

# Red Bank Battlefield Diaries

Diary Excerpts from the British, Hessian and Americans from October 9, 1777 to October 24, 1777

**British Officer - Royal Artillery**

**Lt. Colonel Frances Downman**



**Hessian Officer – Hessian Jaeger Corp**

**Captain Johann Ewald**



**Continental Soldier – 1st Rhode Island Regiment**



**Sergeant John Smith**

**Sergeant Jeremiah Greenman**



**Continental Soldier – 2nd Rhode Island Regiment**



**Lt. Colonel Israel Angel**

**Major Simeon Thayer**

**Captain Steven Olney**



**Job Whithall**

**Civilian Plantation Owner**



## October 9<sup>th</sup> 1777

In the morning it looked like rain but we marched from this place to McCawley's tavern two miles. There our butchers were killing beef. We halted and it began to rain and we marched away into the woods. They sent the beef to us there and we cooked in the rain and eat our victuals and marched about a mile. Put our packs into a wagon and marched in the rain in a very severe storm as far as Newtown where we got as much cider as every man could drink -- then we went to look for lodging -- some companies got good quarters -- I was obliged to lodge in a barn amongst the hay with all my wet clothes and lodged something comfortable

**Sergeant John Smith**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**





## October 9<sup>th</sup> 1777

Marched very early this morning, went to Buckingham, there halted to cook our provisions, but met with some difficulty in cooking on account of the extreme heavy rain ---- After we had cooked, marched on to New Town there we dried ourselves and lodged that night.

**Colonel Israel Angell**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**





## October 10<sup>th</sup> 1777

I turned out early in the morning -- we marched for Bristol and we marched about 8 miles and filled our boxes with new cartridges as our old ones being all wet with rain -- then marched farther and an express came for one battalion to return back and Colonel Angel went. We proceeded forward -- we went to Bristol and crossed the ferry over to Burlington before breakfast -- and halted there to wait for our baggage wagons to come over where we waited until sunset. We had impressed a number of wagons to transport our baggage we marched forward all night until day break.

**Sergeant John Smith**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**





## October 10<sup>th</sup> 1777

Marched very early this morning -- went within three miles of Bristol then overtaken by an express which ordered my Regiment back to the Grand army -- we parted with great reluctance -- Colonel Green went on for Red Bank and my Regiment for the Grand Army -- I marched about 12 miles back then lodged that night in Wrights town.

**Colonel Israel Angell**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**

**2nd Rhode Island Regiment  
ordered back to the main army**





## October 11<sup>th</sup> 1777

We halted at Mount Holly and drew fatigue rum -- this town is 7 miles from Burlington -- then we marched through Moorestown 9 miles farther -- then we marched to Haddonfield and called up the people and made fires and rested a while for we were very much fatigued with marching -- then we marched again for the Red Bank -- we marched 6 miles and made another halt and drew half gill of rum per man -- then marched into the fort about 4 miles farther and pitched our tents and lodged quiet this night -- their hath been a continual fire of cannon all day between the enemy and our galleys in the river

**Sergeant John Smith**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**



**1st Rhode Island Regiment**  
**Arrives at Red Bank**





## October 11<sup>th</sup> 1777

Drew provisions this morning and cooked -- Marched by eight o Clock -- there was a heavy cannonading this morning which continued all the day -- this cannonading was below Philadelphia -- we marched as far as New Brittan township -- There lodged within 6 miles of General Washington's headquarters.

**Colonel Israel Angell**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**





## October 12<sup>th</sup> 1777

The firing that begun yesterday morning still continues --Supposed to be at the Chevaux de frize below Philadelphia -- This afternoon the cannonading ceased -- About Six O Clock we lay still this day to clean our army and wash our clothes.

**Colonel Israel Angell**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**





# October 17<sup>th</sup> 1777



Turned out half past three O clock got our breakfasts and marched off -- Went to Bristol there crossed the Delaware and marched through Burlington. Drew provisions and cooked, then marched on all the night following.

