

MS Howe¹ (Drafts 1 & 2)

While Charles Wesley had little kind to say about the North American colonists revolting against the control of Britain in the late 1770s, his most biting poetic indictments were aimed at Lieutenant General Sir William Howe (1729–1814), whom he blamed for the failure's in British military efforts to suppress the rebellion. Charles's perspective on these matters was clearly shaped by the information (and viewpoint) provided in Joseph Galloway's published indictments of Howe.²

Charles framed his attack on Howe's conduct of the American War in the form of 617 lines of mock heroic verse, patterned on Samuel Butler's *Hudibras* (1663–78). Two drafts of this extended indictment survive, both in Wesley's hand. The roughest version (draft 1) fills thirty pages and is marked by many corrections. A polished version (draft 2), to which Charles added additional notes explaining his allusions, is twenty-two pages in length. The two drafts were probably written in 1779 or early 1780, while the House of Commons was making its fruitless inquiry into Howe's dilatory tactics in the American War.

Both drafts of MS Howe are part of the collection in the Methodist Archive and Research Centre. Draft 1 is assigned accession number MA 1977/583/1 (Charles Wesley Notebooks Box 4). Draft 2 is accession number MA 1977/706/3/4 (there is also a photocopy of this draft numbered MA 1977/570 in Charles Wesley Notebooks Box 2). The transcription of both drafts below is provided with permission of the Librarian and Director, The John Rylands Library, The University of Manchester.

(The drafts are presented in consecutive order—draft 2 beginning on overall page 32).

¹This document was produced by the Duke Center for Studies in the Wesleyan Tradition under the editorial direction of Randy L. Maddox, with the diligent assistance of Aileen F. Maddox. Last updated: Feb. 07, 2012.

²See particularly Joseph Galloway. *A Letter to the Right Honourable Lord Viscount Howe, on his Naval Conduct in the American War* (London: G. Wilkie, 1779); and Galloway, *Letters to a Nobleman, on the Conduct of the War in the Middle Colonies* (London: G. Wilkie, 1779). John Wesley published abridgements of both volumes. For more historical background on this poem, see Philip O. Beale, "Historical Introduction," in *Unpublished Poetry*, 1:27–39.

**The American War
under the Conduct of Sir W[illiam] H[owe].³**
[Draft 1]

*Tu maximus ille es,
Unus qui nobis cunctando restituis rem.*⁴

[Part I.]

The Americans, we all allow,
Were conquer'd by Immortal H[owe],
(The younger of th' illustrious Pair,
The British Thunderbolt of war,)
As oft as met, as oft as seen,
Agen he beat them, and agen;
(Whene'er⁵ he thought it worth his while)
As sheep he drove them from the Isle, ^(a)
Resistless on their Armies fell,
And storm'd their Forts impregnable; ^(b) 10
Scatter'd their fugitive Remains
(But not pursued them) on the plains ^(c)
Their ^(d) Provinces with ease he took,
With ease their Provinces forsook,
And threw them wantonly away,
As if he took them but in play.

Full oft, that all might wondring see
An Hero's magnanimity,

^(a) Long Island ^(b) New York, Fort Washington
^(c) the White plains ^(d) New York, the Jerseys.

³Published posthumously in *Unpublished Poetry*, 1:41–57. The original title was “The American War under General H.”; corrected by Wesley to the above.

⁴Virgil, *Aeneid*, vi. 845–46. “You, O Maximus, are he who singly by delaying restores the state.” This refers to Q. Fabius Maximus, who defeated Hannibal by delaying tactics.

⁵Ori., “Where'er.”

Not to destroy, or conquer wholly,
He check'd his thunder in mid volley, 20
Gave the unequal contest over,
And time allow'd them to recover.
Advantage he disdain'd to take,
Or hurt them, when they turn'd their back,
Or push a victory too far,
For Valor⁶ true delights to spare:
But tho' he chasten'd them in measure
He always did it⁷ at his pleasure.

Why was not then the Contest ended?
Because it never was intended: [30]
A sudden Period of their Quarrels
Had rob'd the Valiant of his lawrels;
The war concluded in a day
Had robb'd the Needy of his Pay;
To Conquer, or to Reconcile
Had barr'd his soldiers of their spoil:
And the Rebellion's full⁸ conclusion
Had put the Patriots⁹ to confusion:
"Why then pursue a routed foe,
"And end the business at a blow? 40

⁶Ori., "courage."

⁷Ori., "beat them" changed to "did it."

⁸"Full" has "swift" written above it as an alternative.

⁹Ori., "his Party" changed to "the Patriots."

“No: let him rise, whene’er brought under,
“To yield us more renown and plunder,”
He spake, to clemency inclin’d,
And all the troops were of his mind.

