordered round to attack the enemy at Princeton - attacked them, took many prisoners."⁹ This last sentence confirms the account by John Hood: "our regiment and the Philadelphia militia were ordered round to attack the enemy at Princeton."

The next question is: was Hausegger himself at Princeton and what did the men in his regiment know about his activities? That Hausegger was indeed at Princeton is confirmed in (so far) four known pension applications by members of his regiment. William Lewis wrote that he was "attached to the German Battalion commanded by Col. Hoosecker who deserted and joined the enemy at Princeton"¹⁰ Henry Piper testified: "I enlisted in 1776 in Captain Wilpert's company under the command of Colonel Hosecker who afterwards deserted at Princeton, and Major Weltner then took command."¹¹ During the winter of 1776/77, Melcher Painter served in the "company of William Heyser, the said company was attached to the German Battalion commanded by Col. Hoosecker, who deserted and joined the enemy at Princeton,

⁸ "Engagements at Trenton and Princeton, January 2 and 3, 1777." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 10 (1886), pp. 263-265. The author is most likely John Hood who served in Captain William Talbert's Company of the 3rd Battalion under Colonel John Nixon from 3 December 1776 to 20 January 1777. *Pennsylvania Archives* 6th Series vol. 1 (Harrisburg, 1906), p. 185 and p. 199. *The Papers of George Washington. Revolutionary War Series* vol. 7: October 1776 – January 1777. Philander D. Chase, ed., (Charlottesville, 1997), p. 525, identify Sergeant James Hood as the author of the account. This is doubtful since James is known to have served in the 3rd Battalion, Capt. Fitzsimmon's Coy, only from 10 July -29 August 1776. *Pennsylvania Archives* 6th series vol. 1 (Harrisburg, 1906), p. 184.

⁹ Pension Application Nr. R10238. For additional sources see Primary Sources: Continental Army.

¹⁰ Pension application No. W 4263.

¹¹ Pension application No. S 40344.

this Battalion was afterwards commanded by Lieut. Col. Striker."¹² Edward Robertson confirms Hausegger's presence at Princeton but implies untoward "conduct" which led to Hausegger's arrest. The "German Regiment commanded by Colonel Housaker of Pennsylvania, George Stricker Lieutenant Colonel, Frederick County, Maryland, Major Weltner, who was the other field officer, of Fredericktown, Maryland, who was afterwards on the Colonel being arrested and discharged, for his conduct at Princeton, and the resignation of the Lieutenant Colonel, promoted as Lieutenant Colonel, and when discharged Major Weltner was in command."¹³

The "conduct" Robertson referred to was Hausegger's purported desertion to the British.¹⁴ Since it sheds light on the movement of his forces a look at Hausegger's account of what happened and where he was and what he did on 3 January 1777 is in order. All accounts agree that by the end of the battle Hausegger was behind British lines. From Princeton he marched to New York City, but upon his return less than two weeks later he sent a letter to Washington on 16 January 1777 in which he gave details of his actions during the battle and his purported capture by the British.¹⁵

Sir!

Last Night I arrived here from New York much indisposed with the Rheumatism and pains in my Limbs, occasioned by great Colds I caught, which deprives me of the Pleasure of waiting personally on your Excellency, and therefore take the Liberty, by the first Oppertunity vizt by Capn Keepots¹⁶ to inform your Excellency of my Safe Arrival here. Immediately after I come to Town I was credibly informed, that some malicious Persons have injured my Reputation, by misrepresenting Facts relating to the late Affair at Princetown.

I have taken the Liberty to inform your Excellency of the Manner of my Proceedings and of what happened to me from the 3d of this Instant to the Time of my Arrival here.

¹² Pension application No. W 9226.

¹³ Pension application No. S 35050.

¹⁴ There is another, highly dramatic account of Hausegger's capture by Joseph Reed, who gave both an incorrect place and time when he wrote: "About 12 o'clock the Enemy made a Halt on the North side the Shabbacunk about 3 Miles from Trenton but soon after pressing on [with] great Rapidity they cross'd the Creek driving our Riffle Men & small Parties before them, untill they reach'd the high Ground near the Town where several of the Battalions were drawn up & check'd their Advance. In the mean Time the Militia & principal Part of the Army had cross'd the Bridge the Enemy evidently attempting to out flank our left & pressing with great Force, our Troops gradually yielded the Ground keeping up a regular Fire of Musquetry & Artillery with some loss on both sides. The German Battalion being then just raised & commanded by an Officer who had never been able to divest himself of the Ideas he had acquired in the British Army gave way with very little Resistance & the Colonel suffered himself to be taken Prisoner when he might easily have escaped by remaining with his Troops the Countenance & Favour afterwards shown this Person by the enemy fully confirmed the Suspicions then form'd of him." "General Joseph Reed's Narrative of the Movements of the American Army in the Neighborhood of Trenton in the Winter of 1776-77." *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* vol. 8 No. 4 (1884), pp. 401-402.

¹⁵ Hausegger to Washington, 16 January 1777. *The Papers of George Washington: Revolutionary War Series, 8 January-March 1777* Philander D. Chase, ed., (Charlottesville, 1998), pp. 83-85.

¹⁶ Captain George Peter Keeports resigned his commission in the German Regiment in May 1777, and became a supply officer in Maryland. Washington surely inquired about Hausegger, his character and his activities during the Battle of Princeton. Keeports could not have provided any first-hand information since he was not in command of his company during the Battle of Princeton. In a 20 December 1828 petition to the House of Representatives, Samuel Gerock, one-time First Lieutenant in Keeport's Company, testified "That he commanded said company in the then absence of Capt. Keeport, at the attack, and cannonade at Trenton New Jersey, on the afternoon of the 2nd January." Pension application No. S 6884.

