



The Florida Society of the Sons of the American Revolution Fort Lauderdale Chapter Newsletter



Fort Lauderdale Chapter Organized November 26, 1966

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I AM THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

I am the flag of the United States of America.
My name is Old Glory.
I fly atop the world's tallest buildings.
I stand watch in America's halls of justice.
I fly majestically over institutions of learning.
I stand guard with power in the world.
Look up and see me.

I stand for peace, honor, truth and justice.
I stand for freedom.
I am confident.
I am arrogant.
I am proud.

When I am flown with my fellow banners,
my head is a little higher,
my colors a little truer.

I bow to no one!
I am recognized all over the world.
I am worshipped - I am saluted.
I am loved - I am revered.
I am respected -- and I am feared.

I have fought in every battle of every war
for more than 200 years.
I was flown at Valley Forge, Gettysburg,
Shiloh and Appomattox.
I was there at San Juan Hill,
the trenches of France,
in the Argonne Forest, Anzio, Rome
and the beaches of Normandy, Guam,
Okinawa, Korea and KheSan, Saigon, Vietnam know me,
I was there.
I led my troops,
I was dirty, battleworn and tired,
but my soldiers cheered me
And I was proud.
I have been burned, torn and trampled
on the streets of countries I have helped set free.
It does not hurt, for I am invincible.

I have been soiled upon, burned, torn
and trampled on the streets of my country.
And when it's by those whom I've served in battle -- it hurts.
But I shall overcome -- for I am strong.

I have slipped the bonds of Earth
and stood watch over the uncharted frontiers of space
from my vantage point on the moon.
I have borne silent witness
to all of America's finest hours.
But my finest hours are yet to come.

When I am torn into strips
and used as bandages
for my wounded comrades on the battlefield,
When I am flown at half-mast to honor my soldier,
Or when I lie in the trembling arms
of a grieving parent
at the grave of their fallen son or daughter,
I am proud.

MY NAME IS OLD GLORY
LONG MAY I WAVE.
DEAR GOD IN HEAVEN
LONG MAY I WAVE

Compatriots and all interested guests:

This is a reminder to make your reservations for the
January 11th meeting with the DAR. There will be
no SAR Chapter meeting in January.

Saturday, January 11, 11:30 AM, at the Deer Creek
Country Club
2801 Country Club Blvd., Deerfield Beach
Entree Choice (\$20 per person):
+ Petite Sirloin steak
+ Chicken breast with apple walnut stuffing
+ Trio salad (chicken / tuna / egg salads)

Before Monday, January 6th, send check and entree
choice to:

Ms. Shirley Hoy, Treasurer
2313 S. Cypress Drive, #223-A
Pompano Beach, FL 33069-4421

Make check payable to: **Fontenada Chapter DAR**

NOTICE: Our February issue will contain an
article on our Chapter Installation last month and
will include several photos at the installation.

NEXT MEETING - FEBRUARY 13th TOWER CLUB !!!

\$20.00 INCL. TAX AND TIP

11:30 SOCIAL 12:00 LUNCH

28TH FLOOR BANK OF AMERICA

1 FINANCIAL TOWER

SE 3RD AVE & BROWARD BLVD

FORT LAUDERDALE

FOR RESERVATIONS CALL:

954-441-8735

Members living in North Broward need to dial the
area code plus the phone number,
or e-mail me at: JoeMotes@aol.com

The Battle of Brandywine

Part 4 of 12 continues from last issue

Several empty supply wagons rolled into Lord Cornwallis's camp at Kennett Square on the 10th of September. Veteran British soldiers certainly knew what these wagons would be used for -- to carry wounded and dying soldiers from the battlefield.

After an uneventful spring, several weeks at sea, and 16 days of uncomfortable marching, the first battle of the Philadelphia Campaign of 1777 was at hand.

The British...

Many of the 15,000 British troops spent the night in Kennett Square -- population 2,000 -- unwinding and carousing, while a battle loomed.

General Howe's flanking strategy was devised two days earlier: While General Knyphausen attacked at Chadd's Ford, as Washington expected, Cornwallis would stealthily move north, cross the Brandywine, and flank Washington's right. [Map and a fuller explanation]

The Americans...