**Colonel Israel Angell**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**





# October 18<sup>th</sup> 1777

We hoisted the flag staff at Fort Mercer & hoisted the flag -- the Colonel gave 6 of us a bottle of rum and we went to our tents -- this day we heard the news that our army had taken 100 wagons from the enemy loaded with stores and 300 men that guarded them as they were going to Philadelphia -- towards night we heard a considerable smart firing of cannon towards Philadelphia supposed to be General Washington and Howes army that had met and in the evening Colonel Angels regiment came into this fort from headquarters to reinforce ours.

**Sergeant John Smith**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**



**2nd Rhode Island Regiment**  
**Arrives at Red Bank**

Excerpt from the diary of Sergeant John Smith 1<sup>st</sup> Rhode Island Regiment



# October 18<sup>th</sup> 1777

This day we arrived at Red Bank about seven o Clock in the evening after marching sixty miles without sleeping.

**Colonel Israel Angell**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**



Excerpt from the diary of Colonel Israel Angel 2nd Rhode Island Regiment



## October 19<sup>th</sup> 1777

Rested this day after pitching our tents until ten o Clock in the evening -- Then both officers and soldiers went to work and worked all night on our fort as we expected an attack that night or in the morning -- This day there was a heavy cannonading on Fort Mifflin.

**Colonel Israel Angell**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**





## October 19<sup>th</sup> 1777

I was detached this morning after my arrival at Fort Mercer on October 19th, with 150 men to join Colonel Smith on Mud Island when the enemies batteries were playing, where I continued for three days, when the Hessians appeared as if they intended an attack on Red Bank.

I then received an express from Colonel Greene to return with my troops to Red Bank about 12 O'clock, which I immediately complied with and reached the Fort just as the Hessians appeared in sight.

**Major Simeon Thayer**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**





## October 20<sup>th</sup> 1777

This morning the cannonading ceased until the afternoon when the cannon and mortars begun to play very brisk, more so than they had any time before -- The greatest part of my Regiment was in the Fort as they relieved Colonel Green's Regiment.

**Colonel Israel Angell**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**





## October 20<sup>th</sup> 1777



This morning Major Farrington came to me from Brigadier General Cleveland to request that I would take command of two 5 1/2 inch howitzers ordered for immediate service. I was not ordered, he said, but the general hoped I would go as the service required a good officer. Ha! Ha! Ha! They were to be ready to embark at 4 o'clock in the morning. I had everything ready by 3 o'clock. The morning rainy and very cold at first, but cleared up as the day advanced.



**Lt. Colonel Frances Downman**  
**British Officer - Royal Artillery**

## October 21<sup>st</sup> 1777

A flurry of wind and rain before day. A cool, windy day. I husked some corn with John and Mart before noon. In ye afternoon, J. Murdock brought our wagon home and we loaded it with goods, a barrel with Sugar, a cask of cider, a case of bottles with wine, a mahogany tea table, one arm chair, half a dozen of other chairs. Our John went with them to Uncle David Coopers. Brother John Whittall brought our sorrel horse home and rode him away again and took my stallion colt with him to Peter Crim's to pasture."



**Job Whithall**  
**Red Bank Plantation**

## October 21<sup>st</sup> 1777



About three o'clock in the morning the Jaeger Corps marched to Cooper's Ferry on the Delaware. The Corps crossed the Delaware in flatboats with the three Hessian grenadier battalions and landed about eight o'clock in the Province of Jersey.



**Captain Johann Ewald**  
**Hessian Soldier**

I had the advanced guard with sixty jaegers, followed by the Corps, the Minnigerode battalion, the Mirbach Regiment , two 6-pounders, two howitzers, the Lengerke and Linsing battalions, and Captain Lorey with twenty mounted jaegers. This corps, under Colonel Donop, was ordered to seize by force Fort Red Bank through which the garrison on Mud Island maintained its communication with the main land. Colonel Donop had volunteered for this expedition.



## October 21<sup>st</sup> 1777

This corps was still less than a half an hour away from the Delaware when it ran into an enemy party in the vicinity of Newton Township, which withdrew over Cooper's Bridge toward Burlington.