On the 3d of this Instant - one of your Excellency's Aid de Camps ordered me to advance and cut off the Enemeys Retreat to Brunswick, and in order to proceed the swifter ordered my Battalion to lay down their Bagage and put a Guard over it, this being done I proceeded and met Capn Craig who informed me, that it was your Excellency's Orders for me to march towards Millstone and to cut off the Enemeys Retreat, which said Orders I complied with, and not discovering any of the Enemy there returned towards Princetown and coming up to the Place where I had ordered the sd Bagage to be left I sent my Battn under Lieut. Colonel Streiker over the Fence to take up their Bagage with Directions to follow me immediately, so I proceeded, with Capn Craig, on the Road towards Princetown, and within half a Mile of Princetown I met one of my Soldiers, who informed me, that the Enemy was at Princetown, upon which I sent Captn Craig back to Lieut. Colonel Streiker with Orders to keep the Battallion together and to march with all the Haste he could up to me through a Swamp and immediately after that I seen my Battallion crossing the Swamp towards Princetown, then I pushed forwards along the Road in Order to Head the Battallion, And as I come to the Plains of Princetown I heard a Fireing, thinking that my Battallion was engaged with the Enemy whom I was persuing, thereupon I rode towards the Battallion into the Woods, and to my great Surprize was stoped by a Party of the Enemy's, who took me Prisoner and brought me to their Commander, whose Name I do not recollect who sent me to Lord Cornwallis near Princetown where I met with Generals Grant and Lesle. General Grant, then let me go, on my Parole, about Princetown,¹⁷ here I stayed till about Evening when the Enemy's Army marched through Princetown I was delivered to Colonel Dunop of the Hessians, who on the 4th of this Instant took me to Brunswick, where we stayed two Days, And on the 6th I was sent with General Heisters Son to New-York, where I arrived the 7th by whoes Interest and Colonel Donap's Recommendation to General Heister's I obtained Liberty to return home on my Parole, And on the 12th of January I left New-York in Company with several Officers who also returned on their Parole, And four Shallops with about 400 Prisoners who all returned to their respective Homes on their Parole.

Having stated Matters as they, in Fact, are I leave it to the Judgment of your Excellency whether or no I acted as a Gentleman Officer ought to do.

I am your Excellency's most obedient humble Servant

Nichls Haussegger

Word of possible misconduct on Haussegger's part spread quickly. On 17 January, Haussegger testified about his actions at Princeton and how he was taken prisoner.¹⁸ He conducted himself well enough during his testimony since Robert Morris declared afterwards that any suspected foul play regarding his conduct at Princeton was 'wiped off' and that rumors of disloyalty were unfounded: "Colo Housicker whom we mentioned in our last in an unfavourable point of light, has just been with us & gives such an acct of the manner in which he was taken & the cause of the Enemies favourable treatment of him as in our opinion wipes off the suspicions that many People had entertained of foul play. He is under parole and says all the Continental officers & prisoners that are able to walk are coming from New York on parole."¹⁹

¹⁷ Haussegger and Grant knew each other since Haussegger had served as lieutenant in the Forbes' campaign in the French & Indian War in 1758. in which James Grant, then a Major, also participated. Thad Weaver thinks that Grant's note in a letter that he had a "highly placed" spy in a Continental Army Regiment refers to Haussegger. According to Grant the spy was "a colonel in one of the largest regiments in the Army."

¹⁸ The text/minutes of the testimony have not been found.

¹⁹ Executive Committee of Pennsylvania to John Hancock, 17 January 1777. Paul H. Smith, ed., *Letters of Delegates to Congress, 1774-1789*, vol. 6, *January 1 - April 30, 1777* (Washington, D.C., 1980), p. 117. In his letter to Hancock of the 14th Morris had written: "we are told Colo Houssicker is in New York wearing a black Cockade. Here he wore a red one. There are bad reports & Suspicions respecting him." *Ibid.*, p. 97.

This congressional inquiry did not end the investigation into Hausegger's conduct. On 11 February 1777, Congress ordered an official inquiry and recommended that General Washington convene a court martial if necessary.²⁰ The rumors about his conduct spread by "malicious Persons that have injured my Reputation, by misrepresenting Facts relating to the late Affair at Princetown" would not die. Who were those "malicious Persons"? There are three likely candidates. One is John Adlum, a corporal in the Pennsylvania Flying Camp who had been captured at Fort Washington on 16 November 1776 and who talked to Hausegger's servant Conrad Hausman sometime in January or February 1777 while both were prisoners in New York City. Adlum's pension application indicates that he was paroled sometime in February 1777 and presumably returned to the American camp.²¹ Besides John Adlum his fellow prisoners Colonel Ethan Allen of Vermont²² and Captain Alexander Graydon of Pennsylvania²³ also later

²⁰ *Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789* (Washington, DC 1907) vol. 7: January 1--May 21, 1777, p. 107:

Information being given to Congress, that sundry officers complain of the conduct of Colonel Hausegger, Resolved, That the Board of War enquire into the nature of the charges against Colonel Hausegger, and transmit the same to General Washington, with the names of the informants and witnesses to support the charges, and desire him to take speedy and effectual measures for bringing the said Colonel Hausegger to trial.

²¹ John Adlum (1759-1836) was taken as a prisoner of war on 16 November 1776 and held in New York City until his parole in February 1777. See the pension application of John Adlum in John C. Dann, ed., *The Revolution Remembered: Eyewitness Accounts of the War for Independence* (Chicago, 1980), p. 117: "sometime in the month of February 1777 I got a parole to go home." There are two drafts of his memoirs dating between 1773-1784 in the Schoff Revolutionary War Collection, William L. Clements Library at The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Conrad Hausman of York, Pennsylvania enlisted in Captain Henry Fister's Company (nominally from Frederick County, MD) on 25 July 1776. He returned to the German Regiment in January 1777, and was discharged from the unit on 26 July 1779. Entry for "Hausman, Houseman, Conrad", in Retzer, *German Regiment*, p. 91.

²² Allen is primarily upset about Hausegger's fraternizing with General Heister: "In the meantime a Col. Hussecker, of the continental army, (as he then reported) was taken prisoner, and brought to New York, who gave out, that the country was most universally submitting to the English kings authority, and that there would be little or no opposition to Great Britain: This at first gave the officers a little shock, but in a few days they recovered themselves, for this Col. Hussecker, being a german, was feasting with Gen. D. Heister, his countryman, and from his conduct they were apprehensive, that he was a knave, at least he was esteemed so by most of the officers, it was nevertheless a day of trouble." Ethan Allen, *The Narrative of Colonel Ethan Allen* (Cambridge, MA, 1989), pp. 88-89. Allen's *Narrative* was first published in 1779.

