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CHAP. XII. CIVIL WAR in AMERICA.

[355]

commander Colonel Magaw, refusing a summons to surrender, and declaring he would defend it to the last extremity, a general assault was determined upon, as saving the time that would be lost in regular approaches. The garrison consisted of near 3000 men, and the strong grounds round the Fort were covered with lines and works. Four attacks were made at the same time. The first, on the North side, was conducted by the General Knyphausen, at the head of two columns of Hessians and Waldeckers. The second on the East, was led on by Brigadier General Mathew, at the head of the 1st and 2d battalions of light infantry, and two battalions of guards, supported by Lord Cornwallis with the 1st and 2d battalions of grenadiers, and the 33d regiment. These forces crossed the East river in flat boats, as the provincial works there extended the breadth of the Island, redoubts and batteries were erected on the opposite shore, as well to cover the landing of the troops, as to annoy those works which were near the water. The third attack, which was principally intended as a feint, to distract the enemy, was conducted by Lt. Col. Sterling, with the 42d regiment, who passed the East river lower down, between the 2d and 4th attacks. The last attack was made by Lord Percy with the corps which he commanded on the south of the Island. All the attacks were supported with a numerous, powerful, and well served artillery.

The Hessians under General Knyphausen had a thick wood to pass, where the provincials were very advantageously posted, and a warm engagement was continued for a considerable time, in which the former were much exposed, and behaved with great firmness and bravery. In the mean time the light infantry landed, and were exposed both before and after to a very brisk and continual fire from the provincials, who were themselves covered by the rocks and trees among which they were posted.

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