But let us with a nearer view
The conquering Hero’s steps pursue:
The Island is already won,
The Town and Fortress are his own:
Repuls’d, and scatter’d by his eye,
The Rebels, and their Leader fly. 50
Victorious now in every place,
He finds, where’er he turns his face,
The foe to cope with him not able,
The Country NOT impracticable:
A panic-struck defeated Rout
Contemptible,¹⁰ he drives them out,
The Province rapidly¹¹ reduces:
But all his Country’s Friends refuses.

Invited by his Proclamation,
And eager to embrace th’ Occasion, 60

¹⁰Ori., “Contemptable.”

¹¹Ori., “easily.”

While Thousands their assistance bring
To serve Old England and their King,
In strict confederacy to join
And fight beneath the British Sign;
Sole Arbiter of war and peace,
He spurns their proffer'd services,
Commands them tamely to sit still,
While Rebels do whate'er they will,
Roughly forbids them to resist,
And quells the rising Loyalist. 70

To such as follow his direction
He promises assur'd protection:¹²
“And doth he not the grace afford
“To those that rest upon his word?”
He lets his valiant¹³ soldiers loose¹⁴
To rob, and plunder, and abuse,
Whose mercy no distinction knows
Of age, or sex, of friends or foes:
Nothing their violence escapes; *
They seize the Subjects of their rapes,¹⁵ 80

*or— Nothing their rage and lust escapes
Their violence, cruelties, and rapes

¹²Ori., “He ~~kindly~~ promises protection.”

¹³“Lawless” is written in the margin, most likely as an alternative to “valiant.”

¹⁴Ori., “seize.”

¹⁵In line 79, “violence” has “rage and lust” written above it as an alternative. Wesley also decided to write an alternative to line 80 so for clarity he wrote the alternative lines for both 79 and 80 at the bottom of the page as shown above.

While fathers, friends, and husbands *see*
The Ruffians foul Brutality.
Tis thus their new Allies they spoil,
Their daughters and their Wives defile,
Out to the fields their infants turn
And wantonly their houses burn;
That all the Public Faith may see,
With joy to their Protector flee,
Confirm'd in zeal and loyalty.

}
}

Who can his rapid course arrest,
When foes and friends are thus supprest,
And terrified by their disgraces,
The Yanki's dare not show their faces?
Congress alarm'd by How[e] so nigh,
Forsake their Capitol, and fly;
The rebel chiefs, by his successes¹⁶
Awed and reduc'd himself confesses;
The high and mighty States come down,
From hopes of a Colonial Crown,

90

¹⁶Ori., "confesses."

Ready again to swear¹⁷ subjection [100]¹⁸
For peace, and pardon, and protection
And all the Country to come in,
So they may sleep in a whole skin.
One only Step there yet remains
For bringing back th' Americans;¹⁹
They all must suddenly submit,
And cry for mercy at his feet
With humble, supplicating prayer
If How[e] but pass²⁰ the Delaware!

When Washington the river crost, [110]
And wept, and gave up all for lost
With pity mov'd, the British Chief
Made a full halt for his relief,
Unwilling in his last distresses
T' o'retake, and break him all to pieces,
Disperse the Relicks of his host,
And make his Cause give up the ghost.

“But his pontoons were left behind;
“How shoud he then a passage find?”^{19]}

¹⁷Ori., “yield.”

¹⁸Wesley incorrectly showed the margin line number for 100 on line 101, which is shown corrected above. The margin line numbers after 100 have been corrected to reflect this error, as well as any new lines of text added or numbers left out.

¹⁹Ori., “For bring back ~~at~~ th' Americans.”

²⁰Ori., “cross.”

Or listen to the idle words [120]
Of such as pointed out the fords,
Engag'd with ease to carry o're
His Legions to the farther shore,
Annihilate the Adverse Power
And crush Rebellion in an hour!

The Knight intended no such thing
As "making absolute the King,"
And by a short decisive Action
Stopping the mouth of his own Faction:
Why shoud he raise his²¹ Rivals higher [130]
By quenching the last Spark of fire,
Or force the Rebels to submission
Without resource, without condition?²²
Tis plain, he thought it better far²³
Still to procrastinate the war:
Nor could he so ungenerous be
To spurn a prostrate enemy,
But let him rise, brought down so low,
And rise—without a rising blow.

²¹"His" has "their" written above it as an alternative.

²²Ori., "submi," which is likely the beginning of "submission."

²³This line has "He deem'd it prudenter by far" written above it as an alternative.

