

pieces placed at that advanced post. The Hessian column divided into two columns, the right ascending the strong broken ground towards Spuyten-Duyvil Creek, the left nearer to the road towards the Gorge. The first obtained the ground without much difficulty; but the Americans made a most noble opposition against the last, and, for a considerable time, kept the troops forming it from ascending the hill, making a terrible slaughter among them, but the great superiority of the assailants, with an unabating firmness, finally prevailed. The British loss was greater here than at any other place. Meanwhile the British, having crossed Haarlem Creek in two different places, charged, and finally routed the Americans on that side, and possessed themselves of the strong post of Laurel Hill, on the other side of the road, from Fort Washington, and not very distant from it; and Lord Percy at the same time advancing, with the troops under his command on the island, towards the fort on that side. The Americans, now generally driven from their out-works, retired to the fort, which was crowded full. * * * *

“The British had summoned Colonel Robert Magaw to surrender, and were preparing their batteries to play on the fort when Colonel Magaw thought it best to surrender the post, which he accordingly did; between two and three thousand men becoming prisoners. * * * *

“Elated with the easy reduction of Fort Washington, the British determined to cross into the Jerseys and attack General Washington on that side.

“On the eighteenth, Lord Cornwallis, with a strong body of the British forces, landed at Closter Landing, on the Jersey side, above Fort Lee, the garrison of which were obliged to leave that post, and some cannon, stores, and provisions, which could not be removed, fell into the hands of the enemy.”¹

The fourth provincial congress of the colony of New York convened at White Plains, on July 9, 1776, and “took the title of ‘The representatives of the state of New York,’ and exercised all the powers of sovereignty until the establishment of the government under the constitution.” This body having “appointed committees to visit respectively the army in the northern department under Major-General Philip Schuyler and the main continental army under General Washington in order to obtain from the general officers the characters of the New York officers then in continental service,” which committees extended their inquiries also to the volunteer and militia regiments of the state then in actual service, in order to obtain recommendations from them, “the full committee of arrangements of the New York convention met in Fishkill, on the fifteenth day of November, 1776, and after hearing the reports of the respec-

¹ Memoirs of Major-General Heath, pp. 83, 84, 85, 86, 87.