

Archibald Robertson, Royal Engineer
Text Accompanying his Manuscript Map of The Battle of Brandywine
RCIN 734026.A. King's Map Collection. Windsor Castle

[comments by Thomas McGuire]

After crossing the second Branch of the Brandywine the Van of the Army halted upon the Heights on this side until the Rear came up: It then moved on in three Columns— The centre Column composed of the Jagers, two Battalions of Light Infantry, two Battalions British [grenadiers], and three Battalions of Hessian Grenadiers in the Road—The Brigade of Guards and 16th Regiment of light Dragoons formed the right Column, and the 4th Brigade British the left Column, about 400 Yards distant on each side of the Road—The third Brigade British formed the Reserve and moved along the Road in the Rear.—

After advancing to the high Ground mark'd *A* [Osborne's Hill] in the Plan, the Enemy were observed at Birmingham Meeting, but moving and unsettled—The Army was ordered immediately to advance and form as in the plan *B*. The Rebels then fell back and took the position expressed in the Plan *C*, having their light Troops in their Front in the hollow Way [Birmingham Road near the Lafayette monument, then east along a fence line down to New Street and just beyond], and along the Fences *D* [the county line – RPN]. Our Troops kept advancing – the three Battalions of Hessian Grenadiers forming a second Line, but the two Battalions of Light Infantry being a little in Front, and having beat back the advanced Parties of the Rebels, halted in the position *E* until the two Battalions of British Grenadiers got up to the Rails at *F*, when they received a heavy Fire from the Rebels in their Front; after crossing the Rails they immediately charged and drove the Rebels before them. At the same time the first Battn. of Light Infantry charged and took five Pieces of Cannon in their Front. When the 4th Brigade which followed the Rear of the first Battn. Light Infantry gained the Hill *G*, the two Rear Battns. the 33rd and 46th filed off to their left in the Rear of the 5 Companies of the 2nd Battn. of Light Infantry *H*, who by that time had got upon the Flank of the Rebels, and so facilitated the Charge made by the remainder of the 2nd Battn. of Light Infantry and Chasseurs across the Field *I*, who drove the Rebels and took their two Pieces of Cannon. The Rebels retreated to their right seemingly with an intention to outflank our Left* [*very interesting comment—this would explain the progress of the battle towards Dilworth] - Orders were given to the 2nd Battn of Grenadiers and 4th Brigade to incline to their left, and a Halt was made at *K* to give time to the Artillery to come up. The 1st Battn. of Light Infantry remained to mask the wood *KK*, except two Companies that moved on with the 2nd Battn. of Grenadiers.

The Rebels were discover'd behind the Fence *L* in Front, with two Pieces of Cannon *M*, with which they cannonaded the Troops at *K*, but our 12 pounders which had got up to *K*, firing a few rounds they retired to *N* where they again cannonaded the 4th Brigade, two Regiments of which, the 33rd and 46th, were ordered to scour the Village of Dillworth, and then formed in the Field *O*; the second Battn. of Grenadiers being in Front of the left of the Brigade. Five Companies of the 2nd [Battalion] of Light Infantry advanced on the left of the

4th Brigade, and the remainder with the Chasseurs were posted on the left as in the Plan. On the approach of the Second Battn. of Grenadiers, the Rebels left the Hedge *N* and were observed drawn up in Field *P*, upon which the second Battn. of Grenadiers advanced, and the 4th Brigade wheel'd up to their left in the position *Q*, when a very heavy Fire commenced from Hedges and Woods *R* where the Rebels had retired, from which they were very soon driven on all sides, but it being by this time almost Dark, unacquainted with the Ground, and the Troops very much fatigued, it was impossible to pursue further the Advantage they had gained.

To return to the Plan at *F*, the Guards receiv'd the fire of the Rebels from the Wood at the same time with the two Battns. of British Grenadiers, and immediately charging them the Rebels gave way with the utmost precipitation. They pursued as far as *S*, where one Battn. of the Guards [the 2nd Battalion], the three Batts. of Hessian Grenadiers, and the first Battn. British Grenadiers halted, having in their Front a Ravine, and a woody rocky Hill almost impassable. The 16th of Light Dragoons who were on the right with the Guards, and who could never have an opportunity to charge from the closeness of the Country, were halted at *T*, then marched up the Road to Dillworth to the left of the Army. One Battn. of the Guards [1st Battalion] filed off to their right *V* and forming at *W* advanced to *X* by which means they came upon the right Flank of the Rebels who had opposed Lieut. Genl. Knyphausen's Column, who now gave way on all sides, but Night coming on hindered a Pursuit.

The Column under the Command of Lieut. General Knyphausen about 9 O'clock in the Morning, after having beat back the Enemy's advanced Party [Maxwell], came to the position express'd in the Plan *a*, having the Rebel Army in their Front on the other side of the Brandywine, nearly in the Position *b*, besides Numbers conceal'd in the Woods, and the two Batteries *c* in their Front. A cannonade immediately ensued on both Sides. The Rebels pass'd the River with a Corps and drew up at *d*, and in the Breast work *e*, upon which the Queen's Rangers, Fergusson's Riffle Men, and the 49th and 28th Regiments were sent to dislodge them, which they soon did and drove them across the River. The Rebels were likewise observed passing some Men over the Ford *f* [Sullivan's men], upon which the 4th Regiment which had been on our right was ordered to move to the Position mark'd in the Plan with two pieces of Cannon.

On Information being given to the Rebels of the Column under Lieut. Genl. Earl Cornwallis having passed Jeffery's Ford about 6 Miles above them, a Corps was detach'd from the right and rear of their Army, by the different Roads leading to Birmingham Meeting, to oppose it. Immediately on the firing with this Column beginning Lieut. Genl. Knyphausen push'd his Troops (which had been assembled under cover of the Woods *g*) across Chad's Ford, the 4th Regt. leading, and as they were obliged to advance in Column along the Road *h* on Account of the Morass on their Flanks, they were galled by Musketry from the Woods on their right and by round and grape Shot from two Pieces of Cannon and an 8 inch Howitzer from the Battery *c* in their Front, however they advanc'd Briskly and very soon took Possession of the Work and the 3 Pieces of Artillery. The Army forming as they got over, soon obliged the Rebels to give way on all sides, though posted on very strong Ground. Night coming on prevented the Pursuit.