²³ Graydon too berates Hausegger for his defeatism without stating when or where Hausegger supposedly deserted: "Other attentions, of a character not wholly dissimilar, as coming from the royal side, we could well have dispensed with. These were from Captain Davenport and Colonel Houssacker, quondam Whigs, and officers of our army . . . As to Houssacker, he had been originally commissioned a major of Wayne's battalion. He had, if I mistake not, been an adjutant of the Royal Americans, and was considered a capable disciplinarian. He was a German, or rather a man of no country or any country; a citizen of the world, a soldier of fortune, and a true mercenary. Thinking that our cause was going down rapidly, he saw no reason for adhering any longer to it; but came over to the enemy in the season of our extreme adversity, though he did not reach us until after the affairs of Trenton and Princetown. Not liking the name of a deserter, he called himself a prisoner, but certainly, if he was one, he had made much better terms than we had. He told us, however, that all was over; and that General Washington was reduced to the necessity of giving enormous bounties for only two or three weeks service; that by means of these, and haranguing his troops, he contrived to keep a few in the field, but that there was not the smallest doubt that the business was up, and America subdued. His inference was, that we ought immediately to make our peace. What do you shut yourselves up here for? Said he, in his rattling manner, to Miles, Atlee, and Magaw, with whom he was acquainted. Why don't you go to the coffeehouse and mix with the British army as I do? They will use you well you may depend upon it. And, to be sure, the thing was easy enough; it was only to change sides, to cry *peccavi*, and receive forgiveness. Nevertheless, Colonel Houssacker made no proselytes to his opinion, or rather to his principles. Our affairs, it must be confessed, were at a very low ebb; in so far, at least, as success was dependant on sheer fighting. The immense multitude which had taken the field in the beginning of the summer was no longer to be found; it had vanished . . . Still we flattered ourselves that things were better than they appeared; and notwithstanding the dire bodings of

wrote accounts of Haussegger's conduct while in captivity but upon their parole or exchange could only have served as character witnesses about his conduct in New York City, not his capture. Even Adlum was not a witness to Haussegger's capture or desertion though his story as told in February 1776 was most likely similar to that he gave in his pension application many years later:

"One evening after dark I was standing in the street door. There came two persons, one of whom was an officer and asked if Col. Miles and Col. Atlee lived there. I replied they did, when he told me to tell them that Col. Housacker was at the door. Knowing it to be the name of the Colonel that commanded the German regiment in our service raised in Pennsylvania and Maryland, I told him to walk in and I ushered him into the midst of our gentlemen officers who were listening to some [stories] of the famous Col. Ethan Allen, who was always a very welcome guest at our lodgings. But I was much astonished to see Housacker's appearance operate on our officers as suddenly as an electric shock would. As he was known to all of them except Col. Allen, who had just returned from Europe, and from a pleasant hilarity it was turned into a dead silence and all were waiting in anxious silence to know the cause of his being here. One of the gentlemen asked him if there was another battle fought. He replied, "No. I went to reconnoiter at Princeton and I was with ten men taken by the Hessians."

When I was taking him to the officers' room he turned round and said, "Housman, go to the kitchen."

As that was the name of the man who supplied my father's family with meat, as soon as I heard that there was no battle fought I went to the kitchen to see who this Housman was, and I found him to be the younger brother of the butcher abovementioned.²⁴ After asking him a few questions I went to the officer's room and whispered to Col. Magaw and Col. Miles to come into the entry as I wished to speak with them. They immediately left the room, when I informed them that Col. Housacker's waiter was from York Town [PA] and whom I knew. They told me to take him into their room and order him some refreshment and to make him a nip of warm toddy and to make particular inquiry how Col. Housacker was captured.

I accordingly got him the refreshment and made him the toddy and after some time Col. Miles came up, and Housman gave us the following particulars. The regiment was marched towards Princeton and not meeting with any enemy they continued marching until they came within about half a mile of Princeton. Major Weltner rode up to Col. Housacker and immediately a smart altercation took place between them. The Major ordered the regiment to halt. Housacker ordered them to march, when the Major said, "The enemy are in the town."

Housacker said they were not. The regiment halted during the altercation and most of the officers of the regiment came to where the Colonel and Major were disputing at the head of the regiment. The Major said, "They shall not march until the town is reconnoitered and then we can act according to circumstances."

The Colonel replied he would go and reconnoiter the town himself. He ordered out ten men and Lieutenant Barnard Hubly to go with him. The Major ordered the Lieutenant to stand by his platoon. Housacker said it was mutiny and that he would have him punished. The Major replied that prudence was

Housacker, our spirits were not a little raised by the handsome *coups de main* of Trenton and Princeton." Alexander Graydon, *Memoirs of a Life Chiefly Passed in Pennsylvania within the Last Sixty Years* (Edinburgh and London, 1822), pp. 248-249.

²⁴ Hausman may have been apprenticed to his older brother. German Regiment muster rolls indicate that Hausman was a camp butcher in 1778. "German Regiment, Compiled Military Service Records", National Archives, Washington, D.C., Reel no. 881-138, "Houseman, Conrad", entries for muster rolls dated September 4, 1778; October 6, 1778; November 6, 1778.

not mutiny and that he knew the enemy were in town and that the Colonel also knew it, and that it was highly improper to go into a place occupied by the enemy. Housacker said there was no enemy there and he set out for Princeton taking ten men with him and went direct to the Hessian general's quarters, who came to the door and took him by the hand and asked him where his regiment was. The Colonel replied that the Major mutinied and usurped the command and had even ordered an officer back to his place who he intended to have brought with him, and these ten men was all he could bring with him.

"Well," says the General, "I am sorry you did not bring in your regiment. I had ordered all the troops to keep close in their quarters. You see, I have not even a sentinel at my own door and if they had come in we could have taken them with little or no bloodshed."

And then pulled out his purse and poured some gold into his own hand and told Housacker to take what he wanted of it. The general then ordered a guard to take the men into their care. The Colonel told the General he wished to have one of the men as a waiter. The General told him to call out one, and he called up Houseman, and then the General and Colonel went into the house together and the next day they set out for N. York and called at our quarters as abovementioned. The Colonel stayed at our quarters all night and in the morning Mrs. C. was requested to give him notice that there was no room for him in that house.

I afterwards became acquainted with Colonel Weltner and Captain Hubly. They were both promoted and they both corroborated and confirmed Housman's account so far as to Colonel Weltner, when Major, of usurping the command, and Captain Hubly informed me that it prevent him from being taken prisoner. When Cols. Magaw and Miles came into the room at bedtime, I asked them what news Col. H. brought. They both said there was not doubt of his being a great scoundrel and ought to be punished as a deserter or traitor. He told the gentlemen that the whole country was submitting to the British and that it was all over with us, that the country was as much as conquered, and that the whole of the Jerseys was coming and taking the Oath of Allegiance to the King.

Col. Allen who had dined at our quarters that day and had drank pretty freely of punch was somewhat elevated. [He] told Col. H. that no true American would submit to the enemy . . . Having drank freely of punch and other good things he increased in ardor as he went along, saying . . . it was cowardly and pusillanimous in the highest degree to utter such sentiments and that the were not true, and there was the beatels of morality to beat anyone to mummy (at the same time showing a great pair of fists) anyone who dared to say our country was conquered or would submit to the enemy.

