

A person dressed in 18th-century clothing, including a brown hat, a tan jacket, and a red satchel, is shown in profile aiming a long rifle. They are standing in a snowy, wooded area with snow-covered evergreen trees in the background.

Eyewitness of the American Revolution

The logo for the Princeton Battlefield Society features a circular arrangement of stars surrounding a central tree. Below the tree, the text "January 3, 1777" is written in a script font. The words "Princeton Battlefield" are prominently displayed in a serif font, with "Society" underneath. A rifle is positioned horizontally below the text.

January 3, 1777
Princeton
Battlefield
Society
www.pbs1777.org

*Courtesy of
Nathan Joel
Putterman Hoffman*

Dec 29 - Private David How

16th Continental Regiment



I woke up on the cold morning of December 29 still recovering from the night crossing in the storm on December 25/26, the all-night march to Trenton, the battle there, the march back up to the ferry crossing, the second night crossing back to Pennsylvania with our Hessian prisoners, and making camp in the very cold weather. Aside from routine camp duties, we were finally able to get some rest and food and recover our strength. Yesterday I spent washing my ragged and very dirty clothes while otherwise resting up.

Today we all drew provisions and cooked them in preparation for marching. I only had four days left in my enlistment and had no idea why we should be preparing to march again. We had won decisively at Trenton, what more was there to do? Some of us thought that General Washington did not want to appear to have retreated after his victory and those of us who had retreated so much with him during the second half of the year could understand that. We were also tired of retreating.

The Trenton victory had reinvigorated us, but many of us who had suffered a year in the army felt we had done our duty and now it was time for others to step forward. Towards night we marched to Yardley's Ferry, known as Howell's on the New Jersey side, much closer to Trenton than the Johnson's and McConkey's ferry crossings we had used the night of December 25. I heard that part of the army crossed up there again, while the troops I was with crossed at Howell's. We also crossed all our essential baggage and artillery, clear evidence that some kind of action was likely. Once we got across the river it was late in the day and we set up camp to wait until morning to march on to Trenton.

As I tried to get some sleep, I felt confident that in three days I could go home. *Text by Larry Kidder.*