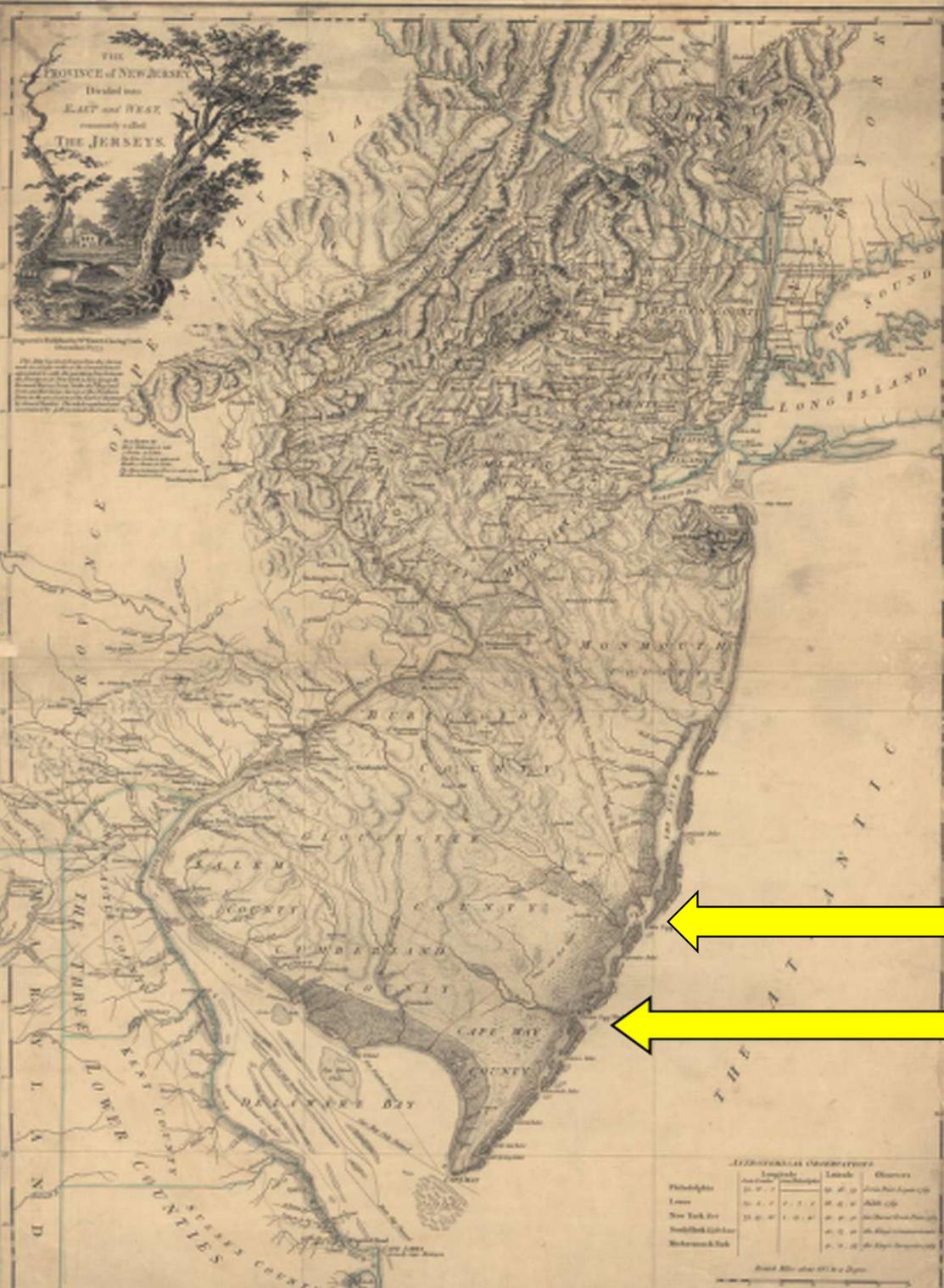
The background of the image is a stylized American flag with horizontal stripes and a blue canton containing white stars.