Sav'd by the Patriot's compassion [140]
Washington took the intimation,
Avail'd himself of the delay,
And rose to fight another day.
Resolv'd his honor to retrieve,
And bid his dying²⁴ Party live,
He watch'd, by some important blow
To pour²⁵ his vengeance on the Foe,
But²⁶ when his Cantonments he spied
Drawn weakly out,²⁷ and scatter'd wide,
And full in sight the weakest post, [150]
Where men and strength were wanted most,
(As if the Noble General²⁸ meant
To aid, and favor his intent,
To call him back, and tempt him over,
His fame, and fortune to recover)
He seiz'd the moment of success,
The unsuspecting²⁹ troops t' oppress,
The river pass'd, his glory bent on,
And took them napping all at Trenton.

As swiftly back again he flew, [160]
For Six to one the foes he knew,

²⁴“Gasping” is written in the margin, most likely as an alternative to “dying.”

²⁵“Wreck” is written in the margin, most likely as an alternative to “pour.”

²⁶“But” has “And” written in the margin as an alternative.

²⁷Ori., “Drawn out in length.”

²⁸Ori., “adversary” changed to “Noble General.”

²⁹Ori., “unsuspecting.”

Well able to retake the Post,
The Town, and Him, and all his host.
But Howe³⁰ th' unkind attempt forbore,
Resolv'd the Province to restore
Nor trust, or Loyalist, or Hessian,
Or his own troops to keep possession.

Retreating now the Victor see
Before a vanquish'd Enemy,
The better yielding to the worse, [170]
The greater to the lesser force:
Without regret, or halt,³¹ or stop,
He tamely gives his conquests up
As if he fear'd to keep them longer
Ev'n with an Army six times stronger,
In all respects superior far,
Enur'd to discipline and war,
By bold, experienc'd Captains led,
Well arm'd, and habited, and paid,
Brave Veterans who danger sought, [180]
And always conquer'd when they fought:
Their foes, a despicable host
Who nothing had whereof to boast,

³⁰Ori., “~~how~~.”

³¹“Halt” has “shame” written in the margin as an alternative.

Undisciplin'd, half arm'd, half fed,
To labour not to battle bred,
Drag'd from their shops, or from the plough
To face th' unconquerable How[e],
Forc'd by the bay'onet to comply,
And fight against their will, or die.

To These, for reasons of his own
Perhaps by³² his Associates known,
He yields, tho' uncompe'l'd; to These
Relinquishes his victories,
Gives both the Jerseys back again,³³
(Lest Patriots shoud at home complain)
And finishes his First Campaigne.

[190]

}

³²Ori., "~~By none but~~" changed to "Perhaps by."

³³Wesley crossed out several lines and some shorthand when trying to compose the last three lines, before deciding on the three lines shown above.

Part II.³⁴

Fatigued with his victorious toil,
 Tis fit he now should rest a while,
 Diversion taste, and in his Fort
 Injoy the pleasures of a Court: [200]
 The Rebel-General, with his Tartars,
 Escorts him to his Winter-quarters,
 And taking a position near him
 Affects to show, he does not fear him;
 His thirty thousand men, or more,
 Besieges, and insults with Four:
 His stragling parties he defeats,
 Cuts off his Outposts, and Pickets,
 Slaughters his foragers, and seizes
 The spoil, and does just what³⁵ he pleases, [210]
 His army harasses and lessens
 Attacking at all times and seasons,
 The spirits cheers of his own men
 And raises them to fight again
 Keeps them employ'd, prevents desertion
 By enterprize and fresh exertion: }
 And this is Washington's Diversion.

³⁴Ori., "II Part."

³⁵Ori., "does whate'er" changed to "does just what."

Howe has no eyes his sport to see
But grants him full impunity,
Or if sometimes perforce he sees it, [220]
He never once returns the³⁶ visit,
Who by one quarter of his force
Might stop the bold Invader his course³⁷
Or take him, where secure he lies³⁸
Within his reach and scorns surprize.

But lo! the Spring returning warms
The earth, and calls his host to arms,
When mighty kings go forth to war
And smell the battle from afar:
Why lingers then th' intrepid³⁹ Man [230]
Immortal fame with spoil to gain?
Glory invites; but softer charms
Detain him in Armida's arms,
Wasting the time in careless⁴⁰ ease
In revels, sports, and wantonness,
In dear, luxurious dissipation,
And doubly dear Procrastination.

What doth our Chief Commander say⁴¹
For his unsoldierly delay?⁴²

³⁶Ori., "~~his.~~"

³⁷Ori., "~~Could storm his camp and stop his course.~~" Wesley's next rewrite attempt shows: "Might easily obstruct his course"; with the addition of "stop the bold Invader" to arrive at what is shown above.

³⁸Ori., "~~Where long the fearless Rebel lies~~"; with the slight change of "~~While long~~" before rewriting the line to what is shown above.

³⁹"Intrepid" has "undaunted" written above it as an alternative.

