



Detail from *Map of British outposts between Burlington and New Bridge, New Jersey, December 1776*

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

2nd Battle of Trenton (Battle of Assumpink Creek), New Jersey, Jan. 1-3, 1777

**Letter No. 42 from Commander-in-Chief Gen. Sir William Howe to
Secretary of State Lord George Germain, Describing 2nd Battle of Trenton,
Jan. 1 -2, 1777**

New York 5 January 1777

My Lord,

In consequence of the advantage gained by the enemy at Trenton on the 26th of last month and the necessity of an alteration in the cantonment, [Lt. Gen. Charles,] Lord Cornwallis deferring his going to England by this opportunity, went from thence to New Jersey on the 1st instant reached Princeton that night, to which place [Maj.] General [James] 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 2^d 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 [Charles] Mawhood [17th Regt.] at Princeton, and the 2^d brigade with Brigadier-General [Hon. Alexander] 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 [Assumpink] creek running through Trenton...

Source: William S. Stryker, *Documents relating to the Revolutionary history of the State of New Jersey* (Trenton, 1931), vol. 1: 1776-1777, pp. 369-371.



Detail Showing Trenton Bridge over Assumpink Creek from “Sketch of the engagement at Trenton, given on the 26th of December 1776 betwixt the American troops under command of General Washington, and three Hessian regiments under command of Colonel Rall, in which the latter a part surrendert themselves prisoner of war,” by Andreas Wiederholdt

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

**Translation of Letter from Hessian Col. Carl von Donop to Hessian Commander
Lt. Gen. Wilhelm von Knyphausen Describing the Actions of His Brigade
(Including the 42nd Regt.) at the 2nd Battle of Trenton, New Jersey, Jan. 2, 1777**

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 [Maj.] General [James] Grant arrived with the English Grenadiers and the Fourth Brigade, which I accordingly made advance up to the bridge with my brigade inc^l. the 42^d Regiment and the [Hessian Grenadier] 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 [Charles, Earl] Cornwallis arrived in Princeton. At 8 o'clock in the morning of the 2^d 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.

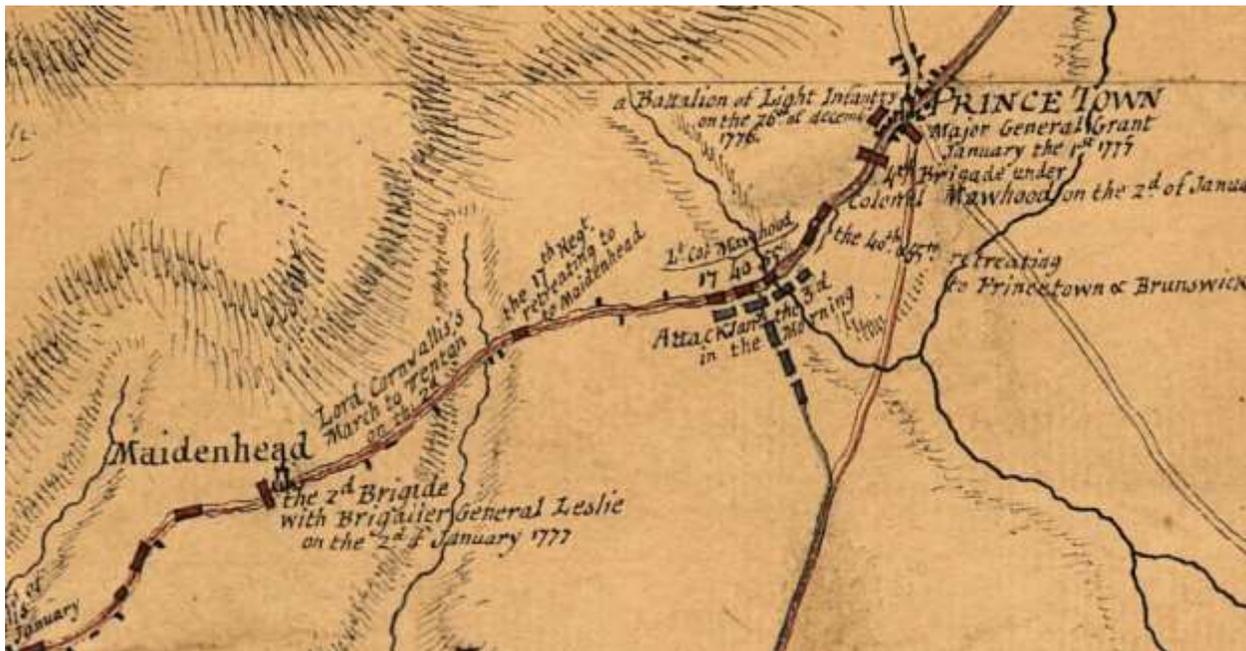
The two [Hessian] Grenadier Battalions Linsingen and Block with the Jäger Corps were the first to enter into the city. I posted the Battalion Minnigerode with the rest of the Brigade Rall on the height on the left since a Rebel Corps was beyond the river which is there. Inside and outside Trenton we 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 [Brig.] General [Hon. Alexander] Leslie had advanced to Maidenhead and therefore only a few battalions of the Fourth Brigade were at Princeton...