The Battle at Chestnut Neck

Port Republic, New Jersey

October 6, 1778

New Jersey in 1778

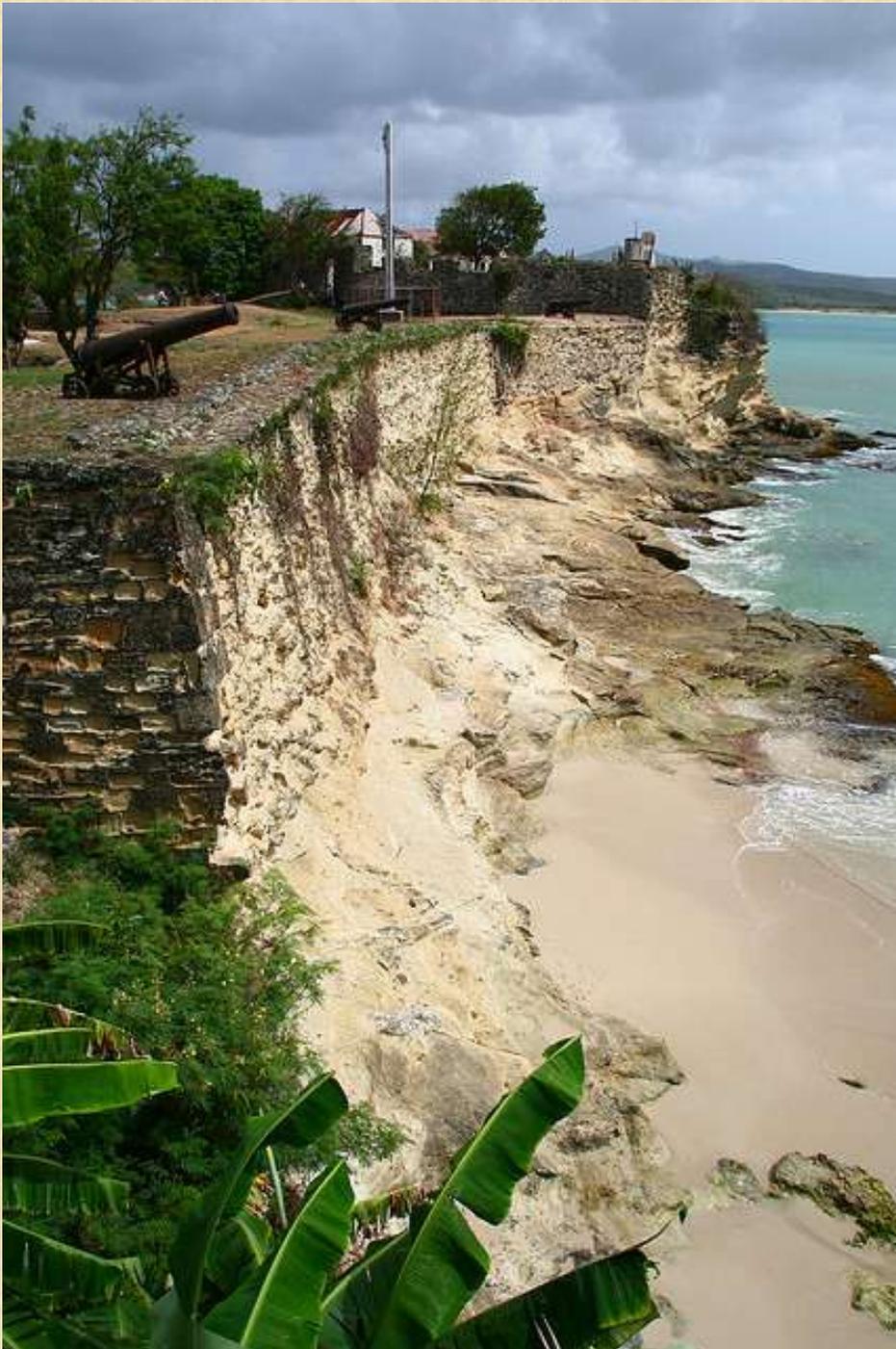


**Little Egg Harbor River
Area (Mullica River today) –
Chestnut Neck**

**Great Egg Harbor River Area
– Somers Point**

Now Let's Talk About the Battle





- Dec. 16, 1773 – Boston Tea Party and the British blockade of Boston followed by the 1st Continental Congress in 1774.
- Aug. 19, 1775 – Battles at Lexington and Concord and the American blockade of Boston. The Egg Harbor Guard was immediately formed and guarded The Forks (Pension Application {Hereafter called a PA} of Pvt. John Jeffries).

- **1775 – 2nd Cont. Congress; Washington made Commander in Chief; Britain declares war; battles at Breed’s & Bunker Hills occur.**
- **Oct. 1775 – 3rd Battalion captures 1st prize – the “Rebecca & Francis” on Brigantine Beach (PA Pvts. David Somers & Albert Albertson).**



The Mud Fort – Fox Burroughs

- April 1776 – 1st recorded activity – “we commenced building a small fort” (Pvt. Isaac Hickman). Continued in May/June – it was also called Fort Tucker (Pvt. David Denike).
- July 1776 – 1st fire fight – “some of the British Cruzers came in and drove us off...before the Fort was completed and we had any guns; we were ordered back to the same place” (Pvt. Zadock Bowen).





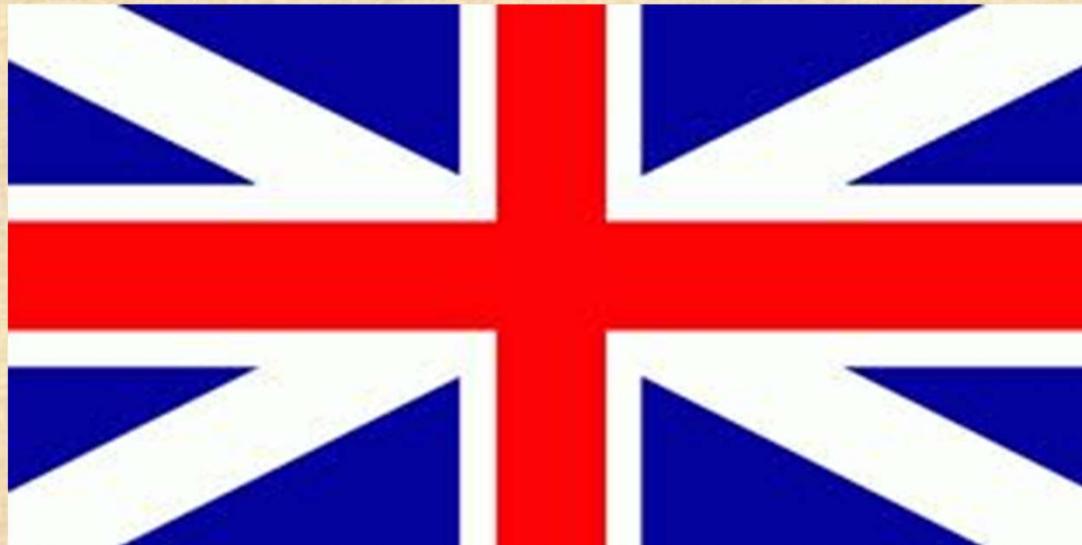
- **Aug 1776 – Fort men ordered to Absecon to capture 16 Tories (Pvt. Isaac Hickman).**
- **Sep 1776 – 3rd Battalion captures 3 more cargo ships (Pvt. Levi Price).**