I have mentioned that there was no room in that house for him. He got quarters somewhere else, but he called at our lodgings two or three times, but as the gentlemen looked upon him as a sort of spy on their conduct they received him very coldly and as his situation could not be very pleasant he got a parole to go home, which was at Lebanon in Pennsylvania. Colonel Weltner afterwards informed me that on his way home he, Housacker, called at General Washington's quarters at Morristown in New Jersey. When he announced himself General Washington ordered that he should not be admitted and the sentinel was ordered not to permit him to go into the house. He H[aussegger] instead of going home immediately returned to N. York, and accepted of a captaincy in the new levies in the British service, where he died."²⁵

Possibly based on Adlum's report, Congress on 11 February 1777 ordered the Board of War to further investigate the allegations. Hausegger was ordered to be taken to army headquarters at Morristown by Horatio Gates. Six troopers from the Pennsylvania Light Horse Cavalry and an officer escorted

²⁵ Howard H. Peckham, ed., *Memoirs of the Life of John Adlum in the Revolutionary War* (Chicago, 1968), pp. 117-124.

Hausegger to Morristown, where he arrived on 12 February 1777.²⁶ The inquiry and interview at Morristown also did not produce evidence of any punishable action in Hausegger's conduct as Washington informed Gates on 12 February 1777:

"Dear Sir:

This will be delivered you by the Officer who came with Colo. Housegger -- and under whose care he returns again. His arrival here was what I did not expect, as I had no particular specific charge against him, nor has any thing more been alledged than general suspicions. All I meant or wished to be done respecting him, was, that you should by enquiry, trace, if you could, the causes of Complaint, and obtain some certain information of the facts imputed to him. To this end, I thought it exceedingly proper that his conduct, after his return home, should be marked with some degree of vigilance and cautious attention by our Friends in his Neighbourhood, but in such a way as not to afford him room for suspicion. This I would have done yet, but as to retaining him in arrest or under guard, without some certain and positive crime, It cannot be done; indeed his remaining here would put it much in his power, if he was so disposed, to transmit intelligence to the Enemy of an injurious nature I am etc."²⁷

Adlum's account, if true, would almost certainly have led to a court martial. Instead Washington's allowed Hausegger to return home - but the suspicion remained. Why? Both Hausegger's as well as Adlum's accounts need to be taken with a grain of salt, but both contain elements of the truth. When put together these two accounts provide a reasonably logical and/or possible sequence of events that led to Hausegger's appearance behind British lines. Hausegger's main purpose was exculpatory: he had been accused of fraternizing with the enemy if not desertion. He had to be explicit in his presentation of the regiment's movements toward Brunswick and Millstone and his 'arrest' on the afternoon of 3 Jan 1777. The account he presented to Washington and to Congress had to be factual and accurate and Hausegger took a great risk in particular when he mentioned first receiving his orders via one of Washington's aides-de-camp and later by a "Capn Craig" who accompanied him during most of the march toward Princeton.²⁸ He had to stick as closely to the truth as possible since there was always the possibility of a court martial in which these statements would come under close scrutiny during the testimony of Capt. Craig, Stricker, or any of the 400 soldiers of the German Regiment under his command. Any inaccuracy could lead to imprisonment or death on suspicions of desertion and treason. The only part of his story that would be difficult to corroborate was his 'capture' in the woods outside Princeton. Difficult, but not impossible. Adlum claimed to have heard the story from Hausegger's servant who supposedly was with him when he was captured and, given the rules of warfare in the eighteenth century, was probably paroled with Hausegger.

Taken at face value, Adlum's account of the circumstances of Hausegger's desertion, or rather the account he received from the colonel's servant, is non-sensical. Hausman supposedly told him that "The regiment

²⁶ "That there is due to William Pollard, for the expences of six of the Philadelphia light horse to bring Colonel Hausegger from Lebanon, by order of General Gates, the sum of 63 14/90th dollars."

Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789 (Washington, DC 1907) vol. 8: May 22 - October 2, 1777, p. 503 (Friday, 27 June 1777)

²⁷ Quoted from the on-line edition of the Washington Papers at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html>.

²⁸ "Capn Craig" has not been conclusively identified. There were at least four, possibly five, members of the Craig family of York County, PA alone who served in the Continental Army. The most likely candidate is Captain Samuel Craig who served as a First Lieutenant from 1 January 1776 in Colonel Hand's Rifle Regiment and was promoted to Captain on 1 October 1776. (*Pennsylvania Archives Series 2*, vol. 10, p. 328.) Hausegger would have known him since Hand's regiment had served with the German Regiment in Fermoy's Brigade. In addition Craig is listed as serving in Washington's Life Guard as early as 5 January 1777, in which function he could have delivered orders from the Commander in Chief. His service record shows him at the Battle of Princeton.

was marched towards Princeton and not meeting with any enemy they continued marching until they came within about half a mile of Princeton." At that point a rather curious conversation is said to have taken place when Major Weltner and Hausegger supposedly argued over whether Crown forces were in Princeton or not. In view of the reason why they had come to Princeton in the first place, Weltner's purported demand that "They shall not march until the town is reconnoitered and then we can act according to circumstances" is nonsensical - as is, Hausegger's claim that "they were not." It seems that during the almost 50 years between the event and the pension application Adlum muddled up the facts somewhat or, and that is equally possible, Hausegger's servant heard - and later told Adlum - only part of the conversation. Even if Adlum's accounts told in camp in February 1777 were closer to what had really happened on 3 January than the account he gave in his pension application it is still not surprising that Washington was reluctant to arrest Hausegger on Adlum's account alone and place him before a court martial.

What had happened? To begin with, Hausegger's and Adlum's (or rather Houseman's) account of the routes, locations and reasons for Hausegger being where he was are not only confirmed by Mr. Hood but match Washington's battle plan as well. In order for the Battle of Princeton to unfold as planned, Hausegger's brigade had to be the first to file off and move very quickly indeed. It had to have reached the Princeton-Trenton Road and crossed it before the lead elements of Mawhood's forces turned the corner in the road south-west of the Olden House from where they would have seen Hausegger's troops. Such a scenario is not only possible but forms the basis of Hausegger's letter. It is about 4,000 feet or 3/4 of a mile from the jump-off point to the bridge and Hausegger's hurrying troops could have covered the distance in 20 minutes, arriving at the bridge at around 0730 a.m. and thus a bit before Mawhood's forces. But their tracks would not have gone unnoticed, which may help to explain the appearance of the Light Dragoons on Cochran's Hill conducting a reconnaissance mission some 15 minutes later. From there they sighted the van of Sullivan's forces about 3/4 of a mile to the east. Unbeknownst to Hausegger, Washington's battle plan began to unravel.