Independence Hall Association

By the night of September 10th, the American troops were extended along a six-mile line covering the east side of the Brandywine Creek. Washington knew that the British army would have to ford the Brandywine if they were to get to their target -- Philadelphia.

He discounted the possibility of being flanked, assuming that Howe would rely upon his his greater troop strength and superior artillery to press a direct attack.

Washington believed that the British would have to ford the Brandywine at one of eight fords. Washington chose Chadd's Ford as his defensive stronghold, as this was along the road where the British were camped.

Washington positioned his troops along the creek. Congress even sent four deputies to inspect and they approved of where Washington had placed his men and urged a staunch defense. They knew that if the Americans failed here, it was likely Philadelphia would fall.

Washington felt a battle of major consequence was coming. A newspaper of the day quoted the general as saying:

Should they push their designs against Philadelphia, on this route, there all is at stake. They will put the contest on the event of a single battle. If they are overthrown they are utterly undone. The war is at an end. Now, then, is the time for our most strenuous endeavors. One bold stroke will free the land.

Washington's army seemed well-positioned and well-prepared to meet the British thrust.

Independence Hall Association

The Morning of the Battle

At 4 A.M. on the morning of September 11, 1777, a long line of redcoats quietly flowed out from Kennett Square. They were led by General Howe who personally took command of Cornwallis's column. At the van of the column were "pioneers," soldiers employed to clear the road of any obstructions the Americans might have thrown in their way.

If all went well, in six miles they would reach their destination, Jeffries' Ford, without being detected by American scouts. Once across this deep ford located on a branch of the Brandywine Creek, Howe and his troops would have a good chance of flanking and trapping General Washington's army.

At 5:45 A.M., after Howe's division had cleared out, General Knyphausen's division began moving along the Great Nottingham Road directly toward Chadd's Ford seven miles away -- exactly where Washington expected the entire British Army to attack. The first to leave was a 496-member vanguard which consisted of Queen's Rangers, Ferguson's riflemen, and a squad from the 16th Light Dragoons. Behind them were the 1st and 2nd British Brigades, followed by the artillery, supply wagons, and a herd of rustled livestock. Serving as the rear guard were the 71st regiment. It was a formidable force.

A Round of Shots ... A Round of Shots ... and the Battle Begins

American General Maxwell, too, had been up early on the foggy morning of the 11th. Maxwell had been ordered to scout the vicinity in the area of Kennett Square. At Kennett Meeting, a Quaker house of worship located about a mile east of Kennett Square, Maxwell sent out a mounted scouting party. After heading up the road about a half a mile, the scouts paused to refresh themselves at Welch's Tavern. The group tethered their horses out front and bellied up to the bar.

At about 9 o'clock, one of the scouts saw a vision which might have been chalked up to excessive drinking. Headed straight for the tavern, and less than 100 yards away, were Ferguson's Riflemen and Queen's Rangers -- the vanguard of Knyphausen's Division. The Americans fired off a round of shots from the bar and bolted out the back door leaving their horses behind.

Thus began the Battle of Brandywine.

All The Other World

The British column continued its advance on the tavern. They were stopped by an English-born Quaker woman. She approached General Knyphausen and said, "My dear man, do not go down there, for George Washington is on the other side of the stream, and he has all this world with him."

Unruffled, Knyphausen replied, "Never mind, Madam. I have all the other world with me."

After bolting from the bar, the battle was underway. The tasks were clear: Knyphausen was under orders "to amuse the Americans," convincing them that "all the other world" was with him. Maxwell's orders were to delay the advance.

Maxwell would fire from cover and fall back toward the river. The British advanced slowly amid a cloud of musketfire and at great expense in lives.

A British soldier made the following diary entry:

[The Queen's Rangers and Ferguson's riflemen] fell in very early with large Bodies of the Enemy who form'd upon ev'ry advantageous Post & behind Fences fired on the Troops as they advanc'd - This galling fire was sustain'd the whole way by the Queen's Rangers commanded by Capt. Weyms of the 40th & Rifle Men by Capt. Ferguson of the 70th - who encouraged by the Example of their Leaders behav'd with a degree of perseverance & Bravery which would have done Honor to the best Established Corps.

After a series of heavy skirmishes, in which dense smoke often choked off the morning sunlight, the British forced Maxwell back to the east bank. At about 10:30 the firing died down, save for an occasional artillery exchange across the creek.