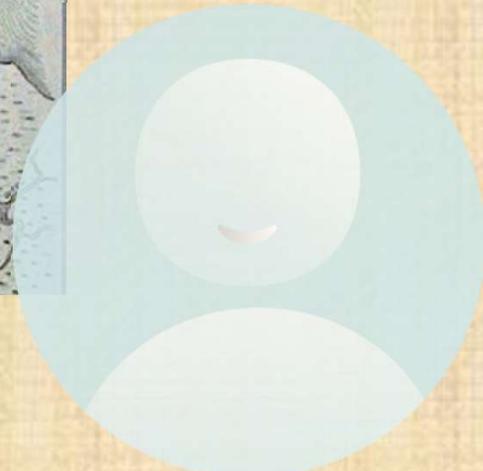
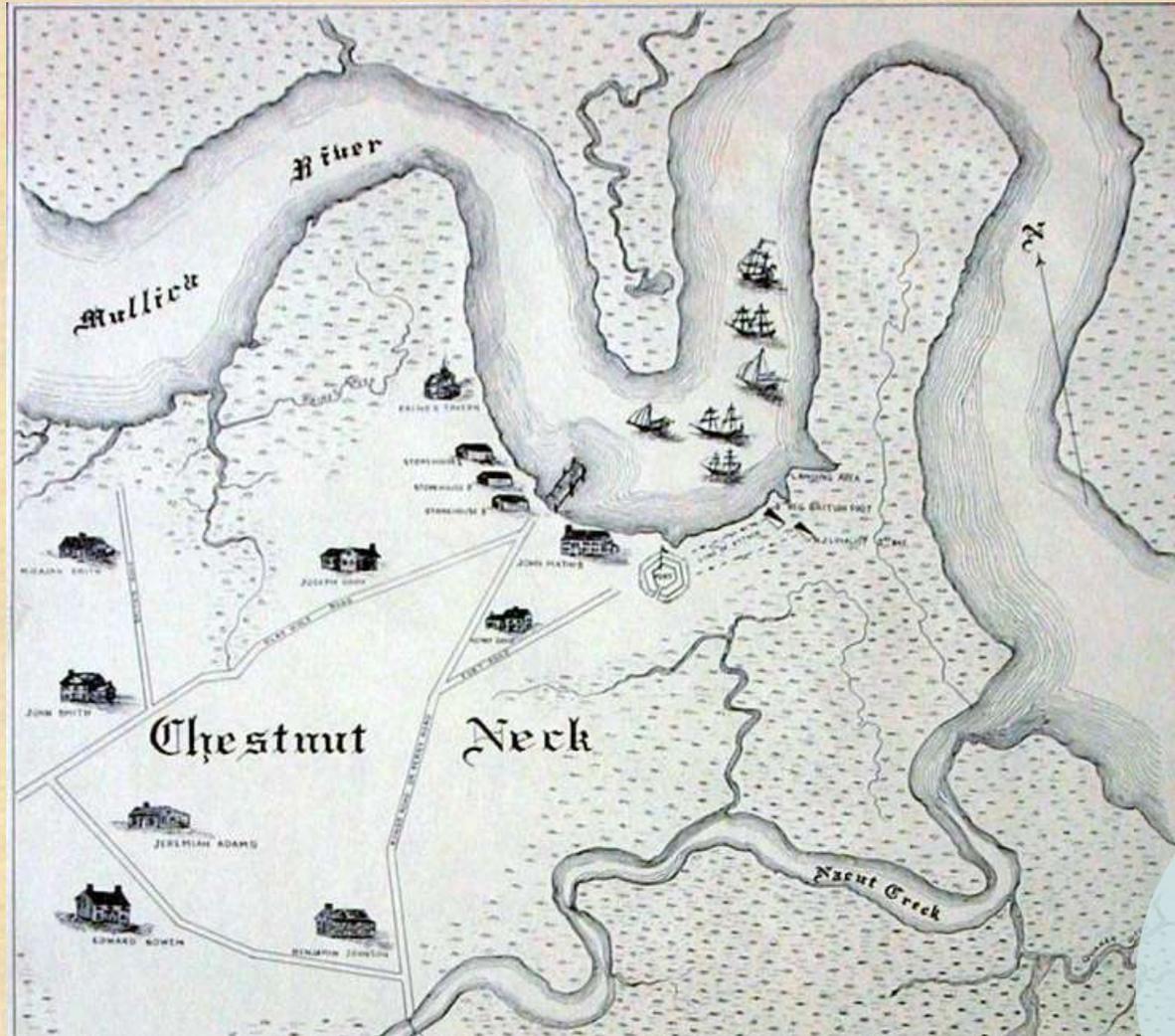
- **June 1777 – “we marched to Leeds Point...in order to attack 3 of the enemy ships laying in the bay...we succeeded in setting one of the ships on fire...she sank” (Pvt. John Ingersoll).**
- **Mar 1778 – “we marched...to Clam Town (Tuckerton), a place much infested by Tories...we found them too strong for us” (Pvts. James Steelman & David Somers).**



- **June 1778 – “we had a long chase after a company of Refugees...we took 20-30 prisoners and their Captains Turner & Howlings” (Pvts. Zephaniah Steelman & John Jeffries)**
- **Before Oct 1778 – “the British had been to that place (Chestnut Neck) 3 times and burned the vessels or took the off” (Pvt. James Giberson).**



At The Battle at Chestnut Neck



The Final 18 Straws for Gen. Clinton

- **“10 Ships Captured & Sold:** at the house of Richard Westcott, Esq. at the Forks at Egg Harbor on Tuesday, the 28th of July (1778) the following vessels: *Industry, Dispatch, Molly’s Adventure...Canester, Carolina Packet, Prince Frederick, Speedwell, Jenny, Bachelor...*
\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$
- **“4 Ships Captured & Sold...on Tuesday, September 8th** (1778) at Chestnut Neck...*Rising Sun, Governor Henry, Nancy, William...*” \$\$\$\$
- **“4 Ships Captured & Sold...on Monday, September 14th at** Mays Landing...the cargo ship *Venus*, the schooners *Fame, Hannah...Defiance*” \$\$\$\$

Success Would Bring Retaliation, so Col. Somers Began to Prepare for the Coming Attack by Purchasing Powder and Shot