**Captain Johann Ewald**  
**Hessian Soldier**

I pursued it up to the end of a wood, where I discovered several hundred men on both sides of Cooper's Creek, with whom I skirmished until about four o'clock in the afternoon, after which time they withdrew. The colonel, who continued his march with the corps, had ordered me to occupy myself with the enemy until nightfall, and then to follow the corps to Haddonfield. He wanted to mislead the enemy and conceal his march. At eight o'clock in the evening I arrived at Haddonfield, where I found the corps encamped in a quadrangle on the heights.

## October 21<sup>st</sup> 1777



Three battalions of Hessian grenadiers, one Minigerode, one Mirbach, with 3 pounder guns, and myself with the two howtizers, began to embark in the flat-bottomed boats and other craft from the wharf at the upper end of the town, and crossed over to the Jersey side, landing without the least opposition. The whole were commanded by Colonel Donop. We began our march as soon as the last artillery were over, and about 8 o'clock at night we came to Haddonfield, where we remained till 4 o'clock the next morning.



**Lt. Colonel Frances Downman**  
**British Officer - Royal Artillery**



# October 21<sup>st</sup> 1777

This morning we are informed that a party of the enemy crossed Cooper ferry last evening and was on their way through Haddonfield for this Fort. I came across this morning from Fort Mifflin.

**Sergeant Jeremiah Greenman**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**



Excerpt from the diary of Jeremiah Greenman





## October 21<sup>st</sup> 1777

We were informed that a party of regulars had landed at Cooper ferry to attack our fort -- we removed all our tents and baggage into the Citadel and every man was employed at work on the fort to fortify the same -- between 3 and 4 O' Clock 300 more troops came here to reinforce us -- we cut down an orchard by the fort and hauled trees round the fort to keep off the enemy -- we had no disturbance from the enemy this day -- Mr. Henry Holden departed for home by whom I sent a letter to my wife.

**Sergeant John Smith**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**



# October 21<sup>st</sup> 1777



This evening we received certain intelligence that the enemy was coming to attack us which obliged us to work all the night long.

**Colonel Israel Angell**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**



Excerpt from the diary of Colonel Israel Angel 2nd Rhode Island Regiment

## October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777

Our women blowed ye horn and we went home, got our horses and wagon and loaded it with goods. Ye reason was because ye English troops was close by ... my wife, Children, and myself went off in our wagon. Father, Mother, and ye boys stayed. We got to Uncle David Coopers and stayed awhile and I went back again on horseback. Uncle David and James Cooper sent each a boy down to fathers to help me away with some Cattle..."



**Job Whithall**  
**Red Bank Plantation**

Excerpt from the diary of Job Whithall



## October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777

We turned out early in the morning and struck tents and cleared away for an attack and every man at work to strengthen ourselves - we sent parties out to fetch in all the stock and horses into the fort which was done and every person in the fort.

**Sergeant John Smith**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**



Excerpt from the diary of Sergeant John Smith 1<sup>st</sup> Rhode Island Regiment



## October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777

On the morning of the 22d about four o'clock, the corps marched toward Red Bank in the same formation as yesterday with the slight difference that I formed the rear guard with my company.



**Captain Johann Ewald**  
**Hessian Soldier**

About nine o'clock we crossed the pass over Timber Creek which has very marshy banks. A dam of several hundred paces extends across the creek on which there are two wooden bridges. Two small plantations are situated on this and the other side. I was surprised that we did not leave here at least one jaeger company to retain the mastery of this pass since, after all, the success of our expedition was not yet assured. To be sure, there were the two battalions of light infantry ready for the Jersey post at Cooper's Ferry, but they could not help much if Washington had gotten wind of this expedition, passed a strong corps across the Delaware, and stationed it at Timber Creek.

# October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777



We again set forward and only had a few popping shots between this place and Red Bank where the rebels have raised a strong fort with cannon. It is absolutely necessary that we be in possession of this fort for it not only protects their vessels, but also would annoy our shipping very much in passing whenever we are lucky enough to get over their chevaux-de-fries, and it likewise commands Mud Island so that should we take Mud Island, unless we had this fort, also we should be very much disturbed by it. For these reasons General Howe ordered a detachment to storm it.