I have the honor to be
Your Excellency's &c &c &c
Donop

Source and Notes: *James Grant Papers of Ballindalloch Castle, Scotland*; Microfilm, Library of Congress, Reel 37, Correspondence, January, 1777 from *Battle of Princeton Mapping Project: Report of Military terrain Analysis and battle Narrative, Princeton, New Jersey*, by Robert A. Selig, Ph.D., Matthew Harris, and Wade P. Catts, RPA, Princeton Battlefield Society, West Chester (Pa.), 2010. Although the addressee is not shown, only the British Commander-in-Chief and the Hessian Commander were normally addressed as "Your Excellency." Based on the Hessian personnel information in the letter, it appears this letter was meant for von Knyphausen. Von Donop mentions in the second paragraph that he still commands the 42nd Regt. This is contrary to the wishes of Gen. Sir William Howe, expressed to Maj. Gen Grant in a Dec. 28, 1776 letter where Howe wrote: "... I do not wish he should have any british if it can be properly avoided..."



Detail Showing Route from Princeton to Maidenhead from "Plan of the operations of General Washington against the King's troops in New Jersey, from the 26th of December 1776 to the 3d of January 1777."

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

Journal of Engineer Extraordinary and Capt. Lt. Archibald Robertson Describes the British and Hessian Advance from Princeton and 2nd Battle of Trenton, Jan. 1-2, 1777

January 1st At day Break march'd with the Troops mention'd from Brunswick and arrived at Princetown about 1 o'clock where we found the Troops Cantoned there (consisting of 3 Battalions Hessian Grenadiers, 1 Company Jagers, 2 Battalions Light Infantry, the 2^d Brigade and 42^d Regiment commanded by Brigadier General [Hon. Alexander] Leslie) drawn up with their Arms expecting Enemy as a small Skirmish had happened Close to our out Piquets when the Rebels lost 4 men Killed. In the middle of the Night [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis Arrived from York and superceded [Maj.] General [James]

Grant in his Command: Immediately after our Arrival to day I attended [Gen.] Sir William [Howe] and [Hessian Col.] Count [Carl von] Donop on an advanced party about 3 miles toward Maiden Head but saw nobody. Got wet to the Skin. The 42^d and 3 Hessian Battalions of Grenadiers and Jagers Advanced about a mile from Prince Town and Bevak 'd it, under Count Donop.

2^d At Daybreak, Count Donop advanced with his corps towards Maiden Head and Trenton. At Maiden Head some of the Rebels were posted with Cannon but they went off. The 2 Battalions British Grenadier Guards, 2 Battalions Light Infantry were ordered forward to Join Donop and the 2^d Brigade to take Post at Maiden Head. The 3 Regiment of the 4th Brigade [17th, 40th and 55th] were left at Princetown under Lieutenant Colonel [Charles] Mawhood [17th Regt.]. We lost a great deal of time owing to the whole's not marching in one Body from Prince Town and run a Risque of having been cut up in Detail. After the Light Infantry Joined us we advanced and found the Rebels posted on the top of a Rising ground covered with wood within 20 miles of Trenton. The Jagers at first gave way a little but were soon supported by the Light Infantry. By a Prisoner taken we learnt that there were two Battalions in the wood one on each hand of us. The Horse [Foot] Guards and [42nd] Highlanders were form'd and advanced on our left in Front where they saw the Rebels as if they intended to form but they retired into the woods on the other side of the Assumpink Creek just opposite to us and within a mile and half of Trenton where the main Body was. In order to amuse us they Manœuver'd 2 or 3,000 men on their Right very well making a Demonstration of Passing the Creek at two Different places in their Possession where it was fordable, so that by that means to turn our left Flank if we advanced towards Trenton. However the heights and woods on our Right were soon forced with little loss and our Troops followed them into Trenton where their main Body were drawn up, about 6 or 7,000, with the Creek and Bridge in front and a Number of Field pieces. We lost a few men with the Cannonade but durst not attack them. They were exactly in the Position [Hessian Col. Johann von] Rall should have taken when He was attack'd from which He might have retreated towards Borden's Town with very little Loss. I observed distinctly this Evening the Rebels filing of to their left, which made Sir William post the 2^d Battalion Grenadiers and Guards with a Battalion Hessian Grenadiers to secure that Flank. At the same time were Apprehensive they meditated a Blow on Prince Town which was but weak. Two of the 3 Regiments have been order'd to join us after we saw the Rebels force. Our Troops all lay out. Hard frost and 2 Battalions Light Infantry lay in Trenton without fires by way of Piquets to watch the Rebels on the other side the Creek.

Source: *Archibald Robertson, Lieutenant-General Royal Engineers, His Diaries and Sketches in America*, Ed. Harry Miller Lydenberg, New York Public Library, New York, 1930, pp. 118-120.

Extract of Journal of Sgt. Thomas Sullivan, 49th Regt., Describing 42nd Regt. at 2nd Battle of Trenton, New Jersey, Jan. 1-2. 1777

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 [Jägers], with the 42^d. Regiment, which last were obliged to quit their station and retreat from Burlington, came to Princetown, where the main body of the Army lay...

In consequence of the advantage gained by the enemy at Trenton, and the necessity of an alteration in the cantonments, [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis deferring his going to England, went to the Jerseys, and reached, Princetown this night; the troops being ordered there by Major General [James] Grant, upon gaining intelligence that the enemy, on receeving reinforcements from Virginia, Maryland, and y^c Militia of Pennsylvania had repassed the Delaware into Jersey.