The Americans and British now were face-to-face on opposite sides of the Creek. But the British kept busy. Knyphausen was under orders not to let on his true troop strength, but rather make it appear as if the entire British army were with him. To achieve this sham effect, the Hessian general ordered marches and countermarches up and down and in and out of the hills. He also positioned great numbers of soldiers from his columns in the fields that opened from the Nottingham Road onto the creek. He also left the British baggage train in plain sight.

So overwhelming was this display of manpower and equipment that a New Jersey soldier called it "a sight beyond description grand..."

Knyphausen had successfully made his way to the west bank of the Brandywine and had bought time for Howe and Cornwallis. Maxwell delayed the British advance, thus fulfilling his orders. British casualties numbered about 300 -- a lot for an "amusement," while American casualties were few. But among the American wounded was a young officer from Virginia who would go to become Chief Justice of the United States, John Marshall.

Washington Receives Conflicting Reports

Brandywine Battlefield

The Benjamin Ring House, used as Washington's Headquarters during the battle

Washington directed the Americans from the Ring House, a residence about three quarters of a mile east of Chadd's Ford. Viewing the battle through a telescope, he must have been a little suspicious that something was afoot. He knew that Howe had all morning to bring his army in position to attack and yet he still hadn't. Washington had also seen the busy movements of the British troops in the hills and their impressive baggage train. Something was in the air. But what exactly?

One of the most fascinating aspects of the Battle of Brandywine is the great number of conflicting reports Washington received throughout the morning and early afternoon regarding whether Howe was moving troops north -- towards the supply depots up at Reading? To ford the Brandywine elsewhere? To conduct a major flanking movement?

Washington heard a preliminary report at around 7 A.M. and a 10 A.M. report saying that Howe's troops were moving north. He heard a report at 9:30 A.M. and one from Major Spear at 1 P.M. that made him feel confident that it was just a feint and not a major troop movement. But the subsequent reports from Major Eustace, Colonel Bland, and a patriotic local squire named Thomas Cheyney finally convinced Washington that the reports of significant northern troop movement were real. Read more about the conflicting reports.

Surgeon Ebenezer Elmer traveling with the American army, put it most succinctly: "the reports were so Contradictory that it was difficult to make a proper disposition."

Washington Chooses a Course of Action

Library of Congress

Major General Nathanael Greene

About noon, having received the reports from Ross and Bland that a large British column was moving north, Washington deduced that Howe had split his army. Washington felt he could deal a decisive blow to the divided British. He launched an assault aimed at Knyphausen's troops across the Brandywine.

Washington ordered part of Greene's troops and Maxwell's light infantry across the Brandywine at Chadd's Ford. The vanguard of this charge attacked an entrenching party from the British 49th regiment. They drove the British from their ground and in the process inflicted 30 casualties and killed a captain. Maxwell's infantrymen took possession of "a number of Entrenching Tools with which they [the British] were just throwing up a Battery."

Library of Congress

Major General John Sullivan

Upstream, a regiment from Sullivan's command crossed the creek and started skirmishing with a British foot regiment. Downstream a group of Pennsylvania militia stationed at Pyle's Ford crossed the river and joined the fray.

At this time, Washington had dispatched Lord Stirling's and Stephen's brigades farther north on the east side of the creek toward Birmingham Meeting House in case Howe was indeed planning an attack from the north and not heading up to Reading.

Just before Washington was going to send the remainder of the army across the creek, he received a "definitive" message from Major Spear that there was no northern British troop movement. Washington decided "that the movement of the enemy was just a feint" and that they were returning to reinforce Knyphausen at Chadd's Ford.

Assuming that this was the case, he knew it would be folly to abandon his defensive position on the east side of the Creek to launch a full assault. Washington recalled his attacking troops back to the east side of the Creek. He also removed his defense against the flanking movement by recalling both Lord Stirling's and Stephen's brigades. This faulty report was very damaging, as it gave Howe the extra time he needed to march south into the flank of American forces.

Howe Crosses 8 Miles North

By around 1:15 P.M., Howe's 8,000 troops had crossed the two fords along the upper Brandywine and were now on the east side, about 8 miles north of Washington's troops.