2

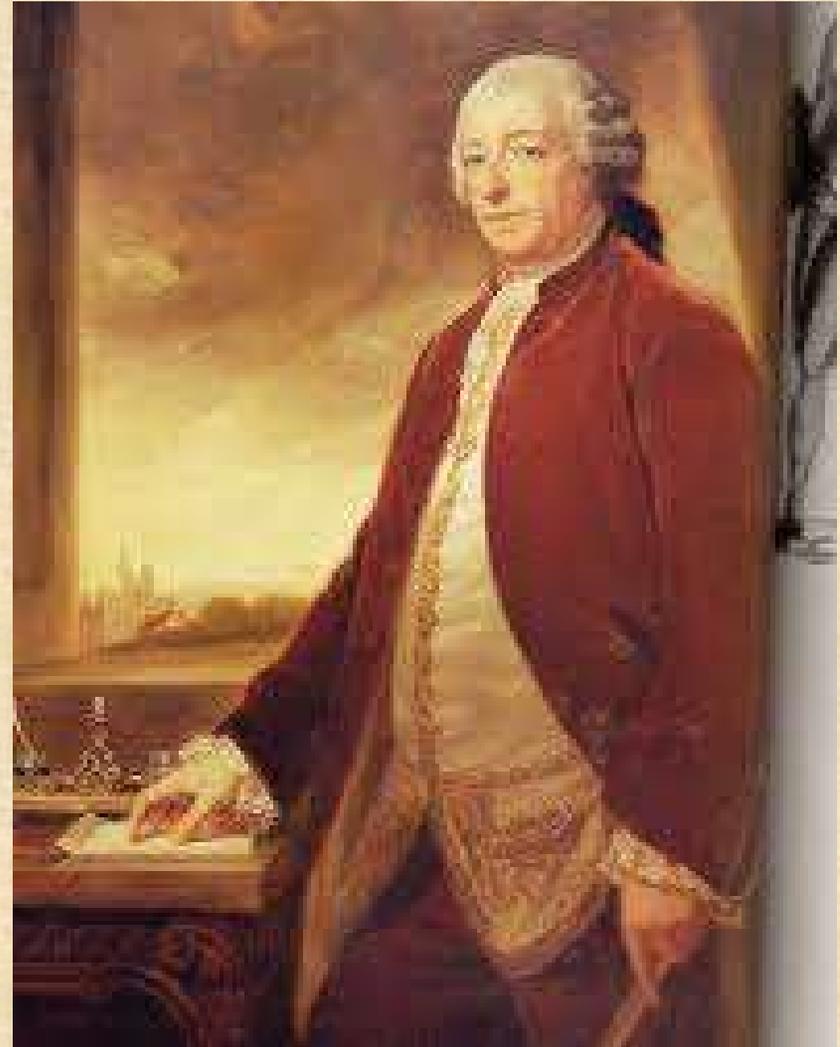
26

40	30	20	8	7	6	5	4
11	25	14					
<hr/>							
11	40	440					
25	30	750					
14	20	280					
Other Money		195					
		1665					
1 Sheet		65					
		1730					

Mrs. Thomas Somers & Company
 54 1/2 St. N.Y.
 To Cash for powder 30 lb. \$ 87-15-0
 Do 100 lbs powder 53 lb. 5-0-0
 To Market Ball Lead 4 1/2 lb. \$ 2-11-2
 5-4 lb shot - 20 value - \$ 2-0-0
 \$ 97-6-2

The British Decision

- “Embark a body of troops...to attack the ports...and destroy all ships and other property alongshore...so as to incapacitate the Rebels...from continuing their depredations...” (Lord Germain, Sec. of State for the Colonies, to Gen. Clinton)



The British Decision

- “I proposed taking a forward position with the army...to favor an expedition to Egg Harbor, at which place the enemy had a number of privateers and prizes and considerable salt works...accordingly...I requested Lord Cornwallis to take a position...in Jersey”
(Clinton to Germain)
- 13 ships and 1690 men were sent to Egg Harbor. Gen. Cornwallis’ troops acted as a distraction in the North.



Army Command: Capt. Patrick Ferguson
Navy Command: Commander Henry Collins

Oct. 5, 1778

**In the afternoon, Congress
ordered Pulaski's Legion
“to proceed immediately to
assist in the defense of Egg
Harbour against the attack
of the enemy on that
port...”**



**Maj. Gen. Sterling to Gen. George
Washington**

October 7, 1778 – 11 AM

**“...an expedition has taken place against Egg
Harbor...”**

Brig. Gen. William Maxwell

October 8, 1778

**“”A fleet of four ships and eight Brigs &
Sloops sailed southward, designed...for Egg
Harbor...”**

**Maj. Gen. Sterling to Gen. George
Washington**

October 7, 1778 – 11 AM

**“...Count Pulaski is gone down to Egg
Harbor...”**



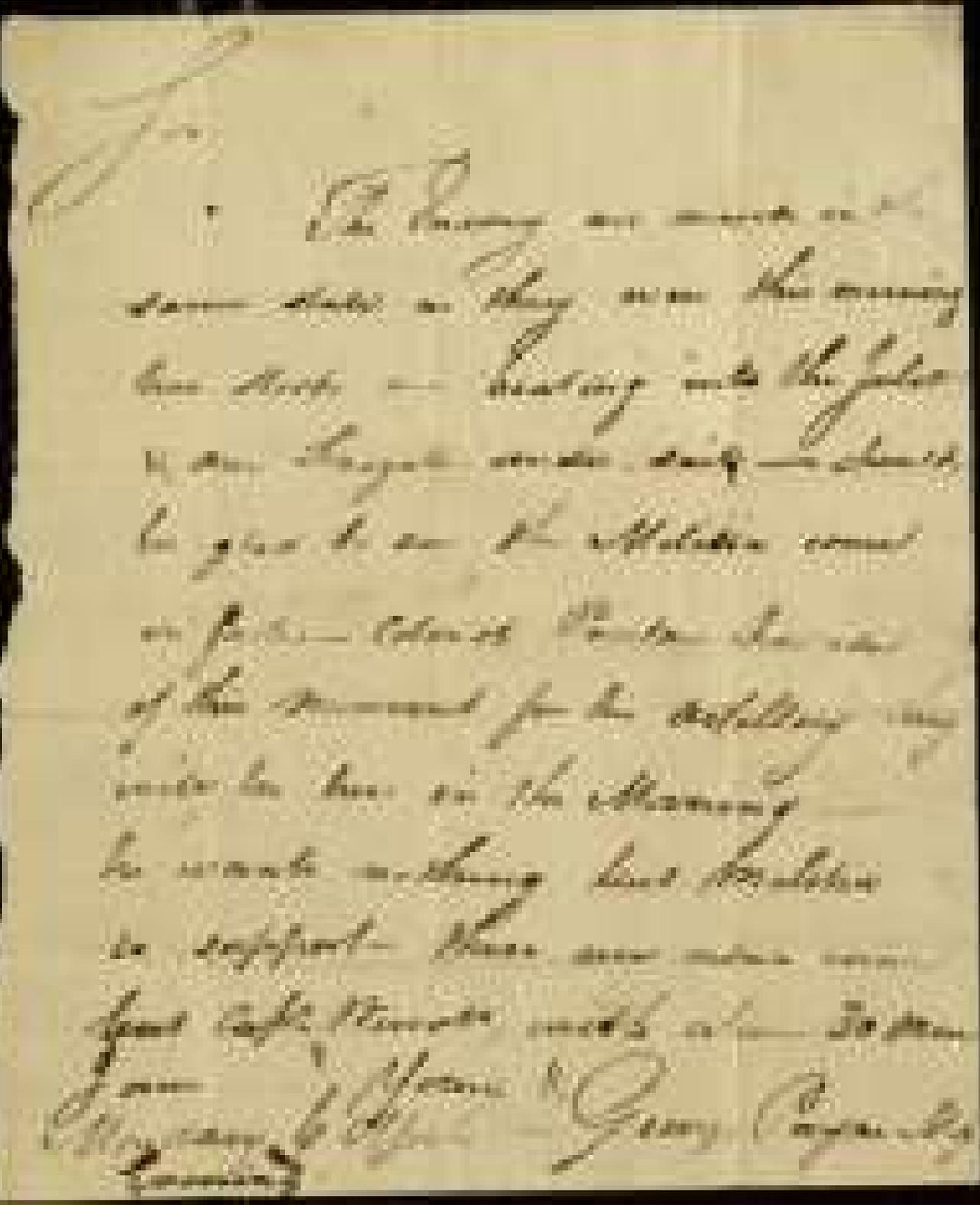
**Maj. Gen. Benedict Arnold to Gen.
George Washington
October 11, 1778 from Philadelphia**



“...I was informed that the Enemy meditated an attack on Little Egg Harbor....Col. Proctor’s Regiment was ordered to march immediately for the defense of the place and the next day I sent 100 militia to reinforce him. Col. Proctor reached the neighborhood of Egg Harbor on the 7th, where he was joined by only fifty militia, although they had been ordered out four days before....”