January 2^d.— Lord Cornwallis, with the 1st. and 2^d. Battalions of Light Infantry; 42^d. Regiment; and Colonel [Carl von] 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 Lieu^t. Colonel [Charles] Mawhood [17th Regt.], in Princetown, and the 2^d. Brigade with Brigadier General [Hon. Alexander] 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...

Source and Notes: *From Redcoat to Rebel, The Thomas Sullivan Journal*, Ed. Joseph Lee Boyle, Heritage Books, Bowie (Md.), 1997, p. 98 and "The Battle of Princeton," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 32 no. 1 (Jan. 1908), pp. 54-57. Corp. Sullivan was in the 49th Regt. in the 2nd Brigade. The village of Maidenhead is now Lawrenceville, New Jersey.



Danish General (Former Hessian Jäger Capt.) Johann Ewald, 1835, C. A. Jensen, after a drawing by H. J. Aldenrath

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons

Hessian Jäger Capt. Johann Ewald's Account of Lt. Gen. Charles, Earl Cornwallis' Approach to Trenton, New Jersey, Jan. 1-2, 1777

At daybreak on January 1, Lt. Col. [Robert] Abercromby [1st Lt. Infantry Battalion] marched toward Maidenhead with the English light infantry [including Capt. Hon. George Mackenzie's 42nd Lt. Infantry Co.], Captain Lorey with the mounted jägers, and the Donop Jäger Company under Captain [Carl August von] Wreden in order to dislodge the enemy from this pass...

For several days the snow had risen high, and the cold was exceptionally severe in the afternoon... I received orders to march to Princeton. At this time the weather began to break, and since it was raining heavily the march was very unpleasant.

On the 2^d at daybreak I arrived in Princeton, where I found the entire army under arms. I was ordered to draw biscuit and brandy from the depot for the men, and to continue marching to Maidenhead, where I found Colonel [Carl von] Donop with the Hessian grenadiers, the jägers and the light infantry. I learned here that yesterday Lieutenant Colonel Abercromby, with the jägers and light infantry, had attacked the enemy, who had defended himself well and had not left the pass until the [Hessian] grenadiers were brought up against him. There were about one hundred and forty men lost on both sides, among whom were a jäger corporal and six jägers.

About noon [Lt. Gen. Charles] Lord Cornwallis arrived with the whole army. The baggage had remained at Princeton under protection of two regiments, and a detachment of light infantry continued to hold the pass at Maidenhead. The army set out in one column toward Trenton in the following order: the vanguard under Colonel Donop consisted of the two jäger companies, one hundred Hessian Grenadiers, and two troops of light dragoons from the 16th [Lt. Dragoon] Regiment. Then followed the light infantry and a number of 6-pounders, the English and Hessian Grenadiers, the remnants of the decimated [Col. Johann Rall's] Hessian brigade, two English brigades, and the 16th Regiment of Dragoons.

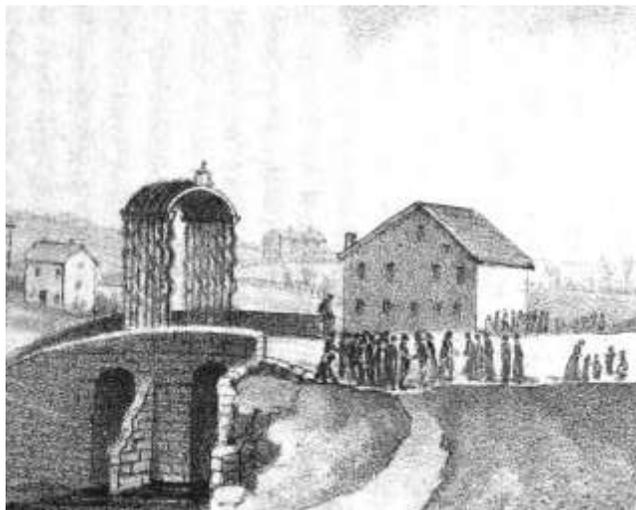
The army was scarcely in motion when the advanced guard came upon an enemy outpost, which withdrew into a small wood through which the highway ran to Trenton, where Lieutenant von Grothausen – [un]fortunately for him – was shot dead along with several jägers. The [Hessian] Grenadier Battalion Minnigerode and the decimated [Rall's Hessian] brigade took post upon a height in this area where a road from Allentown ran into one going to Trenton. We learned from the prisoners who fell into our hands in this skirmish that [Rebel Gen. George] Washington and his army stood behind the Assunpink [Creek] at Trenton, and that a detached corps under Colonel [Nicholas] Haussegger, a Swiss, had occupied the heights on this side of Trenton.

Toward evening we reached the heights, which were occupied by the enemy with an infantry corps, some cavalry, and several guns. The jägers and light infantry, supported by the Hessian grenadiers, attacked the enemy at once, whereupon he withdrew through Trenton across the bridge to his army after slight resistance. But the rear guard was so hard pressed by the jägers and light infantry that the majority were either killed or captured. The jägers and light infantry immediately attempted to occupy the houses of the town on this side of the bridge. Since the enemy had likewise occupied the houses on the other side, which lay in front of the enemy army, a stubborn outpost fight occurred here whereby many men were killed and wounded on both sides. During this fighting the army deployed upon the heights before the town.

General Washington, who desired to bring an end to this action, brought up several howitzers to dislodge us from the houses, which nevertheless were held until the dark night.