**Lt. Colonel Frances Downman**  
**British Officer - Royal Artillery**





## October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777

About one o'clock in the afternoon the corps arrived in a wood which encircled the left side of the fort at rifle-shot distance to the left bank of the Delaware. In this wood a captain and six men from the garrison of the fort fell into the hands of Captain Wreden, who had the advanced guard. They had been ordered to get fresh meat at a plantation and knew nothing of our approach.



**Captain Johann Ewald**  
**Hessian Soldier**

The entire corps remained in column on the road in the wood. The men were permitted to sit down and told to eat, but since this day was not bread or provisions day, very few had any bread to break or bite. The officers, especially, were not provided with anything. I had to march with the rear guard to the head of the corps.



## October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777

At noon we examined it, and the saw the rebels at work which showed that the fort was not finished, or that they were adding something to it on hearing we were near them. I think therefore, we should have stormed it directly without the least loss of time as it was to be done in daylight, but instead of an immediate attack, we did not begin till 5 o'clock in the afternoon.



**Lt. Colonel Frances Downman**  
**British Officer - Royal Artillery**



## October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777

During this time Colonel Donop, along with Colonel Stuart (who accompanied this expedition as a volunteer), Major Pauli and Captain Krug of the Hessian artillery had already reconnoitered the fort when I reached the corps. As soon as I arrived, the colonel ordered me to inspect the fort and to give him my opinion. I approached the fort up to rifle-shot range and found that it was provided with a breastwork twelve feet high, palisaded, and dressed with assault stakes.



**Captain Johann Ewald**  
Hessian Soldier

After a lapse of a half an hour, Colonel Stuart returned with the following reply: "Colonel Greene, who commands the fort, sends his compliments and he shall await Colonel Donop.

# October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777



I met Major Stuart with a drummer who was to summon the fort, and right behind them I met Major Pauli and Captain Krug, and both adjutants of the colonel. All these gentlemen regarded the affair with levity. The only man who had any real knowledge, and looked upon the business as serious, was worthy old Captain Krug. I took this man aside and asked him what he thought of the undertaking, whereupon he answered: He who has seen forts or fortified places captured with sword in hand will not regard this affair as a small matter, if the garrison puts up a fight and has a resolute commandant.



**Captain Johann Ewald**  
**Hessian Soldier**

We have let luck slip through our fingers. We should not have summoned the fort, but immediately taken it by surprise, for no one knew of our arrival. But now they will make themselves ready, and if our preparations are not being made better than I hear, we will get a good beating.



# October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777

After a lapse of a half an hour, Colonel Stuart returned with the following reply: "Colonel Greene, who commands the fort, sends his compliments and he shall await Colonel Donop.



**Captain Johann Ewald**  
**Hessian Soldier**

## October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777



After this news, which the colonel did not expect, a hundred fascines were made at once by the battalions, and a battery of six regimental pieces [3-pounders], two 6-pounders and the howitzers were mounted in the wood at rifle-shot distance from the fort. The Linsing Battalion was to make the attack against the left, the Regiment von Mirbach against the center, and the Minnigerode Battalion on the bastion to the left at the Delaware.



**Captain Johann Ewald**  
**Hessian Soldier**

The Lengerke Battalion was stationed at the Delaware to cover the rear against an enemy landing. One hundred men from each battalion were to carry the fascines and march in a line at a distance of two hundred paces in front of the battalion. With these the ditch was to be filled, crossed, and the fort scaled with sword in hand. I placed sixteen good marksmen at the edge of the wood in the vicinity of the battery, who were to shoot at those men who showed themselves on the parapet.





## October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777

This day we continued diligent on our works until the afternoon about one O clock when the enemy arrived within musket shot of our fort. We fired a cannon or two at them on which they retired and kept skulking in the woods until half after four O clock --They sent in a flag demanding the fort but was answered that the fort was not to be given up on any terms -- In reply to this, they answered that if we still remained obstinate, our blood might be upon our own heads, for we should have no mercy shone us. Our answer was we asked for none and expect none.

