

Meeting Howe about midway between Jerties and Chad's ford. Knyphausen attacked the American outposts at the latter place, drove them across the river under cover of their artillery and commenced a smart cannonade on their position so as to lead Washington to believe that the principal attack would be directed against his centre. In the meantime the left wing of the British had gained Gen. Sullivan's right flank before he was aware of it, while their centre was marching on the Brandywine and threatening his left and rear. He at once judiciously posted his troops and prepared for resistance, but after a hard fought action was totally defeated. Immediately on hearing the firing Knyphausen made a determined attack on the main portion of the American army at Chad's ford, and after a brave resistance the United States troops were routed in great disorder, leaving artillery and baggage behind. Washington, with such of his troops as he could keep together, retreated to Chester and remained within eight miles of the British army until next morning, when he deliberately marched into Philadelphia, where he remained for three days collecting such of his scattered troops as were willing to stand by him and recruiting the supplies lost in battle out of the stores and ammunition there. At the close of the action the British troops under Gen. Howe and Lord Cornwallis were within eighteen miles of Philadelphia, while Washington was twenty three miles distant. With ordinary diligence a British detachment could have occupied it before the latter. Even if Howe had advanced after the action at the meeting house; a large portion of the American army, if not the whole, must have laid down their arms, and if he had detached Knyphausen's column in pursuit Washington could have been intercepted at Crum Creek, Derby, or Philadelphia. But Howe was in no hurry; he did not care to be disturbed, although his country might suffer; and it was too much to expect a forward movement under the circumstances. The day after the battle was wasted in the important occupation of capturing the Governor of the State of Delaware, with all the public records, some money and a sloop laden with the riches of the people of Wilmington at that rising town. Such a manoeuvre being in Howe's eyes of more consequence than the destruction of Washington's army.

On the 20th of September the dispersed Militia under Wayne assembled to the number of 1,500 and concealed themselves in the woods on the left flank of the British army, watching the opportunity of striking a blow to balance their losses at Brandywine. Some loyalist or other apprised Howe of this circumstance, who dispatched Gen. Grey at night to surprise him. This was effected by compelling the men of the 2nd Light Infantry, 42nd and 44th regiments to draw the charges of their muskets and

out the flints. At at four o'clock the American camp was reached and upwards of 300 men bayoneted in less than ten minutes. All the artillery, stores, etc., were captured. This gave Gen. Grey the sobriquet of "No Flint." This fight occurred near Syde's ford on the Schuylkill, and on the 24th the stores, etc., at Valley Forge were destroyed, and on the 26th, having previously crossed the Schuylkill, Cornwallis with 3,000 men marched into Philadelphia.

The lines of the communication of the British army was that of their advance, and they were now encamped with their left resting on the Schuylkill, the village in their centre, and their right resting on Chestnut Hill, an eminence about two miles from the junction of Wesahicon Creek, a rivulet in front of Germantown, and the Schuylkill, while Chester was occupied by three battalions, and Philadelphia by a considerable body of troops.

The situation was this—the Delaware was held by the Americans, and the remains of Washington's army were at Skeppack Creek about seventeen miles from Germantown, on the right flank of the British army.

Washington's game would seem to have been that of throwing his whole force on the communications at Chester, as this movement would have compelled the evacuation of Philadelphia, but he decided or was forced by circumstances to take up another line of operations.

The American works on the Delaware, and which secured them possession of the river, were a little below the mouth of the Schuylkill. Fort Mifflin, on a low mud island, an irregular parallelgram; and a strong redoubt on a similar island, those were known as Great and Little Mud Islands. On the opposite or Jersey shore another strong work called Fort Mercer, or Red bank, was armed with heavy artillery. Between those forts in the channel of the river a series of ingeniously constructed *chevaux de frise* were placed, while three miles further down a formidable work armed with heavy artillery was erected at Byllange's Point, covering another series of *chevaux de frise* between the main and Byllange's Island. In addition to all there was a flotilla of fourteen row galleys, each carrying one heavy piece of ordnance; two floating batteries carrying nine guns each, and some fire ships and rafts.

Towards the end of September a detachment of the British troops stationed at Chester crossed the Delaware and marched on the Fort at Byllange's Point, which was at once abandoned by the garrison and immediately dismantled. The lower line of *chevaux de frise* being without defense, Captain Hammond, of the Roebuck frigate, at once set about removing the obstructions, in which he speedily effected an opening large enough to admit a line-of-battle ship.

On the 25th of September Lord Howe and the fleet sailed from Elk River to the Delaware, where they arrived on the 8th of Octo-

ber, and, as the river was yet obstructed, the fleet was anchored from Reedy Island up to Newcastle.

It now became absolutely necessary to open communications between the fleet and army, and in order to effect that purpose batteries were erected on Providence Island, at the confluence of the Schuylkill and Delaware, mounted with heavy guns, for the purpose of operating against Mud Island. In order to prevent this the Americans landed a small party on the island. The officer commanding shamefully abandoned the artillery, but by the gallantry of a subaltern they were retaken, and the Americans driven off. Two frigates and a schooner with some row-galleys were also sent up the river to demolish the batteries and cannonade the town, on which a heavy fire was kept up for some time; but on the falling of the tide one of the frigates ran aground and was taken while the rest were obliged to make a hasty retreat.

While the attention of the British General was turned towards the operations on the Delaware Gen. Washington endeavored to prevent their success and probably drive him from Philadelphia by a sudden attack on the camp at Germantown. Having received reinforcements from Peckskill on the Hudson and from Virginia, he marched from his camp at Skeppack Creek on the evening of the 3rd of October, and at daylight on the 4th, under cover of a heavy fog, attacked the troops posted at the head of the village, and after a sharp resistance drove those consisting of the 40th Regiment into the village. Lieut.-Col. Musgrave, who commanded them, occupied a large stone house with five companies of that regiment, known as Chew's house, which stood in the centre of the village and in front of the Americans, who, in five columns attempted to pass through it, and thence to the rear of the centre of the British position,—an object he would have effected had it not been for the resistance made at Chew's house, against which he sent a brigade and five pieces of artillery. The defenders, however, boldly maintained their position. They could neither be turned or forced till the third brigade under Major General Grey, and the fourth under Brigadier-General Agnew, came to the assistance of Col. Musgrave, while a portion of the right wing closing on them they retreated, and taking advantage of the fog got clear off with all their artillery. The British lost one General, one Colonel and 600 officers and men killed and wounded: the Americans lost one General and 1,300 officers and men wounded and prisoners.

Sir William Howe was aware of Washington's intention the evening before this action, but with criminal negligence, if no worse motive can be attributed, or culpable stupidity, took no measures to provide against it.

Both English and American writers are of the opinion that if Washington could have