Lord Cornwallis then ordered the light infantry and the Scots [42nd Regt.] to occupy the right bank of Assunpink Creek to keep sharp eye on the movements of the enemy.

Source: *Diary of the American War, A Hessian Journal, Captain Johann Ewald*, trans. and Edited by Joseph P. Tustin, Yale Univ. Press, New Haven, 1979, pp. 48-49. The 71st Highlanders were not present indicating the "Scots" in Ewald's account likely represents the 42nd Highlanders, although it is possible Ewald was referring to the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co. which served in the 1st Lt. Inf. Bn. The 3rd British Grenadier Bn. (including the 42nd Gren. Co.) was not present due to its inclusion in the Rhode Island expedition.



Detail of Print of "View of the Assunpink Bridge Built in 1760" c. 1789

(The Bower in the Middle of the Bridge was not present during the battle).

Picture Source: *A New Historic Manual Concerning the Three Battles at Trenton and Princeton, New Jersey, During the War for American Independence, in 1776 and 1777*, C. C. Haven, Wn. T. Nicolson, Printer, Trenton, 1871, Google Books, after p.56.

**Rebel Artillery Sgt. Joseph White's Description of the 2nd Battle of Trenton,
New Jersey, Jan. 2, 1777**

After staying in Pennsylvania from 26th of December 1775 [1776] to January 2d, 1777 our whole army crossed over to Trenton again with about one half the number less than we had when we retreated over the river Delaware.

The night before a large body of militia joined our army, and they were sent out to meet the enemy, and fight upon their retreat. As soon as they had got over the bridge, we had all our cannon placed before it, consisting of 18 or 19 pieces. The enemy came on in solid columns: we let them come on some ways, then by a signal given, we all fired together. The enemy retreated off the bridge and formed again, and we were ready for them. Our whole artillery was again discharged at them. They retreated again and formed: they came on a third time. We loaded with cannister shot, and let them come nearer. We fired all together again, and such destruction it made, you cannot conceive. The bridge looked red as blood, with their killed and wounded and their red coats. The enemy beat a retreat, and it began to grow dark.

We were dismissed for an hour or two, to pull down all the fences we could find, to build fires with them—and get some refreshment. The fires were made to deceive the enemy: to make them suppose that we were there encamped.

About 9 or 10 o'clock orders came by whispering, (not a loud word must be spoken) to form the line and march. We took such a circuitous rout, we were all night marching from Trenton to Princeton...

Source and Note: *The Battles of Trenton and Princeton*, William S. Stryker, Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston, 1898, pp. 479-480. The 42nd Regt. took part in the attack through Trenton.

**Excerpt of Letter from Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling, 42nd Regt., to his Brother,
Sir William Stirling of Ardoch, Discussing 2nd Battle of Trenton, New Jersey, Jan 2, 1777**

New York, Jan^y 10th 1777

...the Rebels crossed the Delaware River a few miles above Trenton in considerable force – attacked a Brigade of Hessians in that town commanded by Colonel [Johann] Ralle consisting of 3 Reg^{ts} (1200 men) on the 26th Dec^r, surprised them and killed about 20 men and took 900 Prisoners. This obliged another Brigade of Hessians and our [42nd] Reg't which the General had attached to these Foreigners to retire for fear of being cut off to Princeton where [Brig.] Gen'l [Hon. Alexander] Leslie commanded, this threw all of West Jersey into their Power and Washington threatened attacking us there, this occasioned [Maj.] Gen'l [James] Grant who was at Brunswick 17 Mile from us to march with a body of men to support us and enable us to act offensively against them which we did next day and drove them before us out of Trenton...

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

**Extract of a Letter from Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling to Gen. Lord John Murray,
Col., 42nd Regt., Reports Casualties from 2nd Battle of Trenton, Jan. 2, 1777**

Dated Pisquata in Jersey near Brunswick Feb: 10th 1777

I have the pleasure to inform your Lordship that the behavior of the Reg't has been very Gallant and Spirited, though the whole of this severe Campaign which I may say is not ended yet...

By return you see the Reg^t want 62 to compleat to which 22 must be added that are going to be Discharged & Recommended so that we want in all 84 Men.

N.B. ...At Trenton in D^o [New Jersey] 2^d Jan^{ry} 77. 2 private wounded...

Source: *Lord John Murray Papers*.



"The Death of General Mercer at the Battle of Princeton, January 3, 1777," 1789 by John Trumbull

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons, from *Yale University Art Gallery*

Battle of Princeton, New Jersey, Jan. 3, 1776

**Letter No. 42 from Commander-in-Chief Gen. Sir William Howe to
Secretary of State Lord George Germain, Describing the Battle of Princeton, New Jersey,
Jan. 2-3, 1777**

New York 5 January 1777

My Lord,

... During the night of the 2^d the enemy quitted its situation [in Trenton] and marching by Allentown and from thence to Princeton, fell in on the, morning of the 3^d with the 17th and 55th Regiments on their march to join Brigadier-General [Hon Alexander] Leslie at Maidenhead. Lieutenant-Colonel [Charles] 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 [Hon. William] Leslie of the 17th was among the few killed. For further particulars I beg leave to refer your Lordship to the enclosed return. Captain [Erasmus John] 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 [Brig.] General [Hugh] 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 [Lt. Gen. Charles] 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 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 [John] 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 missing 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.