**Col Richard
Somers – Great
Egg Harbor...**

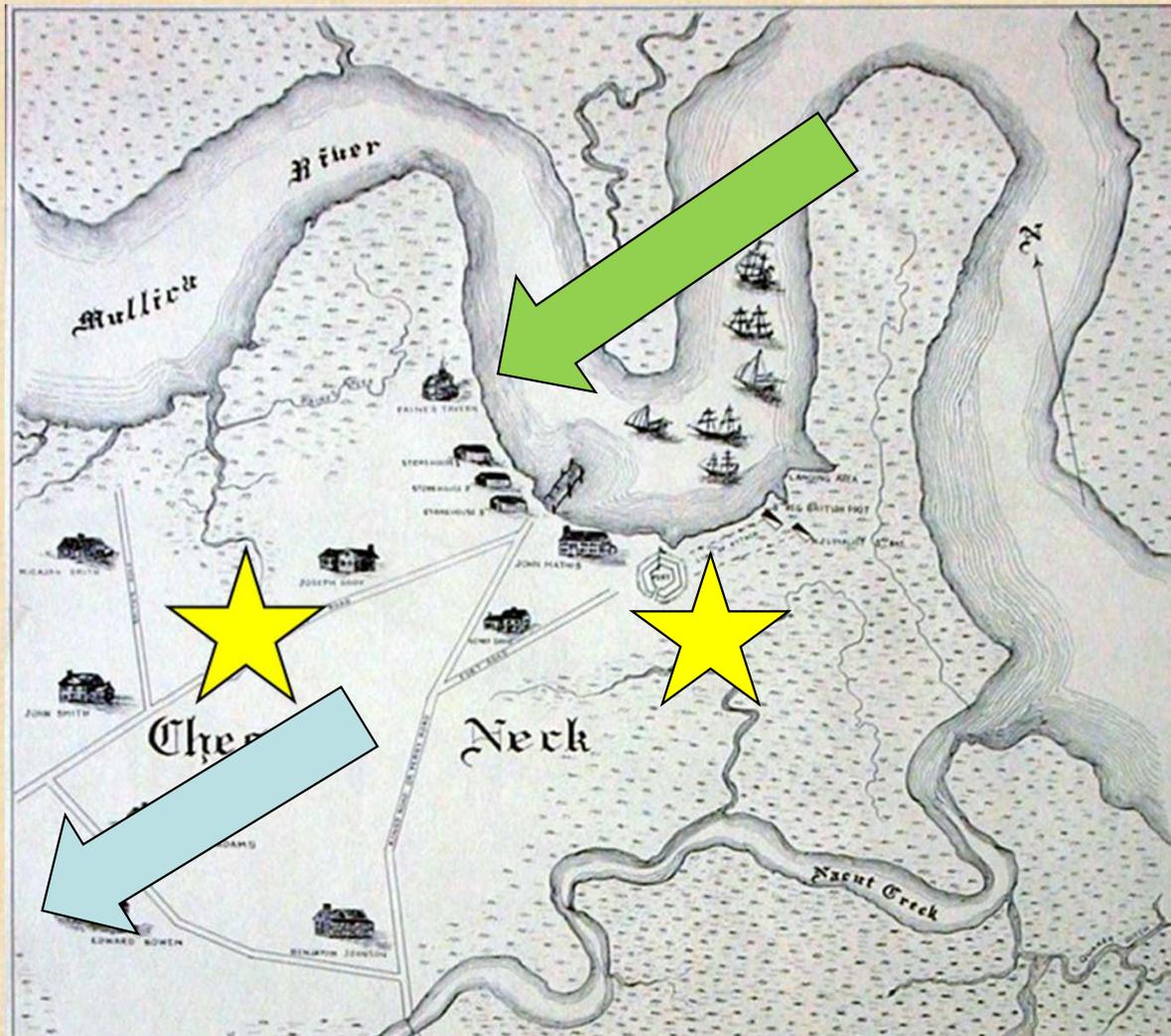
**Sir: The enemy are
much in the same
state as they were
this morning. Two
sloops are
heading into the
Inlet and one
frigate under sail –
should be glad to
see the militia
come in force –**

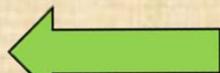
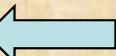


[Faint, handwritten text in cursive script, likely a military report or letter.]

**Col. Proctor has
sent of this
moment for his
artillery – they will
be here in the
morning – he
wants nothing but
militia to support –
there are none
come but Capt.
Westcott with
about 30 men. I
am your...George
Payne, Major,
Commanding -
Monday, 6 o'clock**

The Battle Itself



1. Oct 5 - British arrival in Little Egg Harbor Bay
2. Loyalists warn British that 3rd Batt. Militia is at the fort.
3. Oct 6 – British row troops 20 miles up river in smaller boats with cannons.
4. Oct 6 – 4 PM – British see two forts  and attack with cannon first.
5. Oct 6 – 4:30 PM – the British land and take the village. 
6. Oct 6 – 5 PM – the militia withdraws after wounding 1 British soldier. 
7. Oct 6 – 6 PM – ships and village are burnt