That it would unravel with the sighting of the van of Sullivan's forces is not something Washington could have foreseen. From hindsight it is easy to forget that Washington made his dispositions without the knowledge that the garrison at Princeton was on the march rather than asleep in their barracks. Had Washington known that Mawhood was on his way to Trenton with his whole force he would not have sent this Second Division on a flanking maneuver where they ran the risk of running into Mawhood nor would he later have sent Mercer to take on forces that turned out to be stronger than his own.

In his letter to Washington, Hausegger explained that "On the 3d of this Instant - one of your Excellency's Aid de Camps ordered me to advance and cut off the Enemeys Retreat to Brunswick." In Washington's battle plan this is indeed the task assigned to his regiment and confirmed in Rodney's diary as well. The time was probably around 0700. Since he had the furthest to go he also must have set out from south of the Quaker Meeting House earlier than the rest of the Continental Army: at sunrise - 0730 to 0735 - Hood says he already saw Princeton while the rest of the army was not much past the Thomas Clarke House.

Hausegger's (and Mifflin's) taskforce had the longest route and set out first. His order to the "Battalion to lay down their Bagage" so that they could move faster makes sense as well. As he was marching north along the Stony Brook River he "met Capn Craig who informed me, that it was your Excellency's Orders for me to march towards Millstone and to cut off the Enemeys Retreat". Craig brought additional instructions from Washington though Hausegger of course was not ordered to Millstone, which was more than 10 miles away, but more likely to Worth's Mill near the bridge across the Stony Brook River. Hausegger continues that "said Orders I complied with, and not discovering any of the Enemy there returned towards Princetown and coming up to the Place where I had ordered the sd Bagage to be left I

sent my Battn under Lieut. Colonel Streiker over the Fence to take up their Bagage with Directions to follow me immediately." Hausegger could of course not have found any Crown Forces at the mill, so he turned around and ended up where he had ordered his men to lay down their bags - a scenario that only makes sense if Hausegger and his regiment had gotten lost.

That Washington's battle plan was about to unravel was no Hausegger's fault either. All accounts also agree that Hausegger and the German Regiment were in a detached position from the rest of the Army when something happened on the road 1/2 mile from Princeton. Both accounts have the regiment halt 1/2 mile from Princeton when a heated discourse breaks out between Hausegger and Weltner. What were they arguing about? Aware that he had lost valuable time, "I proceeded, with Capn Craig, on the Road towards Princetown and within half a Mile of Princetown I met one of my Soldiers." The road to Princeton, or rather into the back of the town to "cut off the Enemeys Retreat to Brunswick" led over high ground from where he could see the Trenton-Princeton road (NJ 206). This is confirmed in the account of Mr. Hood, whose guide seems to have known the area better and who could write that "they continued their March round the head of the Mill Creek dam, & pass'd a Bridge and so continued their rout to the Princetown Road, & then Cross'd it & pass'd into a bye road & proceeded about 1 mile to the northward of Princetown - and continued this rout till day light when they saw Princetown." While back on that "bye road" Hausegger, who had many years of military experience, had sent a few scouts ahead for reconaissance. These scouts discovered Mawhood's forces marching out of Princeton but remained undetected themselves. The presence of Crown Forces on a road where they were not supposed to be was most likely the topic of Hausegger's and Weltner's heated discussion. Unable to inform Washington of this discovery of Crown Forces, Hausegger wanted to attack while his major urged caution - not only because any gunfire might upset Washington's battle plan but because the strength and location of the enemy forces was as yet unknown. Colonel Hausegger "won" the argument over the Major and sent "Captn Craig back to Lieut: Colonel Streiker with Orders to keep the Battallion together and to march with all the Haste he could up to me through a Swamp and immediately after that I seen my Battallion crossing the Swamp towards Princetown." At that point the regiment left the road and headed for the enemy forces on the road with Hausegger riding ahead. By now the time was after 0800 and the Mercer had run into the 17th Regiment aligned behind the orchard: "And as I come to the Plains of Princetown I heard a Firing, thinking that my Battallion was engaged with the Enemy whom I was persuing, thereupon I rode towards the Battallion into the Woods, and to my great Surprize was stoped by a Party of the Enemy's" - possibly some of Cornet Staples' mounted 16th Light Dragoons who were retreating from the battlefield.

These details - if this indeed is what happened - would have come to the fore if there had been a court martial, which, to the best of our knowledge, never sat. Hausegger was very precise in his letter when he identified officers and landscape features: it would have been easy to verify the existence of a swamp somewhere to the west of Princeton. Instead suspicions continued to linger and spread from Hausegger's undoubtedly defeatist talk in New York City and fraternizing with the enemy to his actions at Princeton, which soon were and have been interpreted as desertion ever since. Though he could not find enough evidence that warranted punishment Washington never trusted him again, never gave him another command. In late 1778, Hausegger's parole was revoked and he was ordered to return to New York City. On 8 January 1779, he petitioned Congress for arrears in his pay and Congress promptly complied.²⁹ Apparently still in Philadelphia, he was one of eight officers who petitioned Congress on 20 May of the same year to be considered for a prisoner exchange. In response Washington gave explicit orders that

²⁹ Hausegger's memorial (as well as all other primary sources reproduced in the appendix) is in the Papers of the Continental Congress (The correspondence, journals, committee reports, and records of the Continental Congress (1774-1789)). National Archives and Records Administration M247, Memorials Addressed to Congress, 1775-88, RG 360, roll 50, vol. 4, page 47, Item Number 41. They can be found in the original at www.footnote.com.

Hausegger not be included in any prisoner exchange.³⁰ Hausegger returned to Long Island, from where on 30 June 1780, he submitted one final plea to Washington to be exchanged. It fell on deaf ears as well, and so, aware that he would never be exchanged nor able to clear his name, Hausegger resigned his commission in a letter to Washington sent on 5 February 1781 from New York City: "The principles of the present contest have been so totally changed from what they were when I first accepted a Commission under your command and myself so much neglected and injuriously treated by those in whose service I was, that I can not consistent with the honest man and in justice to myself hold it any longer. I have therefore taken the Liberty to enclose my Colo[nel]'s Commission (my Major's commission being long since lost) with this my final resignation thereof, which your Excellency will make acceptable to Congress."³¹

Washington's reluctance to reinstate Colonel Hausegger to his command and his refusal to exchange him even though he had been cleared by a congressional board and Washington himself could not level a "particular specific charge against him" or charge him with "some certain and positive crime" does not fit the image of the ever just and impartial Washington. If at all, it can only be understood within the context of events between December 1776 and February 1777. We may never know whether Hausegger did, or did not, desert or intend to desert or what he did or said while a prisoner in New York City to incur the wrath of his fellow prisoners, but in the political climate of the day when many previously ardent patriots seemed to have doubts about the prudence of continuing the war, when the majority of the Continental Army's enlisted men had refused to heed Washington's appeal and gone home on 31 December 1776, and when Washington himself had just read parts of an equally troubling correspondence between his trusted aide Joseph Reed and General Charles Lee, even the appearance of disloyalty could be enough to convict a man in the court of public opinion. Washington would not trust Hausegger again and he never trust Reed again either. These were indeed the times that tried men's souls.

