

Towards the close of the year seventy-nine, Sir Henry Clinton embarked with a considerable land force, under the convoy of a strong Squadron commanded by Admiral Arbuthnot. Their destination was Savannah; but their progress was much retarded by contrary winds and stormy weather. They did not arrive off the coast of Georgia till the expiration of January.

On the twelfth of February the army was safely landed on the islands in the vicinity of Charles Town; and from thence proceeded to the banks of Ashley's river; between which and Cooper's river that town is situated.

Here he was obliged to remain a considerable time, waiting for the arrival of the necessary stores and implements for the carrying on of the intended siege of that place. This delay was chiefly occasioned by the loss of the principal ordnance ship, which was sunk in a gale of wind on the passage from New York, and by the loss of the draft-horses belonging to the artillery.

Owing to these, and a multitude of other impediments, several of them arising from the nature of the climate, and of the ground that was the scene of action, it was near the close of March before the British forces crossed the river Ashley. This motion was made under the protection of the armed galleys. The boats of the fleet landed the whole army, with the artillery and stores requisite for the siege, without any resistance on the part of the enemy.

From the deficiency of battering cannon, occasioned by the loss of the ordnance ship, the British General was obliged to have recourse to the Admiral, for a supply of pieces of heavy metal. A sufficient number were in consequence landed, with a detachment of seamen under the command of Captain Elphinstone.