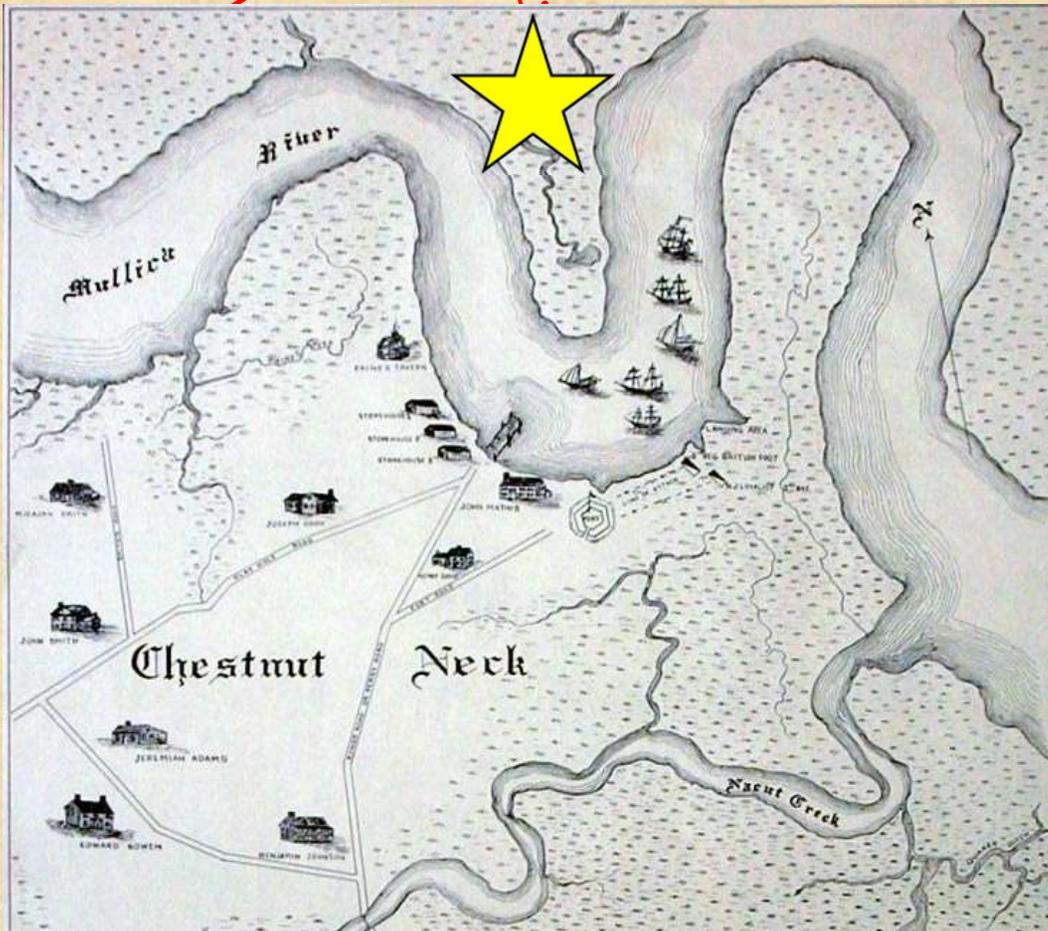


ATTACKED AND BURNED BY
BRITISH TROOPS



VILLAGE OF CHESTNUT

The Day After



8. The British later attack Pulaski's forces on Osbourne Island off New Gretna and killed 30-50 men, with 5 more taken as prisoners.

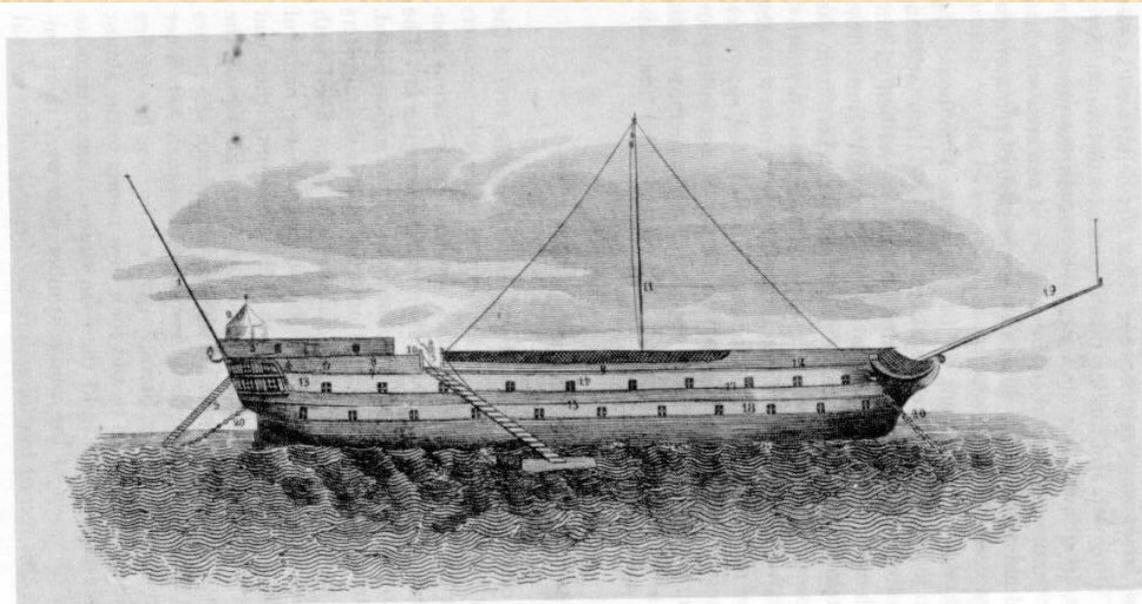
1. The Militia moves through Wrangleboro to Leeds Point to await reinforcements.
2. The British complete destroying the village and ships.
3. The British troops cross the river to destroy 3 salt works and several patriot homes.
4. The British receive word that Proctor and Pulaski's men are almost upon them and withdraw back to Little Egg Harbor Bay to their main ships.
5. The Militia reoccupies Chestnut Neck and remains there until the British leave the larger area 3 weeks later.
6. A few Militia on patrol are taken prison and sent to NY.
7. The rebuilt Fort is occupied until the end of the war.



