



Eyewitness of the American Revolution

Battle of Princeton by Graham Turner
from Trenton and Princeton 1776-77
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January 3, 1777
**Princeton
Battlefield**
Society
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Ensign George Inman

17th Regiment of Foot



On January 3, 1777, I was a 22-year-old ensign in the British 17th Regiment of Foot at Princeton. I had been born in Boston, Massachusetts, to a family who became active Loyalists in the struggle with Great Britain. About the time of the Battle of Bunker Hill, I joined the British army under General Howe as a volunteer and stayed with the army through the campaign to secure the city of New York as a British headquarters. During that fighting, General Howe commissioned me an ensign in the 17th Regiment of Foot and I joined that regiment as we pursued General Washington's troops across New Jersey. The 17th regiment quartered in Trenton in early December until relieved by three Hessian regiments under Colonel Rall that Washington captured on December 26. General Cornwallis wanted revenge for their capture and concentrated some 8,000 troops at Princeton to attack Washington at Trenton. He took most of his soldiers to Trenton on January 2 but left our regiment with several others at Princeton as a rear guard. We got orders the evening of January 2 to march for Trenton the following morning to support Cornwallis.

We marched from Princeton at about 5:00 am that morning, and about sunrise, just as we had crossed the Stony Brook, we discovered enemy troops marching towards Princeton, and our commander determined to attack them. He turned us around and as we headed back on the King's Highway, our regiment and several other units peeled off to cross several farm fields while other units continued on to town. We found that some of Washington's troops had been detached to attack us and we met them on a farm with an apple orchard. We exchanged fire with them but became far outnumbered as more troops joined them. In the fighting, I was the only officer in the battalion right-wing not severely injured. I was only hit by a buckshot that came through my cross belt and just entered the pit of my stomach and made me sick for just a moment. When we were forced to retreat from the field, I was with a group that escaped to Maidenhead to join our forces there. We passed back over the battlefield about 4:00 pm after Washington's troops had left and arrived at Brunswick the following morning. - *Text by Larry Kidder*