Howe had fooled Washington again. The methodical British general had pulled off a 14-mile march while successfully hiding an 8,000 man column. After Howe crossed the west branch of the Brandywine at Trimble's Ford, he moved north on the road toward Martin's Tavern. From there, he took a road to Jeffries' Ford and there crossed the east branch of the Brandywine. Jeffries' Ford was two miles north of Buffington's Ford, the furthest point north the Americans had posted soldiers.

Howe sent Jaegers from the British 42nd out to scout, under the leadership of Captain Johann Ewald. They recognized that they'd have to pass through a narrow gorge "where a hundred men could have held up either army the whole day." Ewald, wary of a trap, asked Cornwallis for permission to proceed, which was granted. It was fortunate for Ewald that they were able to proceed without opposition.

Once through the ford, Cornwallis ordered the remainder of the army to move as quickly as possible. The column took a wide right turn and headed through the village of Scanneltown where Howe halted so his tired, hungry and thirsty men could rest.

At Scanneltown, British foragers made a fortuitous discovery. Some Wilmington merchants had recently placed a large cache of liquor in a barn here thinking it would be safer than in the city. The merchants were wrong.

It was at this point that Squire Cheyney (whom you read about in *Conflicting Reports*), who had taken it upon himself to reconnoiter the British, discovered Howe's column. He frantically rode seven miles to the Ring House to deliver a manic message of warning to Washington which was greeted with skepticism. Cheyney's message, along with several other reports, finally convinced Washington -- Howe was now to the rear of the American right.

By about 2:00 P.M., after receiving these new reports of Howe's movements that Washington recognized the dreadful truth: Howe had successfully moved around him and was positioned to attack from the north.

Washington Adjusts His Strategy

Responding to the threat from Howe's forces to his north, Washington once again ordered the divisions of Lord Stirling and Major General Stephen to move back north toward the Birmingham Meeting House. These brigades covered about three miles in a half hour, and started forming their lines along Birmingham Road. After ascertaining for certain that Howe's column was substantial in size, Washington ordered General Sullivan who was in charge of the entire right, to move north and meet the threat. Generals Wayne and Maxwell, with the support of Proctor's artillery, would have to face Knyphausen alone.

General Greene's troops remained in reserve -- positioned to fight either Knyphausen or Cornwallis.

Tea Time for Howe

As Stirling and Stephen formed their troops, they could see the British advancing over Osborne Hill less than a mile to their north. The Redcoats progressed slowly as "it was extremely difficult to move the artillery over the heights." Once the artillery had crested the hill, Howe ordered a break of a half-hour for lunch and tea. After marching for nearly eleven hours and 17 miles, Howe's troops were safe for the moment and took time to rest and refresh. Howe, as was his pattern, did not follow up on what might have turned into a rout; Instead the picnicking general permitted the panicking Americans to form lines about a mile to his south.

Birmingham Meeting House

Meanwhile Brandywine Valley locals came to gawk at the British war machine. These included a group of Quakers who were holding their prayer meeting at a wheelwright's shop in Scanneltown. Two days earlier they had been evicted from their normal place of prayer, the Birmingham Meeting House, because Washington had taken over the building for use as an American hospital.

Some meeting members went back home to protect their families and farms; others watched in awe. Captivated by the sight of the British army, was a Quaker teenager named Joseph Townsend who would march among the British soldiers in the afternoon, watch the battle into dusk, and be pressed into triage service carrying wounded from the battlefield that night. Townsend observed that Cornwallis made "a brilliant and martial appearance," and Howe "was a large and portly man, of coarse features. He appeared to have lost his teeth, as his mouth had fallen in." [Read more of Townsend's observations on the battle and aftermath]

After their teabreak, the British broke their column into an eight-pronged attack in which they hoped to either outflank or overrun the American line. Meanwhile the Americans had tried to form a solid defensive line with the center at the heights around Birmingham Meeting House. They were thwarted in this attempt, in part because General Sullivan had marched his troops too far north and left a gap in the American line.

Further complicating matters, was the behavior of a proud French Brigadier General named Prudhomme DeBorre who insisted that he be given the position of honor of commanding the right of General Sullivan's Division. Parts of the American line were in disarray. The British launched a furious attack. The British scooped up several artillery pieces along the way.

While the Continental Army fought valiantly, the British attack was too overwhelming, and the Americans had to fall back to new defensive line 400 yards to the southwest.

Part 5 of 12 continues next month

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