David Denike's 1832 Affidavit in The Court of Common Pleas, Philadelphia, PA

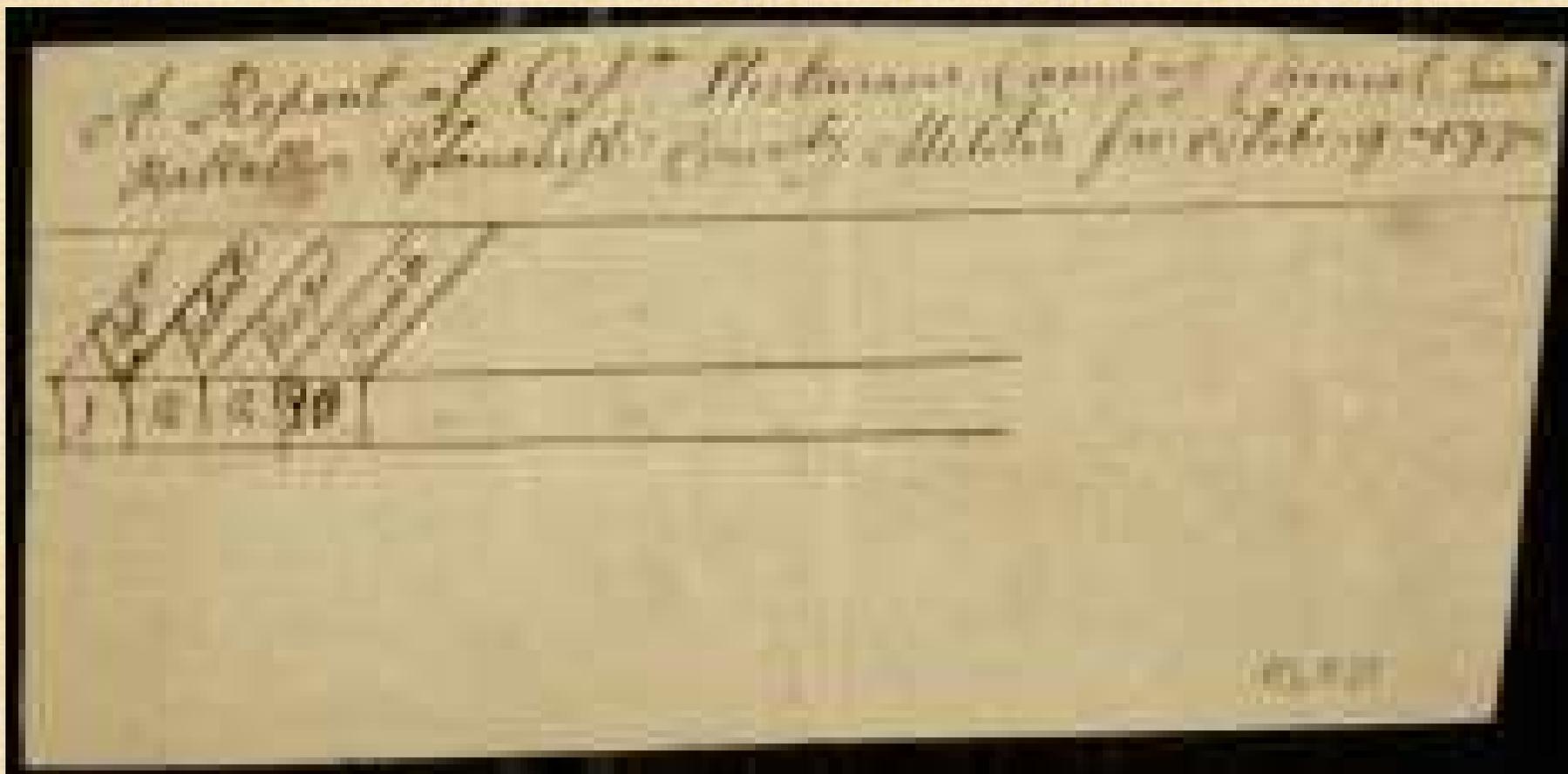
“The British succeeded in burning the village call Chestnut Neck and the surrounding property, and in about 2 weeks after the battle, he was taken prisoner by the British and sent to New York, and put aboard the prison ship Old Jersey. He remained aboard the prison ship not less than 7 months before he was exchanged. His health was much impaired by having been aboard the prison ship a length of time, and he had the scurvy when he was exchanged.

**(His health took another two months to normalize)
He again volunteered in the militia in the company commanded by Capt. Rich Higbee and was a private under him not less than 2 years.**



5. THE "OLD JERSEY" PRISON SHIP, 1782

**Capt. Zephaniah Steelman came
with 2 officers, 2 Sergeants and
30 privates**



October 1778
 Acct. of Beef for
 use of Army
 Obediah Weed's Bill
 from sundry Papers 302 1/2
 David Sayre's Bill - 608
 Saml. Wesley's Bill - 300
 Joseph Dale - Ditto 340
 Richd. Somers - 425
 John Scull - 365

 5059 1/2

Beef
 Bill

Received October the 13th 1778 of Joseph
 Dale one half wait 340 pounds and one
 bushell of Corn for the use of the Slaves by
 me Joseph Scull

