

Cornwallis, and Grant, and in his Rear the Enemy's Main Body stood ready drawn up to support their own Parties and intercept the Retreat of ours. this excellent Disposition, and their superior Numbers ought to have taught our Generals, there was no Time to be lost in securing their Retreat, which might at first have been effected, had the Troops formed into a heavy Column and Pushed their Retreat, but the longer this was delayed it became the more dangerous as they were then landing more Troops in Front from the Ships. our Brigade kept their Ground for several Hours, and in general behaved well having received some heavy Fires from the Artillery and Musquetry of the Enemy whom they repulsed several Times, but their Attacks were neither so lasting or vigorous as was expected owing as it was imagined to their being certain of mak^s the whole Brigade Prisoners of War, for by this Time they had so secured the Passes on the Road to our Lines (seeing our Parties were not supported from thence; which indeed our Numbers would not admit of) that there was no possibility of retreating that Way. between the place of Action and our Lines there lay a large Marsh and Deep Creek not above 80 yds aCross at the Mouth. The Place of Action upon a direct Line did not much exceed a Mile from a part of our Lines towards the Head of which Creek there was a Mill and Bridge across which a certain Col. Ward from New England, who is charged with having acted a Bashful part that Day, pass'd over with his Regiment and then burnt them Down, tho' under cover of our Cannon, which would have check'd the Enemy's Pursuit at any Time, otherways this Bridge might have afforded a secure Retreat, there then remained no other Prospect but to surrender or attempt to retreat over this Marsh and Creek at the Mouth, where no Person had ever been known to Cross. in the Interim I applied to Gen^l Washington for some Regiments to march out to support and cover their Retreat, which he urged would be attended with too great Risk to the Party and the Lines; he immediately afterwards sent for and ordered me to march down a New England Regiment, and Capⁿ Thomas's Comp^y which had just come over from York, to the Mouth of the Creek opposite where the Brigade was drawn up, and ordered two Field Pieces down, to support and cover their Retreat, should they make a push that Way.—soon after our march, they began to retreat, and for a small Time the Fire was very heavy on both sides, till our Troops came to the Marsh, where they were obliged to break their order, and escape as quick as they could to the Edge of the Creek, under a brisk Fire, notwithstanding which they brought off 28 Prisoners—The Enemy taking advantage of a Commanding Ground kept up