

ford, of which I shall give your Lordship an Account in a separate Letter.

I have the Honor to be, &c.

CORNWALLIS.

(Signed)

Guildford, March 17, 1781.

MY LORD,

I HAVE the Satisfaction to inform your Lordship, that His Majesty's Troops under my Command obtained a signal Victory, on the 15th Instant, over the Rebel Army, commanded by General Greene.

In pursuance of my intended Plan, communicated to your Lordship in my Dispatch N^o 7, I had encamped on the 13th Instant, at the Quaker Meeting, between the Forks of Deep River. On the 14th I received Information that General Butler, with a Body of North Carolina Militia, and the expected Reinforcements from Virginia, said to consist of a Virginia State Regiment, a Corps of Virginia Eighteen Months Men, 3000 Virginia Militia, and Recruits for the Maryland Line, had joined General Greene; and that the whole Army, which was reported to amount to 9 or 10,000 Men, was marching to attack the British Troops. During the Afternoon Intelligence was brought, which was confirmed in the Night, that he had advanced that Day to Guildford, about 12 Miles from our Camp. Being now persuaded that he had resolved to hazard an Engagement, after detaching Lieutenant Colonel Hamilton with our Waggon and Baggage, escorted by his own Regiment, a Detachment of 100 Infantry, and 20 Cavalry, towards Bull's Mill on Deep River, I marched with the Rest of the Corps at Day break, on the Morning of the 15th, to meet the Enemy, or to attack them in their Encampment. About Four Miles from Guildford our advanced Guard, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton, fell in with a Corps of the Enemy, consisting of Lee's Legion, some back Mountain Men, and Virginia Militia, which he attacked with his usual good Conduct and Spirit, and defeated: And continuing our March we found the Rebel Army posted on rising Ground, about a Mile and a Half from the Court House. The Prisoners taken by Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton, having been several Days with the advanced Corps, could give me no Account of the Enemy's Order or Position, and the Country People were extremely inaccurate in their Description of the Ground. Immediately between the Head of the Column, and the Enemy's Line, was a considerable Plantation, one large Field of which was on our Left of the Road, and two others, with a Wood of about 200 Yards broad between them, on our Right of it; beyond these Fields the Wood continued for several Miles to our Right. The Wood beyond the Plantation in our Front, in the Skirt of which the Enemy's first Line was formed, was about a Mile in Depth, the Road then leading into an extensive Space of cleared Ground about Guildford Court House. The Woods on our Right and Left were reported to be impracticable for Cannon; but, as that on our Right appeared to be most open, I resolved to attack the Left Wing of the Enemy, and whilst my Disposition was making for that Purpose, I ordered Lieutenant Colonel Macleod to bring forward the Guns, and cannonade their Center. The Attack was directed to be made in the following Order:

On the Right the Regiment of Bose, and the 71st Regiment, led by Major General Leslie, and supported by the 1st Battalion of Guards; on their Left the 23d and 33d Regiments, led by Lieutenant Colonel Webster, and supported by the Grenadiers and 2d Battalion of Guards, commanded by Brigadier General O'Hara; the Yagers and Light Infantry of the Guards remained in the Wood on the Left of the Guns; and the Cavalry in the Road, ready to act as Circumstances might require. Our Preparations being made, the Action began about Half an Hour past One in the Afternoon; Major General Leslie, after being obliged, by the great Extent of the Enemy's Line, to bring up the 1st Battalion of Guards to the Right of the Regiment of Bose, soon defeated every Thing before him; Lieutenant Colonel Webster having joined the Left of Major General Leslie's Division, was no less successful in his Front, when, on finding that the Left of the 33d was exposed to

be changed his Front to the Left, and being supported by the Yagers and Light Infantry of the Guards, attacked and routed it; the Grenadiers and 2d Battalion of Guards moving forward to occupy the Ground left vacant by the Movement of Lieutenant Colonel Webster.

All the Infantry being now in the Line, Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton had Directions to keep his Cavalry compact, and not to charge without positive Orders, except to protect any of the Corps from the most evident Danger of being defeated. The excessive Thicknets of the Woods rendered our Bayonets of little Use, and enabled the broken Enemy to make frequent Stands, with an irregular Fire, which occasioned some Loss, and to several of the Corps great Delay, particularly on our Right, where the First Battalion of Guards and Regiment of Bose were warmly engaged in Front, Flank, and Rear, with some of the Enemy that had been routed on the first Attack, and with Part of the Extremity of their Left Wing, which by the Closeness of the Wood had been passed unbroken. The 71st Regiment and Grenadiers, and 2d Battalion of Guards, not knowing what was passing on their Right, and hearing the Fire advance on their Left, continued to move forward, the Artillery keeping Pace with them on the Road, followed by the Cavalry. The 2d Battalion of the Guards first gained the clear Ground near Guildford Court House, and found a Corps of Continental Infantry, much superior in Number, formed in the open Field on the Left of the Road. Glowing with Impatience to signalize themselves, they instantly attacked and defeated them, taking 2 Six-pounders, but, pursuing into the Wood with too much Ardour, were thrown into Confusion by a heavy Fire, and immediately charged and driven back into the Field, by Colonel Washington's Dragoons, with the Loss of the Six-pounders they had taken. The Enemy's Cavalry was soon repulsed by a well-directed Fire from 2 Three-pounders just brought up by Lieutenant Macleod; and by the Appearance of the Grenadiers of the Guards and of the 71st Regiment, which, having been impeded by some deep Ravines, were now coming out of the Wood, on the Right of the Guards, opposite to the Court House. By the spirited exertions of Brigadier-General O'Hara, though wounded, the 2d Battalion of Guards was soon rallied, and, supported by the Grenadiers, returned to the Charge with the greatest Alacrity. The 23d Regiment arriving at that Instant from our Left, and Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton having advanced with Part of the Cavalry, the Enemy were soon put to Flight, and the 2 Six-pounders once more fell into our Hands; 2 Ammunition Waggon, and 2 other Six-pounders, being all the Artillery they had in the Field, were likewise taken. About this Time the 33d Regiment and Light Infantry of the Guards, after overcoming many Difficulties, completely routed the Corps which was opposed to them, and put an End to the Action in this Quarter: The 23d and 71st Regiments, with Part of the Cavalry, were ordered to pursue; the Remainder of the Cavalry was detached with Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton to our Right, where a heavy Fire still continued, and where his Appearance and spirited Attack contributed much to a speedy Termination of the Action. The Militia, with which our Right had been engaged, dispersed in the Woods; the Continentals went off by the Reedy Fork, beyond which it was not in my Power to follow them, as their Cavalry had suffered but little. Our Troops were excessively fatigued, by an Action which lasted an Hour and a Half; and our numerous Wounded, dispersed over an extensive Space of Country, required immediate Attention. The Care of our Wounded, and the total Want of Provisions in an exhausted Country, made it equally impossible for me to follow the Enemy next Day. The Enemy did not stop until they got to the Iron Works on Troublesome Creek, 18 Miles from the Field of Battle.

From our own Observation, and the best Accounts we could procure, we did not doubt but the Strength of the Enemy exceeded 7000 Men; their Militia composed their Line, with Parties advanced to the Rails of the Fields in their Front; the Continentals were posted obliquely in the Rear of their Right Wing. Their Cannon fired on us whilst we