**Colonel Israel Angell**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**





## October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777

Had scarce an opportunity to get into the Fort, before a Flag came to Colonel Green, who commanded the Fort threatening to put the Garrison to death if he did not surrender it immediately.

**Sergeant Jeremiah Greenman**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**





## October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777

About 4 O' Clock the enemy advanced to the woods adjoining the fort when the Hessian Commander sent a flag and demanded the fort or they were ordered to show no mercy but put all to death if they overcame us – Captain Olney gave them answer that we asked no mercy nor did we expect any -- we were determined to fight or die in defense of the garrison.

**Sergeant John Smith**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**





## October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777

As soon as the Flag had returned they opened up with 7 field pieces & 2 Howitzers on the fort and played very smartly for about ten minutes then rushed on very rash that even success could not justify its temerity.

**Sergeant Jeremiah Greenman**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**





## October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777

The flag returned and the enemy began the attack immediately -- they began a brisk fire with their field pieces and then advanced up to the fort with each a fascine with him and all of them with entrenching tools with him such as spades pick axes and saws to cut down our pickets -- We began a smart fire with our artillery and our small arms and continued firing 47 minutes as smart as ever was known -- the firing began when the sun was half an hour high and continued till dark.

**Sergeant John Smith**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**





## October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777

Then begun as smart a fire as ever I heard from eight field pieces and two howitzers they had placed against us -- At the same time they advanced in two columns to attack our fort by storm -- There begun an incessant fire of musketry which continued forty minutes -- When the Hessians retreated in the most precipitated manner leaving 200 killed and wounded in the field, we spent the greatest part of the night in bringing in the wounded.

**Colonel Israel Angell**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**





## October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777

The battery began to play, and the three battalions advanced against the fort with indescribable courage. But they were received so hotly by the garrison, and by the vessels which had moved into position during the summons to rake the fort's flank, that they were repelled with great loss, although several officers and a number of grenadiers scaled the breastwork.



**Captain Johann Ewald**  
**Hessian Soldier**

Colonel Donop himself and his adjutant, Captain Wagner, were mortally wounded at the edge of the ditch. Captain Stanford, who commanded the Linsing Battalion, was shot through the chest; Minnigerode through both legs; and the gallant Colonel Schieck, who commanded the Regiment von Mirbach, was shot dead at the barred gate. Night ended the battle, and the attacking corps reassembled at the spot from which it had departed for the attack.





## October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777

The advancing of the troops was preceded by a brisk and close fire of all our artillery which continued some little time. Colonel Donop then ordered the whole to cease, and called to his troops to advance. They did so with a quantity of facines to fill up the ditch in front of the fort. Then began a very hot and close fire from the rebels, both of cannon and musketry which was kept up without intermission from the time our troops advanced till they retreated again.



**Lt. Colonel Frances Downman**  
**British Officer - Royal Artillery**



## October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777

The enemy had placed their field pieces or artillery (said to be twelve) on the edge of the woods, within point-blank shot, and their first general discharge was tremendous. It made the gravel and dust fly from the top of our fort, and took off all the heads that happened to be in the way. They then instantly advanced in two solid columns.

The first line of the enemy's artillery, intimidated some of the men so much they were afraid to show their heads above the breastworks, raised their guns and fired by guess work, notwithstanding Colonel Jeremiah Olney was busily employed trashing them with his hanger.



**Captain Stephen Olney**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**



## October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777

My company was stationed in a salient angle, connected within the curtain of the breast work, to rake the ditches on each side. When fighting, I thought my company quite secure, as the enemy looking to the bastions on each side; therefore my men were deliberate, except one little Irishman, who was frightened out of his senses, but a few strokes with the but-end of my gun brought him to his duty."



**Captain Stephen Olney**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**



## October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777

By this time the other column had made its way into that part of the fort which we had evacuated, and supposing they were masters of the fort, huzzaed and came on, perhaps, to cut up their prisoners.

When within 50 or 60 paces, we began a fire upon them. They were put in disorder by getting over the fort. The officers persisted in pushing forward the men, until within about two paces of our breastwork, when our fire proved so destructive that they gave it up and retreated, leaving their dead and wounded.