Source and Note: William S. Stryker, *Documents relating to the Revolutionary history of the State of New Jersey* (Trenton, 1931), vol. 1: 1776-1777, pp. 369-371. Although a section of Highlanders were recognized during the battle by several participants, no Highlanders are listed in the casualties. These Highlanders are thought to be formerly sick soldiers returning to the regiment under the command of a captain of the 71st Highlanders. Pvt. George Buchannan, of Capt. Erskine's Co. was captured at Princeton.

**Excerpt of Letter from Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling, 42nd Regt., to his Brother,
Sir William Stirling of Ardoch, Discussing the Battle of Princeton, New Jersey, Jan 3, 1777**

New York, Jan^y 10th 1777

...but in the night they marched around us, and attacked Princeton & drove 3 Reg^{ts} there quite out of the place who went to Brunswick, and the first notice we had of that affair was the cannon and small arms [illegible] to their [illegible] but it was all over before we got up we were obliged to make a forced march to prevent Brunswick from falling into there hands [illegible], which would have been the case had the Rebels pursued their success, but they contented themselves with what they had done in Princeton and turned off to the left however this forced us to abandon Princeton and we now have nothing on north [south] side of Rariton river but Brunswick, and since that we have abandoned successively our Cantonments in East Jersey likewise, and have nothing left in all that Province but Brunswick and Amboy...

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



Detail of *Portrait of Col. Carl Aemil Ulrich von Donop*

Portrait Source: Wikimedia Commons

Excerpt of Translation of a Letter from Col. Carl von Donop to Hessian Commander Lt. Gen. Wilhelm von Knyphausen, Describing the Actions of His Brigade (Including the 42nd Regt.) at the Battle of Princeton, New Jersey, Jan. 2-3, 1777

Cantonement Brunswick 6 January 1777

...The English Grenadiers followed my Brigade [to Trenton] and were placed on the left wing next to the Battalion Minnigerode. The Brigade of [Brig.] General [Hon. Alexander] Leslie had advanced to Maidenhead and therefore only a few battalions of the Fourth Brigade were at Princeton. M^r. [Rebel Gen. George] 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 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...

Source: *James Grant Papers of Ballindalloch Castle*, Scotland; Microfilm, Library of Congress, Reel 37, Correspondence, January, 1777 from *Battle of Princeton Mapping Project: Report of Military terrain Analysis and battle Narrative, Princeton, New Jersey*, by Robert A. Selig, Ph.D., Matthew Harris, and Wade P. Catts, RPA, Princeton Battlefield Society, West Chester (Pa.), 2010.

Journal of Engineer Extraordinary and Capt. Lt. Archibald Robertson Describes the Battle of Princeton, New Jersey, Jan. 3-5, 1777

3^d At Day Break reported that the Rebels were all gone [from Trenton] which it was generally 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 Grenadiers British had orders to go back as quick as possible and the Light Infantry [including the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co.] and Hessian Grenadiers to follow. Also orders sent to [Brig] General [Hon. Alexander] Leslie to march when we were certain where the Attack was, but before we got there the Afair 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, toward, Kingston with the greatest Body and some to the Right and left into the woods. As our Rear did not come up untill near 4 in the Evening we could not pursue them quickly as it was said they intended the same Coup upon Brunswick. They had not time to destroy either our Ammunition or Stores. About ½ 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. Through-out this whole Expedition we certainly allways erred in imprudently separating our Small Army of 6,000 men by far too much and must hope it will serve as a lesson in future never to despise any Enemy too much.

Our Troops went this very great fatigue with great Spirits. The last march was upwards of 30 miles after having been on the Alert for several nights running. The Rebels were all night about Hillsborough.

5th [Rebel] General [George] Washington march'd over the Raritan to Pluckhemin. The 4th Brigade went to Amboy and orders sent to the Different Cantonments on our Right to collect at Elizabeth Town, the 42^d at Piscatouay.

Source: *Archibald Robertson, Lieutenant-General Royal Engineers, His Diaries and Sketches in America*, Ed. Harry Miller Lydenberg, New York Public Library, New York, 1930, pp. 120-122.

Excerpt of Journal of Sgt. Joseph White, Col. Gridley's Massachusetts Artillery Regt., Reporting Highlanders at Battle of Princeton, New Jersey, Jan. 3, 1777

About 9 or 10 o'clock, orders came by whispering, (not a loud word must be spoken), to form the line and march. We took such a circuitous rout, we were all night marching from Trenton to Princeton...

A little before we got in sight of the enemy, our whole army halted...

We marched on a short distance, we see them all formed in a line, and ready to receive us.

We marched forward so did they, I ordered the limbers off, and to man the drag ropes – They were to the north of us, the sun shone upon them, and their arms glistened very bright, it seemed to strike an awe upon us.

The Cap^t: 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 [Brig.] Gen. [Hugh] 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...

Source and Note: "The Good Soldier White." *American Heritage* 7 no. 4 (June 1956), pp. 73-79, p. 78. Transcribed in *Battle of Princeton Mapping Project, Report of Military Terrain Analysis and Battle Narrative, Princeton New Jersey*, Prepared by John Milner Associates, West Chester (Pa.), Sept. 2010, pp. 142-143. The Highlanders mentioned likely were a collection of formerly sick Highlanders from both regiments rejoining their companies. The Highlanders are sometime mentioned in current histories as recruits joining the Highland regiments. This assumption is incorrect as the first replacements for the Highland regiments did not arrive until July 8, 1777 when the regiments had already embarked for the Philadelphia Campaign. Instead they are likely formerly sick soldiers returning to the regiment. Pvt. George Buchannon, of Capt. Erskine's Co. was captured at Princeton.