³⁰ See Washington's letter to John Beatty of 19 August 1779 in the appendix.

³¹ Quoted from the on-line edition of the Washington Papers at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html> .

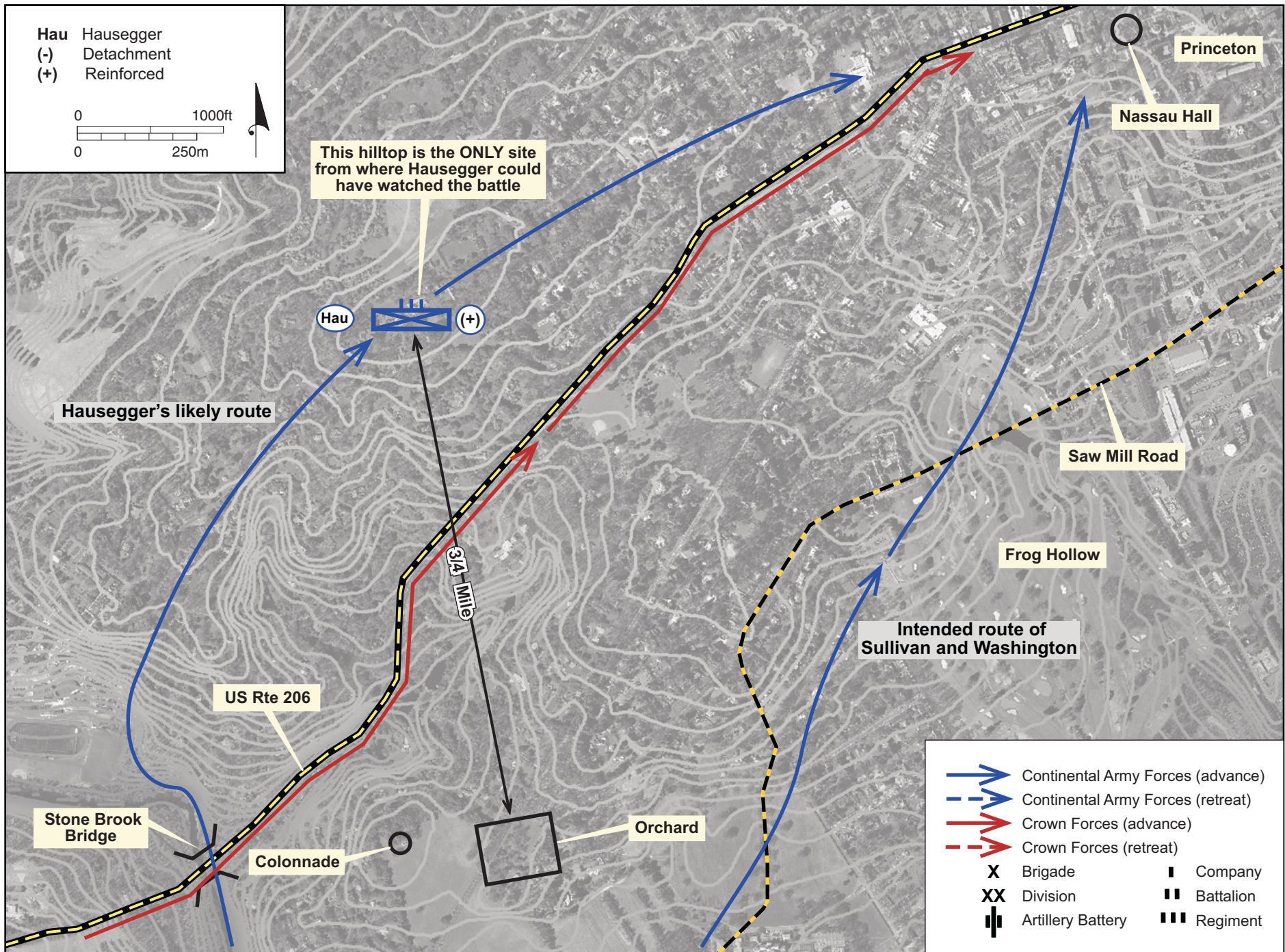


Figure 34. Conjectural route of strike force under Colonel Nicholas Hausegger.

Memorial by Hausegger to Congress, dated 8 January 1779

Hausegger's petition for exchange of 20 May 1779.

George Washington to John Beatty

Head Quarters, West Point, August 19, 1779.

Sir:

I have considered your report of the 5th instant and the papers accompanying it relative to your transactions with Mr. Loring at your last interview and I shall add a few explanatory remarks to my former instructions.

The principle which I intended to govern your exchanges as well absolute as parole for such officers of ours as had violated their paroles was, that we should only exchange those who could not be returned; all that can be returned are to be exempted from the benefit of exchange 'till further orders. But as it may be a long time before many of them can be sent in and probably several of them never will be found and it would be injustice to the enemy to detain their officers 'till the experiment could be fully tried you will in the mean time send them in on parole, with an express and positive agreement that whenever any of the aforesaid violators of parole are returned the officers exchanged in lieu of them are either to be returned also, or other officers of equal rank whom we shall demand sent out in their place.

This must be clearly determined so as to exclude all dispute or equivocation, for we wish not to make a breach of honor a privilege to the guilty person.

In order the better to enable you to carry into execution my order for calling in these breakers of parole, you will make me a report according to the best of your information of the states to which they belong and the places where they reside that application may be made for the assistance of the States to enforce their return.

I observe there are some persons who have been indulged with their paroles by the enemy not violators of parole for whom they now demand other officers to be sent in. This you will not comply with except so far as it is perfectly consistent with propriety of capture. The enemy have it at their option to recall them if they think proper.

You are not to exchange either Col. Housekker on our part, or Mr. Conolly on the part of the enemy. The former was taken in a manner which will not suffer us to consider him in the light of a common prisoner; and the latter has never been considered by us as a military prisoner of war."³²

³² Quoted from the on-line edition of the Washington Papers at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html> .

Hausegger's final petition for exchange as one of six captured American officers from Long Island dated 30 June 1780.