**Captain Stephen Olney**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**

# October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777



From the parapet a small place big enough for eight men to fight in which overlooked all the ground round the Fort. As the Hessians advanced and became entangled within the inner abates, a handful of American defenders were able to rake their flank from the parapet. We rose as one over the berm, swung our musket barrels into view, and pointed down into the mass of men tangled in the abatis. We cut loose with a vicious volley right into the Hessians.

**Sergeant Jeremiah Greenman**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**





**October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777**

The artillery and musketry of the fort caused great slaughter. They advanced as far as the abatis, but they could not remove it though sum few got over were being repulsed with great loss.

**Sergeant Jeremiah Greenman  
2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**





## October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777

We fired at the column that came first. Our men partly on my left and rear fired across my station. When that column retreated and the other came up, I fired and fired upon it, and our men on the other side of the works, also fired across my station.

Next day, Lieutenant Samuel Wipple told me he counted 13 musket balls lodged within the breastwork, where it was impossible the enemy could have lodged them.



**Captain Stephen Olney**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**





**October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777**

When the Hessians retreated in the most precipitous manner they leaving 200 killed and wounded in the field, we spent the greatest part of the night in bringing in the wounded.

**Colonel Israel Angell  
2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**





## October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777

Colonel Wurmb immediately ordered the Jaeger Corps to move up to the edge of the wood to cover the retreat. He personally took the Grenadier Battalion Lengerke, which had protected the rear in case an enemy party had landed from the ships, and hurried with the battalion to the pass of the Timber Creek bridge to occupy it.



**Captain Johann Ewald**  
**Hessian Soldier**

Since we had flattered ourselves in advance with a successful surrender, no retreat then was thought of, and no wagons brought to transport the wounded. The seriously wounded officers were carried on the guns and horses, and all the privates who could not drag themselves away on their wounded limbs fell into enemy hands. But since the enemy took the retreat for a trap, and had expected a new attack during the night, the men had to remain on the battlefield a whole night in the most deplorable condition without the slightest care, whereby the majority died of their wounds.



## October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777

The rest of the enemy army made the best of their way off taking with them 3 or 4 wagons loaded with the wounded Hessians and impressed all the wagons on the road to carry their wounded off -- they Left 20 at a house on the road as they went back and we heard that they carried over the ferry about 300 wounded men that night -- this intelligence we have had by two men that disserted to us who ferried them over and by the inhabitants who saw them go back -- the ships came up in the time of the action and fired at our galleys all the time of the action -- we had a small reinforcement but came too late - the whole garrison were up all night dressing the wounded and taking care of them -- we had no disturbance this night

**Sergeant John Smith**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**





## October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777

We Lost killed one Captain Shaw -- two Sargent's of Colonel Angels Regiment -- two Sargent's and one fifer of Colonel Greens Regiment and the colonel's clerk -- Captain Oliver Clarke taken prisoner as he was out with a party of discovery taken by the light horse and several privates killed belonging to both Regiments -- We killed dead of the Hessians on the spot one Lt Colonel and several officers -- 70 or 80 non-commissioned officers and privates Included -- one Colonel who was Chief Commander -- a Brigade Major who was the officer who came with the flag before the battle was wounded and taken prisoners and about 70 or 80 wounded privates taken prisoners --

**Sergeant John Smith**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**





## October 23<sup>rd</sup> 1777

The wounded consisted of: Colonel Donop, right leg shot apart; Captain Wagner, both legs shot to pieces; Colonel Minnigerode, shot through both legs; Captain Stamford, shot through the chest and right leg. Captain Schotten, right arm shot off; Lieutenant Waitz, through the neck and in the head; Lieutenant Berner, right leg shot to pieces; and 253 noncommissioned officers and privates, of whom not thirty men are convalescing.



**Captain Johann Ewald**  
**Hessian Soldier**

This day was especially sad for me. I lost five of my oldest friends, among whom was a relative, and four of my best friends were severely wounded. As long as I have served, I have not yet left a battlefield in such deep sorrow.