Pvt. George Buchanan, Capt. Erskine's Company, 42nd Regt., Captured at Battle of Princeton, New Jersey, Jan. 3, 1777

List of Officers & c. Belonging to the Service of Great Britain sent from Philadelphia to New York October the [blank] 1778 under the care of [blank]

3 January 1777 Princeton- Private George Buchannon....

Source: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, *Thomas Bradford Papers*, Land and Naval Prisoners, p. 17. Transcribed and provided by Todd Braisted. Pvt. Buchannon was exchanged and returned to the regiment by this document.

Account by Lt. Martin Hunter, 52nd Lt. Infantry Company, of Recovered Soldiers from New York Hospital, Marching to Join Their Regiments, Engaged at Battle of Princeton, New Jersey, Jan. 3, 1777

[Rebel Commander] General [George] 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 [Thomas] Williamson [52nd Regt.] 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.

Source and Note: "Martin Hunter's Journal: America 1774-1778." Ed. Lawrence H. in *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. The presence of these formerly sick soldiers at the battle likely explains why Highlanders were observed at the battle, and why Pvt. George Buchannon, 42nd Regt., was captured there.

Extract of Letter from Robert Morris to Rhode Island Gov. Nicholas Cooke, Regarding Highlanders at Battle of Princeton, New Jersey, Jan. 2-3, 1777.

Sir.

[Philadelphia, Jan. 9, 1777.]

I have the honor to transmit you herewith a letter from the Hon^b Mr Ellery who desires me to give you an account of the battle of the 3rd 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 M^r Ellery has given you the situation of the 2 armies on Thursday evening the 2^d instant as I transmitted to Congress an exact account thereof. That night Gen^l 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 com^r of the Guard cannonaded the enemy awhile to amuse them and 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 undecieved, 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 ab^t 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...

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.

Source and Note: Robert Morris to Governor Nicholas Cooke, Jan. 9, 1777, *Letters of delegates to Congress, 1774-1789* vol. 6, 1 January 1777 - 30 April 1777. Transcribed in *Battle of Princeton Mapping Project, Report of Military Terrain Analysis and Battle Narrative*, Princeton New Jersey, Prepared by John Milner Associates, West Chester (Pa.), Sept. 2010, pp. 93-94.

Excerpt of Memoir of Rebel Pvt. Elisha Bostwick, 19th Connecticut Regt., Mentions Captured Highlanders after the Battle of Princeton, New Jersey, Jan. 2-3, 1777

On 2 January [a]n alarm was made our army cross'd the bridge & form'd on the South side of the [Assumpink] 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 circuetous 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... [Brig.] Gen^l. [Hugh] Mercer was kill'd in this Battle and some highlanders with their Scotch plaid dress were Conducted to Peekshill under a guard which was composed of those of us who belong'd to Col. [Charles] Webbs [19th Connecticut] Reg^t. and here Col Webb discharged the Supernumerary officers of his Reg^t. & they went ...home

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

42nd Regt. Stationed at Piscataway, New Jersey, Jan. –May 10, 1777



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

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

**Letter from Commander in Chief Gen. Sir William Howe to
Lt. Gen. Charles, Earl Cornwallis, on Positioning of Troops in New Jersey, With
Options for the 42nd Regt. at Scotch Plains or Bound Brook, New York, Jan. 4, 1777**

N. York 8 o'clock p.m.
Saturday Jan: 4th [1777]

My Dear Lord

About two hours past I rec^d. y^r. letter of this date at 7 O'Clock & in consequence of my apprehensions that y^e. Enemy, should he not march w^t. y^e. whole, may detach 2 or 3000 men into Morris County, I iss^d orders this night for y^e. march of y^e. 7th. & 26th. Reg^{ts}. to Bergen there to remain for your farther orders & have also ordered y^e. whole of y^e. 71st to take up their Quarters at Elizabethtown w^t. y^e. Waldeck & troop of Drag^{ns} _ The Baggage guard of y^e. 46th & troop of 17th Drag^{ns} at Spanktown to march to Amboy. all these Corps to take their baggage & to wait y^r. orders, At the same time they are acquainted that any orders you may have for these Corps that may Clash w^t. mine are to be obeyed in preference to those from me. When you have no farther occasion for the 46th, that Reg^t may as well be sent to Amboy – I confess I am in [illegible] for y^e. 55th at Hillsborough, but hope they have not remained there en prise, thinking y^e. Enemy made y^e. move over Rocky Hill bridge in order to get around to Morris County by way of Hillsborough _ or could it possibly be that he made y^e. move round y^r. right to Princeton in order to get at y^e. Delawar to cross it above? And in his way [illeg -1] by fell in w^t Maud [Lt. Col. Charles Mawhood, 17th Regt.]