Appendix:

Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789 (Washington, DC 1909) vol. 13: Jan. 1-April 22, 1779, pp. 44-46:

SATURDAY, JANUARY 9, 1779

A memorial from Colonel Haussegger was read: whereupon a report from the Board of War of September 18, 1778, was taken into consideration; and, thereupon,

Resolved, That the commissary general of prisoners be furnished with money, from time to time, by the Treasury Board, for the purpose of subsisting the officers and soldiers of the United States while in captivity and in the actual possession of the enemy, and to accommodate them with sufficient sums, on account, to defray their travelling expences to their homes or regiments:

That the accounts of all prisoners who shall hereafter be released from captivity, for the pay and subsistence due to them while in the actual possession of the enemy, be received and adjusted by the said commissary general, who, after charging them with the moneys he shall have supplied them, shall certify the sums due thereon to the pay master general, the deputy pay master general of any military department, or pay master of the Board of War and Ordnance, as shall be most convenient for the prisoners respectively, which sums shall be paid by the said pay masters upon warrants to be given for the same, as usual for other payments by them made:

That the accounts of all prisoners heretofore released from captivity for their pay and subsistence, while in the actual possession of the enemy, and of all prisoners whatsoever, for all matters previous and subsequent thereto, be, and they are hereby, directed to be settled by the commissioners of accounts at camp, or those where Congress shall sit, according to the convenience of the prisoners respectively, each board communicating their settlements to the other, to prevent mal-practices or mistakes:

That all officers, while they continue prisoners on parole, shall receive their pay and subsistence of the pay master general or deputy pay master general of the department in or nearest to which they reside, by warrant from the Commander in Chief or general officer commanding in the department, or of the pay master to the Board of War and Ordnance, by warrant from the Board; these subordinate pay masters to transmit accounts monthly to the paymaster general of all such payments:

That, for defraying the expences of officers and soldiers released from captivity, on their way home, or to join their regiments, the said commissary general of prisoners, and commissioners of accounts respectively, in settling the accounts aforesaid, make an allowance of one day's pay and rations for every twenty miles such officers and soldiers had or have to travel to their homes, in case of the expiration of their time of service, or release on parole, or if otherwise, to join their regiments:

That the pay master general and other persons, having already paid or advanced moneys to prisoners, send accounts thereof immediately to the aforesaid commissioners of accounts:

That the commissary general of prisoners be allowed a clerk to enable him to perform the extra duty above assigned him, to assist him in the usual business of his department, and perform the duties and receive the pay and rations of a deputy commissary of prisoners.

Appendix V:
Archeological Evidence of the
Battle of Princeton

ARCHEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE OF THE BATTLE OF PRINCETON

Between 1989 and the present several archeological studies of various portions of the Princeton Battlefield have been undertaken and previously reported. The earliest of these studies was conducted by Dr. Keith Bonin beginning in 1989 and continuing into the 1990s. Dr. Bonin metal detected within the present-day State Park lands and on the adjacent IAS lands. His collection, at one time displayed at the Washington Crossing State Park Visitor Center/Museum, contains thirty-three items, principally musket balls, are attributed to the battleground at Princeton.

On six separate occasions between 1993 and 2000 the organization called Deep Search Metal Detecting Club (DSMDC) surveyed portions of the Princeton Battlefield State Park. Following a formal testing strategy, these surveys investigated the state lands south of Mercer Road to the Thomas Clarke House and western part of the IAS lands. Recovered military artifacts totaled fourteen, including grapeshot and musket balls (Sivilich and Phillips 2000).

In 2003 Hunter Research conducted an archeological survey of the approximately 22-acre IAS property adjacent to the Princeton Battlefield State Park (Hunter Research 2004). The metal detector portion of the survey recovered a total of 41 battle-related artifacts. Fifteen musket balls of various calibers – eight were 65-caliber or less, six were greater than 65-caliber and one was indeterminate. Some of the musket balls exhibited evidence of impaction, or having been fired, while others were dropped or not fired. One showed signs of having been extracted from the barrel, and two had dimples caused by ramrods. A small (54-caliber) pewter ball was also retrieved as were three pieces of small lead shot, likely associated with the American method of firing “buck and ball” pre-made cartridges. These artifacts likely represent American weaponry, and the pewter ball may represent a rifle ball. A possible nose cap to a Committee of Safety musket (American-made by gunsmiths in the various colonies) was also retrieved. Besides the musket balls, fourteen pieces of grapeshot were recovered spread in the field northeast of the State Park. Other military-related artifacts included a bayonet fragment, a lead strip used as a flint wrap, a copper alloy ramrod holder, a copper alloy finial to a cartridge box, and a brass tube likely associated with a cartridge waist box. An iron butt cone, used to encase the ground end of a staff or pole, was also found.

In 2004-2005 a follow-up survey of the IAS lands was conducted, but no military or battle-related artifacts were recovered (Grzybowski et al. 2007). Most recently in the summer of 2009 Battlefield Restoration and Archeological Volunteer Organization (BRAVO) conducted a metal detector survey of the Princeton Battlefield State Park property and recovered one or two battle-related artifacts in the field south of Mercer Road.

Overall, approximately 90 battle-related artifacts have been recovered and reported from the Core Area of the Princeton Battlefield included within the state park and IAS properties. The majority of the recovered artifacts are lead shot, including musket balls (including dropped, impacted, and extracted), smaller lead shot (buck shot), and possible rifle balls. These shot have been found in an area approximately 1,400 feet in length (west to east) extending from the Mercer Oak enclosure on the west to the hedge line on the IAS property west of Maxwell Lane in an area approximately 400 feet in depth (north to south) below Mercer Road and Stone House Drive. This area includes artifacts that researchers have attributed to both American and Crown Forces weaponry and accoutrements. Another small cluster of battle-related

artifacts is located in the southeast corner of the IAS field, immediately north of the hypothesized location of a portion of Saw Mill Road (see discussion in Section 3.2.1, this volume).