## October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777

This nights march was as melancholy and as disagreeable a one as ever I experienced; it was dark and excessively cold; the roads were deep and narrow and enclosed with wood; we lost our way twice and had to turn about with guns and wagons in the narrow road; the very worst of all maneuvers. The horses were very bad and almost tired out, the drivers were a set of scoundrels.



**Lt. Colonel Frances Downman**  
**British Officer - Royal Artillery**

Add to this the groans of the wounded; the idea of being attacked in the rear by a sally from the fort while pent up in a road where we could not possibly make use of our cannon, and the probability of an encounter in front or flanks, for until day appeared we had no flanking parties out. We were lucky in meeting with no molestation except a few shot that did no harm.

# October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777



About midnight the entire corps arrived on the other side of Timber Creek, where arrangements were made at once to obtain wagons for transporting the wounded officers to Philadelphia. At eight o'clock in the morning the corps set out again, and crossed the Delaware during the night. The three grenadier battalions moved into cantonment quarters on the outskirts of Philadelphia; the Mirbach Regiment joined the line of the army; and the Jaeger Corps returned to its post at the Morris house, where it arrived after midnight.



**Captain Johann Ewald**  
**Hessian Soldier**



# October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1777



It is hard to say what was the cause of this attempt failing, but so it did, and whether from inability of the troops to fill up the ditch and mount the breastwork, from the loss of Colonel Donop and the number of officers at the first onset, or from being flanked by the row galleys with grape shot, whether from being tired from the march, or from want of spirit and activity to push forward over those who were killed and wounded in the front, is what I shall not presume to determine. It is enough to say that we were obliged to retire, and that in much confusion for by this time it was quite dark.



**Lt. Colonel Frances Downman**  
**British Officer - Royal Artillery**

We retired about a mile all in a bustle and disorder, then stopped about an hour or so to get the troops disposed into some order, and to collect the wounded and carry them in the best way we could, for not a wagon was thought of, and had it not been for the ammunition wagons a number must have been left behind.



## October 23<sup>rd</sup> 1777

This day was spent the greatest part in bringing in the slain and burying them and taking proper care of the wounded -- What time we had to spare was spent on our works, preparing them for the second attack, as we had intelligence of them coming the second time -- But it only proved to be a covering party for their retreat -- The galleys made an attack on the Augusta man of war as she had gotten aground and by some accident she took fire and blew up with a most terrible explosion -- Another twenty gun ship of the enemies got a ground and they set her on fire which also blew up, one fifty gun ship got off clear.

**Colonel Israel Angell**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**





## October 23rd 1777

In the morning we began to strip and bury the dead of our men and the hessians -- we buried 75 hessians in one grave in the entrenchment and covered them over and 8 or 10 more below the bank by the river -- it took us all day to bury the dead.

**Sergeant John Smith**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Rhode Island Regiment**





## October 23<sup>rd</sup> 1777

About daylight of the 23<sup>rd</sup> we repassed Haddonfield and continued our march to the ferry opposite Philadelphia where we arrived about 11 o'clock in the morning, so that, between 4 o'clock in the morning of the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 11 o'clock in the morning of the 23<sup>rd</sup>, we had marched about 42 miles, and been well thrashed into the bargain, so much for storming with.



**Lt. Colonel Frances Downman**  
**British Officer - Royal Artillery**

I crossed the river and went home most heartily tired and very low spirited, for the rebels not only gained the advantage on shore, but they have had the satisfaction of seeing the Augusta, a 64 gun ship, and the Merlin sloop blown up today. This fatal accident I was told was owing to their running aground or upon the chevaux-de-fries in attempting to pass them, the galleys keeping a constant fire upon them the whole time. I have not heard what number of men were killed or wounded in the storm, or what number the men-of-war lost.

# October 24<sup>th</sup>, 1777



I am informed today that the Hessians had about 400 killed and wounded, and that Colonel Donop is not dead but very badly wounded and prisoner. A great loss for he is a brave and good officer. A great many Hessian officers suffered in the attack.



**Lt. Colonel Frances Downman**  
**British Officer - Royal Artillery**