But if he is crossed y^e. River again [illegible phrase] I Should hope by y^e. assistance of y^e. Redoubts we might still hold Princetown w^t. y^e. Second Brigade & Hessn Grenadiers & giving up Hillsborough, put y^e. 4th Brigade in & about Brunswick, the 42^d towards Scotch Plains & y^e. two battalions of L. [Light] Infantry between Brunswick & Princetown. The sooner to Brunswick y^e better_ In this Situation I think our Cantonments will still be secure _ Should y^e. Enemy penetrate into Morris County, we would go after him, & drive him back, otherwise I do not wish to harass y^e. Troops. I am much concerned for y^e. loss of y^e. three Captains y^r. L^{rs}. [letters] mentions to have been killed viz: [Hon. William] Leslie [17th], [Erasmus John] Phillips [35th Gren.] & [Thomas] Williamson [52nd] _ I do not rightly understand how it came that B. Gen. [Hon. Alexander] Leslie did not support Maud, who appears to have been so near when the last was attackd _ When we may be a little more quiet y^e. 7th. & 26th. may move to Spanktown. I shall wait w^h impatience to hear what route Washington has taken from Rocky Hill bridge _ With earnest wishes for y^r. Safety & that you or y^r. Colleagues may not suffer by over fatigue I am my D^r. Lord most faithfully

Y^{rs}. WHowe

L Gen. Cornwallis

The 42^d. perhaps would be better placed towards Bound brook

Source: *James Grant Papers of Ballindalloch Castle*, Scotland; Library of Congress Microcopy, Reel 37, Army Career Series, Correspondence, January, 1777, p. 3. Transcribed by Todd Braisted. Bound Brook is about nine miles northwest of Brunswick on the Raritan River.

**Letter from Commander-in-Chief Gen. Sir William Howe to Lt. Gen. Charles,
Earl Cornwallis, Regarding the Status of the Army in New Jersey, Jan. 5, 1777**

N. York Jan: 5th.
Sunday Eleven o'clock A.M.

My D^f. Lord

This morning at 4. I got y^r. second letter of yesterdays date _ I rather think y^e. 46th. will be too much exposed at Spanktown & by their being at Amboy/as mentioned in my letter sent off to you last night/ that garrison will be sufficiently Strong to send Patroles part way to meet others from Elizabethtown & Brunswick with w^h. I think we'll be y^e. best means of preventing surprize _ at y^e. same time if they are to be had, there cannot be too great a number of persons employed for intelligence from all y^r. posts _

I approve of y^r. orders for y^r troops to Elizabethtown & will send to Bergen for y^e. removal of y^e. 7th. & 26th from there, to go by way of New ark thither.

The post of Brunswick I think must not be given up – Tho from y^e. difficulty of y^e communications [illegible words] propose to keep Princetown_ With respect to y^e. Strength of y^e. post at Brunswick & y^e. Landing, the river, having y^e. possession of y^e. bridges /w^h. by y^e. way must be Secured/ is rather a struggle & y^e. post, and you would bring y^e. whole force to operate on one side or other of y^e. bridge, without y^e. Enemy being able to support a division of their troops on each side y^e. river.

But it is clear to me, from their not attempting to attack you after having drove off y^e. 4th. brigade, or not remaining to wait your return at Princetown that they are still very unequal to any attack at Brunswick, & that River [illegible words] are only to harass or perhaps to attack Elizabethtown with present state of having only one battⁿ. in it _ If they cross y^e. Raritan & march towards you, I think you cannot fail of defeating them, but I would not have you quit Brunswick, unless you have a good prospect of catching them, not that I suppose they can subsist any time in strength in this County – Should they get forward notwithstanding to Morristown, you may in that case possibly get between them & y^e. Rariton, but I hardly think they will commit themselves in that [illegible] – They are too wary –

I could wish [Rebel Maj. Gen. Charles] Lee were kept near y^e. bridge at Brunswick, rather than he should come here, but if you desire much to be rid of him, I must consent, at y^e. same time I think we must be hard drove before we quit Brunswick _ Yet how you will manage to covir a body of troops there I confess I am at a loss to say –

All y^e Sledges in y^e. country should be taken to Brunswick [illegible phrase] provisions & baggage in case a move against y^e. Enemy may at any time be necessary after y^e. snow has fallen, w^h. we may shortly expect.

Cannot y^r. Troops at Elizabethtown be supplied w^t provisions from Amboy by water?

Mauds [Lt. Col. Charles Mahwood, 17th Regt.] behavior shall not be forgot in my letters home by [Adm. Molyneux] L^d. Shuldham _ I shall hope to hear tomorrow morning that you have fixt Washington – I think his army must suffer exceedingly by this weather

Adieu My D^f. Lord
Y^{rs}. Entirely
WHowe

L. G. Cornwallis

Comp^{ts} to [Maj. Gen. James] Grant & [Brig. Gen. Sir William] Erskine _ and am sorry they have [illegible] Christmas

I think we'll Supply the Eliz:town troops w^t. prov^{ns}. From River –

Source: *James Grant Papers of Ballindalloch Castle, Scotland*; Library of Congress Microcopy, Reel 37, Army Career Series, Correspondence, Jan. 1777.

Lt. Henry Stirke's Account of New Winter Quarters for the 1st Lt. Infantry Battalion, Including the 42nd Lt. Inf. Co., Near Brunswick, New Jersey, Approx. Jan. 5, 1777

...That unlucky affair of [Hessian] Colonel [Johann] 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, about a mile above [upstream of] the Town; where we spent a very Disagreeable Winter, continually harrass'd in Observing the motions of the Enemy, collecting forage &c...