Corn Bill

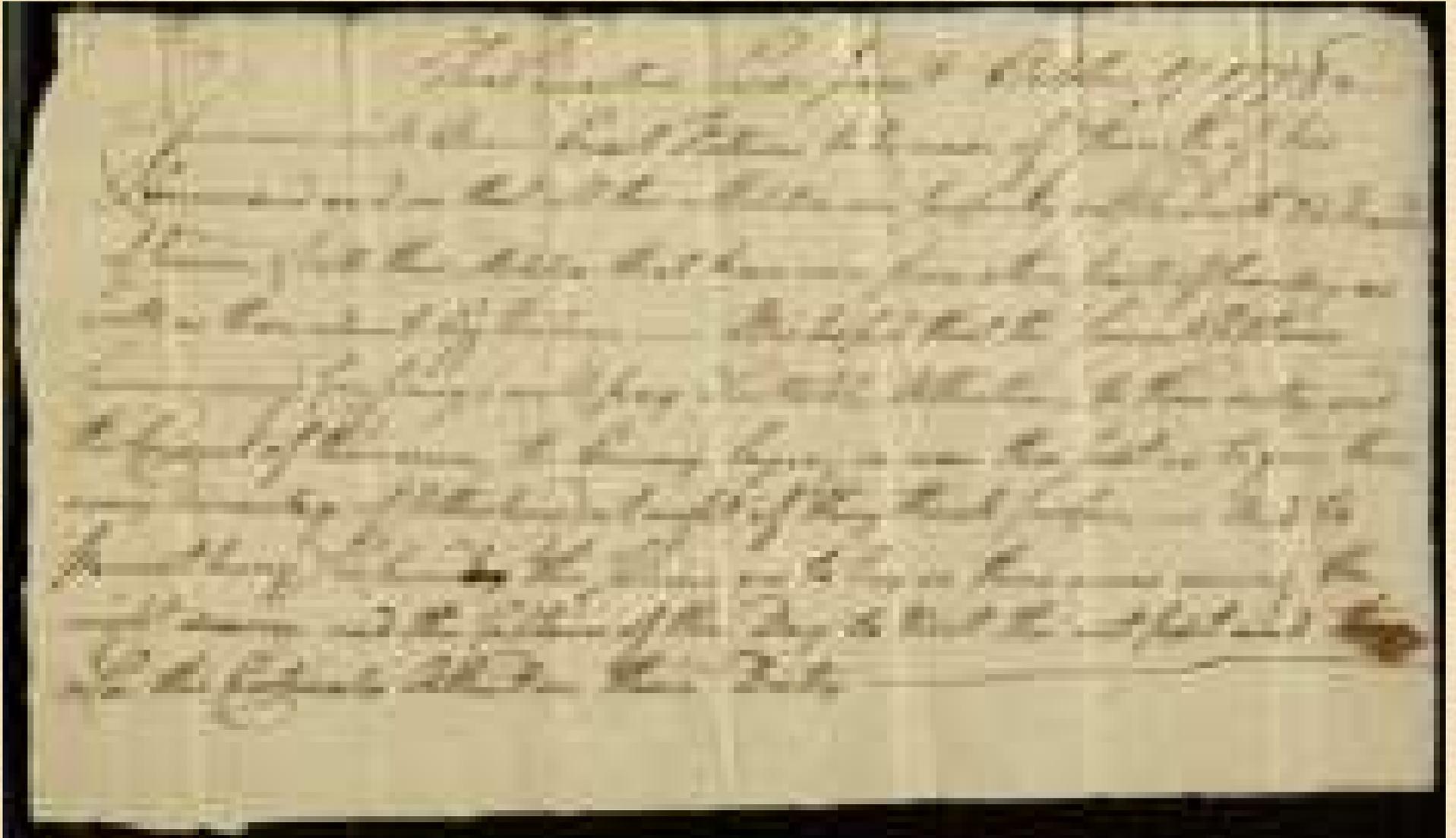
Rum & Socks Bill

November 12th 1778
 Col. Richard Sommers Bought at Vendue

1 Doz: Mens worsted Hose	£36. 5. 0
1 d ^o : Women	25. 15. 0
	<hr/> £62. 0. 0
1 Hogshead Rum Contg. 109 Gal. @ 73/	397. 17. 0
1 . . . d ^o . . . d ^o . . . d ^o 113 d ^o 78/6	443. 10. 6
1 . . . d ^o . . . d ^o . . . d ^o 109 d ^o 78/6	427. 16. 6
	<hr/> £1,331. 4. 0

Received the above in full
 Joseph Ball

**Leeds Point - Oct 17th – Col. Proctor
to Col. Somers – Get Ready for a
Night Attack on the Brits**



Camp Great Egg Harbour Oct. 23. 1778

Dear Sir

In consequence of a letter I lately
Received from General Count Pulaski, intimating
to me; that the troops here are no longer required,
the Enemy having Removed from this quarter
You will therefore please to Discharge the
Militia in your district, some Companies of
which are posted at, or near Leeds Point, which
are to be remembered. I Return
you my particular Respects for your Affi-
duty and care in this present Command, and
Remain your

Most Hble Serv^t
Thos. Proctor Col
Commandant

To
Col. Richard Sumner's

**Oct. 23rd – Col.
Proctor to
Col. Somers – After
the reported
disaster with Gen.
Pulaski at Osbourne
Island, you are to
discharge your
Leeds Point troops
immediately**

3rd Battalion Soldiers Present

Col. Richard Somers

Col. Robert Taylor

**With 8 companies, @
about 30 men = 240 men**

Capt. Joseph Conover

Capt. George Payne

Capt. Richard Higbee

Capt. Zephaniah Steelman

Capt. William Price

Capt. Joseph Estell

Capt. Samuel Snell

Capt. Jeremiah Smith

1st Lt. Jeremiah Leeds

Pvt. John Stewart

Pvt. Benjamin Scull

Pvt. Henry Snell

Pvt. Edward Dowers

Pvt. Levi Price

Pvt. Zadok Bowen

Pvt. Robert Leeds

Pvt. Abraham Albertson

Pvt. John Giberson

Pvt. Jesse Conover

Pvt. David Denike – POW 7 months

Pvt. John Thomas

Pvt. Stephen Ford

Pvt. Enoch Gandy

Pvt. Zephaniah Steelman

Pvt. James Giberson

Pvt. James Steelman

Pvt. John Jeffreys

Pvt. David Somers

Pvt. Stephen Morris

Pvt. Richard Sayres

Note: the 3rd Battalion contained about 250 men. We know of eight companies that were present on Oct. 6, 1778 when the British came ashore. This means that there were at least 240 men present, some guarding The Forks, some guarding Somers Point and most at Chestnut Neck. The list above contains only the 32 names that are documented to have been present via items from the NJ State Archives.

The KIA Honor Roll of the 3rd Gloucester Battalion

- **Pvt. Forrest Bellangy (killed at Trenton #2)**
- **Lt. John Lucas (killed in post-Red Bank fight)**
- **Pvt. John Cain (murdered while POW in Tuckerton)**
- **Capt. Andrew Steelman (murdered while POW at Long Beach Is)**
- **Capt. Henry Snell (killed by friendly fire at Long Beach Is)**
- **3 other unnamed men killed at Petticoat Bridge/Mt. Holly**

The WIA Honor Roll of the 3rd Gloucester Battalion

- **Lt. John Tilton (wounded in post-Red Bank fight)**
- **Pvt. Hugh Jones (wounded in post-Red Bank fight)**
- **Maj. Elijah Clark (wounded at Trenton #2)**
- **Lt. John Lucas (wounded at Petticoat Bridge)**
- **Pvt. John Thomas (wounded at Tuckerton)**
- **Pvt. Stephen Ford (wounded at Petticoat Bridge)**
- **Lt. David Scull (wounded at Long Beach Is)**
- **Pvt. John Steelman (wounded on Cumberland County patrol)**
- **3 other unnamed men wounded at raid at John Steelman's house in Absecon**

The POW Honor Roll of the 3rd Gloucester Battalion

- **Pvt. David Denike (taken in post-Chestnut Neck period) - exchanged**
- **Pvt. Benjamin Endicott (taken in skirmish near Camden) - exchanged**
- **Pvt. James Leeds (taken in Absecon raid) - escaped**
- **Pvt. John Ingersoll (taken in post-Chestnut Neck period) - escaped**
- **Pvt. Patrick McCollum (taken in skirmish near Camden) - exchanged**
- **Capt. Enoch Willits (taken in Cape May raid) - died in NY prison ship**
- **4 other unnamed men taken, 2 post-Chestnut Neck and 2 at Camden - exchanged**

**This presentation is a work in progress.
If you have any additional information
about any of the activities of Col.
Richard Somers' 3rd Gloucester Militia
Battalion, please contact me and share it.**

Thank You!

Norm Goos

normangoos@comcast.net

609-513-1044