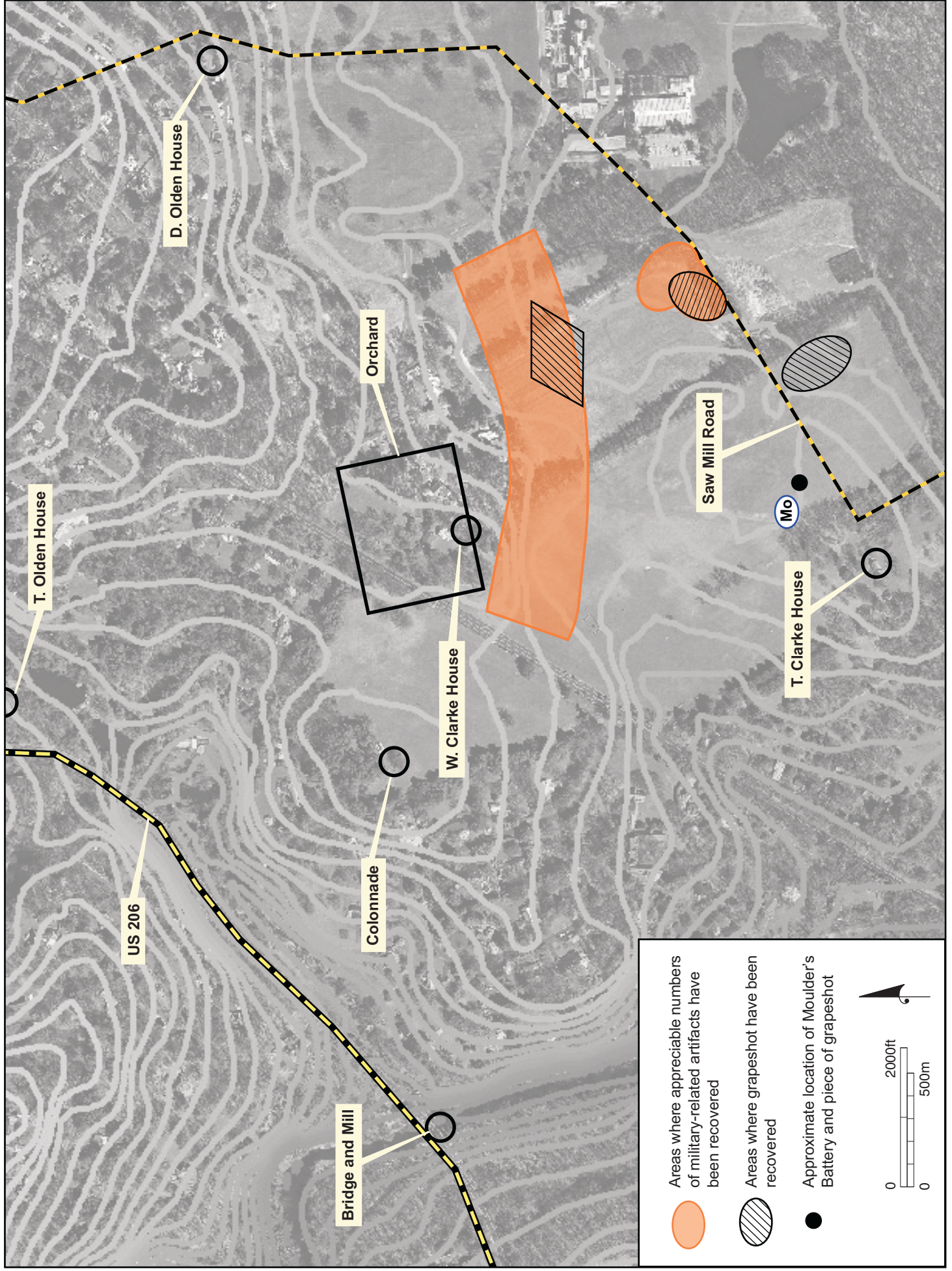
A second principal artifact type recovered on the battlefield is grape shot. Overall, seventeen pieces of grapeshot have been found in the Core Area of the battlefield. Nine of the grapeshot are found in the field area immediately south of Stone House Drive in a concentration measuring approximately 400 feet (northwest-southeast) by 250 feet (southwest-northeast). A second smaller concentration of three grapeshot is found in the southeastern corner of the IAS field, mirroring the small cluster of battle related artifacts described in the preceding paragraph. A third concentration is found in the State Park field, southeast of the hypothesized location of Saw Mill Road and below the crest of the slight topographic rise where the road may have been located (see Section 3.2.1, this volume). A final single piece of grapeshot has been recovered from the field approximately 400 feet northeast of the Thomas Clarke House.




When combined the archeological evidence provided by the series of surveys is compelling and revealing of the battle (Figure 35). The concentration of musket balls and other battle-related artifacts along the northwestern side of the topographic rise likely represents the main Crown Forces battle line following the route of Mercer's formation from the William Clarke orchard and farm. It is likely the position that 17th Regiment of Foot, reinforced with the *ad hoc* companies of light infantry, grenadier, and recruits, and supported by Royal artillery and dragoons, occupied when Hand and Hitchcock's formations attacked from the southeast and east. The density of material here, in a swath about 400 feet thick, includes not only fired and dropped musket balls and buck shot, but also parts of cartridge boxes, an extracted musket ball from a Brown Bess, a ramrod holder for a Brown Bess musket, a lead flint wrap, an iron butt cone for a pole or staff, and a silver coin (1/2 Real Spanish Cob, produced 1572-1733). Added to these artifacts is the distribution of grapeshot. The heaviest concentration of grapeshot is nearly contiguous with the density of other battle-related objects in the IAS field south of Stone House Drive. Grapeshot was an anti-personnel round, intended for killing and maiming infantry. Its presence on the battlefield in a relatively dense area suggests that infantry formations were standing in that location, taking artillery fire.

The three other concentrations of grapeshot are also of interest, because they likely represent the locations of American formations. The single grapeshot recovered east of the Thomas Clarke House has been previously interpreted as associated with the position occupied by Moulder's battery. This interpretation is further supported by the rough scatter pattern of the grapeshot described above in the IAS field, making that concentration approximately 1,000 feet from the dropped piece where Moulder's guns are situated. The group of three grapeshot in the southeast portion of the State Park field is likely related to Royal Artillery rounds fired at American formations standing along or maneuvering along Saw Mill Road. The grapeshot recovered from the southeastern portion of the IAS field, north of the hypothesized Saw Mill Road may also represent Crown Forces artillery rounds fired into American formations. Both of these concentrations support the location of Saw Mill Road as the project team has done (Section 3.2.1 above). These grapeshot also suggest that Royal Artillery batteries were placed on the high ground southwest of the William Clarke House and northeast of the Mercer Oak enclosure.

While no systematic archeological survey has been conducted to date within the Core Area of the Princeton Battlefield, the review of the above surveys and studies makes it clear that significant archeological data associated with the battle is present. To date the balance of that material has been

recovered from the IAS lands. This is likely a function of the multiple surveys of the land as well as its conditions at the time of the survey – i.e., the IAS lands were plowed and disked, something that has not occurred on the State Park property for many years.



-  Areas where appreciable numbers of military-related artifacts have been recovered
-  Areas where grapeshot have been recovered
-  Approximate location of Moulder's Battery and piece of grapeshot

0 2000ft
0 500m




Figure 35. Interpretation of archeological data, Princeton Battlefield. Sources: BRAVO 2009; Gryzbowski et al. 2007; Hunter Research, Inc. 2003; Sivilich and Phillips 2006.