Source: "A British Officer's Revolutionary War Journal, 1776 – 1778," Ed. S. Sydney Bradford in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, Vol. 56, No. 2, Baltimore, June 1961, pp. 166 - 167.



Detail of Portrait of Maj. Gen. James Grant of Ballindalloch, circa 1770

Picture Source: Wikimedia Commons

Letter from Commander-in-Chief Gen. Sir William Howe to New Jersey Commander Maj. Gen. James Grant, Mentioning the Position of the 42nd Regt., New York, Jan. 9, 1777

N. York Jan: 9th
11 o'clock A.M.

Dear Sir

This morning I got y^r. letter of yesterday_ It was much against y^e grain y^r. quitting Elizabethtown; But as y^e 42^d did not go [to Elizabethtown] with [Lt. Col. Thomas] 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 y^e 42nd, no time was to be lost in sending [Maj. Gen. John] Vaughan to Amboy.

By y^e best information I can get, I do not find [Rebel Gen. George] 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 y^e 42nd & 10 Pieces of Cannon, when I am told Mau^d [Lt. Col. Charles] Mawhood] would have beat him off had y^e whole of his brigade behaved like y^e 17th...

You say Washingtons army is trifling to y^{rs}. when collected, but formidable when you are divided in Cantonments _ No doubt _ But Cantonments are only occupied when y^e Enemys army is not collected, when it is, the Cantoned army must also collect_

But surely y^e force you have now at Brunswic is full sufficient to drive Washington to y^e D—l [Devil] if you could get at him_ An army you well know does not go into Cantonments to fight, but w^t intentions to be left quiet, & being no fortified Places here, we have no other resource until we can get to Philadelphia_ At y^e same time I think y^e 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 y^e 4th Brigade or waiting to receive you at Princetown_ It plainly indicates y^e inability of his ever standing against us when we are in force & what kind of figure would he make in y^e attack of a fort possibly occupied?

... With my best Comp^{ts}. to y^e amicable [Lt. Gen.] Earl [Cornwallis] & to [Brig. Gen.] S^r.
Will^m. [Erskine] I am my D^r. Sir

Ever Y^{rs}.

WHowe

M.G. Grant

What is y^r. opinion of [Col. Carl von] Donop's report which I sent to L^d. Cornwallis yesterday? He does us much credit _ and does not seem to have been alarmed himself.

Source and Notes : *James Grant Papers of Ballindalloch Castle*, Scotland; Microfilm, Library of Congress, Reel 37, Correspondence, January, 1777 from *Battle of Princeton Mapping Project: Report of Military terrain Analysis and battle Narrative, Princeton, New Jersey*, by Robert A. Selig, Ph.D., Matthew Harris, and Wade P. Catts, RPA, Princeton Battlefield Society, West Chester (Pa.), 2010. The report of the death of Capt. John Luke was incorrect as Luke retired from the regiment in Apr. 1777. As discussed below in a letter dated Jan. 10, Lt. Col. Stirling was ordered to Elizabethtown to command six battalions, but the command was instead given to Maj. Gen. Hon. John Vaughan, and Stirling proceeded to New York for business there. The 42nd Regt. as this time was at Piscataway, N. J.



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

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

Excerpt of Letter from Lt. Col. Thomas Stirling, 42nd Regt., to his Brother, Sir William Stirling of Ardoch, Discussing Movement of the 42nd Regt. to Piscataway, New Jersey, Jan 3 - 10, 1777

New York, Jan^y 10th 1777

... [After Battle of Princeton] we were obliged to make a forced march to prevent Brunswick from falling into there hands [illegible], which would have been the case had the Rebels pursued their success, but they contented themselves with what they had done in Princeton and turned off to the left however this forced us to abandon Princeton and we now have nothing on north[south]side of Rariton

river but Brunswick, and since that we have abandoned successively our Cantonments in East Jersey likewise, and have nothing left in all that Province but Brunswick and Amboy such is the consequence of a bad disposition of our troops at first and the success of the Rebels at Trentown which raised their drooping spirits and of course brought great numbers to join them, so that we are now on the defensive, an army is likewise talked of to attack this Island composed of the militia of the Province of new York Connecticut and New England, and they have been daring enough to send some troops in to Staten island so that our communications from this place to the Jerseys is cut off but by water to Amboy, what the result of all this will be God knows but I have never had a flattering opinion of this War and much less now. I was ordered from the Reg't to Elizabethtown to take command of Six batt^{ns} that was to be there & bring them off to Amboy as [Rebel Gen. George] Washington was expected to make an attack on them, but two days after [Maj.] Gen'l [John] Vaughan was ordered there so that I had nothing to do & took that opportunity of coming here to settle some business for two days and return tomorrow to join my Reg't lyes at a straggling village called Piscataqua 3 mile on this side of the Raritan River from Brunswick, and must make a dash to get at them as the road is infested with Rebels unless I happen to get an Escort going that way. Never has a Reg't been so badly used as ours first in attaching us with Foreigners on the Frontiers and then campaigning so late without clothing shoes, hose or any necessaries, lying out all night and repeated night marches, our Waggon's are constantly loaded and the Reg't under arms every morning two hours before daybreak to prevent our being attacked or cut off in our scattered cantonments, I am really quite worn out but must go through with it tho there is no appearance of relaxation of our fatigues till the end of the next Campaign. I write you as if you had a map of Jersies before you but if you have not M^r Stirling will explain to you...

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