⁴⁰Ori., "~~sloth, and.~~"

⁴¹Ori., "~~What can the lingering Hero say~~"; with "mighty," "lazily," and "backward" written above the line as alternatives for "~~lingering.~~" Wesley's next rewrite attempt shows: "What doth the great Commander say"; with the slight change of "our ~~bold~~ Chief" to arrive at what is shown above.

⁴²Ori., "~~To vindicates his long delay.~~"

“He cannot move, for on the ground [240]
“No forage green is to be found.”
But might he not his steeds supply
With better far,⁴³ with forage dry?
He might but yet⁴⁴ he ne’er appears
In spring, like common Chiefs, who fears⁴⁵
Beginning the campaign too soon,
Or marching to the field, till June,
Since Congress cannot⁴⁶ be prepar’d
Before, to stand upon their guard,
And only baseborn Cowardise [250]
Woud take an Enemy by surprize.

Behold the Champion,⁴⁷ rous’d at last
(When now the Vernal Season’s past,)
Goes out⁴⁸ with thirty thousand men,
And, Lewis like, goes back again:
But first he boldly reconnoiters,
Demurs, and hesitates, and loiters,
Loth to compel a weaker foe
To fight, whether he will or no.

Washington in his quarters lay, [260]
But kept our General at a bay,

⁴³Ori., “food.”

⁴⁴Ori., “Yet in the Spring” changed to “He might but yet.”

⁴⁵Ori., “In arms, like common Chiefs, but fears.”

⁴⁶Ori., “coud not.”

⁴⁷Ori., “Lion.”

⁴⁸Ori., “forth.”

Watch'd all his motions, and lay still
Safe as a thief within a mill,
Safe—at the mercy of his foe,
For Howe, he knew, woud mercy show
Nor force his trenches, or devour
An Handful always in his power.

Between two mighty rivers pent,
With his Antagonist's consent,
Secure for months he kept his station [270]
Without alarm, or molestation,
Sure, if assaulted to be beat,
Who could not possibly retreat.

How[e] had a mortgage on his foes,
Which still he scrupled to foreclose,
And spar'd a *corresponding* brother,
For well they understood each other,
And Washington by instinct knew
What How[e] intended *not* to do,
Or learnt it in a whisper kind [280]
Like brave Sertorius from his Hind. ^(a)

^(a) Sertorius against Metallus and Pompey, in Spain.

Howe has it in his choice to make
An end of him,⁴⁹ by one attack;
Or if he pass the Delaware
He drives the Rebels to despair
Their stores and magazines destroys,
An host of Loyalists employs,
Th' unguarded Capitol possesses,
And all the war at once suppresses.

But it was never his intent [290]
To please the Tools of Government,
Under his auspices to take,
And conquer, for his Rival's sake
Confirming in their envied places,
The Ministry by his successes⁵⁰
That They might still direct the helm
Exalt the King and save the Realm.

So when the French were in his power
The Admiral of the Lee-shore,
Refus'd to sink⁵¹ but half their fleet [300]
And⁵² lingring, let them all retreat,
Lest Sandwich should the honor share
Or North remain First Minister
Or Britain end its ruinous war. }

⁴⁹Ori., “~~at~~.”

⁵⁰Wesley originally had lines 294 and 295 reversed, but numbered them in the margin to show the order shown above.

⁵¹Ori., “~~Would not destroy~~” changed to “Refus'd to sink.”

⁵²Ori., “~~But~~.”

Commanded by his King to join
The brave, unfortunate Burgoigne,⁵³
(Alone unequal to oppose
Whole armies of surrounding foes)
He flies, impatient of delay,
But turns; and flies another way: [310]
Another way he must be gone,
To seek, and fight with Washington,
The man,⁵⁴ already found, to seek
By sailing round⁵⁵ the Chesapeak,
To meet the Enemy before
His face, and always in his power:
Whom that he may more soundly beat,
By a precipitate retreat
Out of the Province he withdraws,
As seeming to give up the Cause; [320]
For well he knew, Burgoigne and he,
If join'd, were sure of victory,
And, for the patriots confusion,
Must bring the war to a conclusion,

⁵³I.e., John Burgoyne.

⁵⁴Ori., "~~His foe~~" changed to "The man."

⁵⁵"Up" is written in the margin, most likely as an alternative to "round."

'Twas better far to sacrifice
A Leader more resolv'd than wise,
Indulge his own malignant hate
And leave our Army to its fate.

His skill and strength at once to show,
And fight in earnest with his foe, [330]
Yet not by marching a few miles
To save himself the glorious⁵⁶ toils,
He goes, in haste to find him out,
At least two thousand miles about;
In the ships' holds compact and close,
His soldiers with his horses stows,
(To bring their strength superfluous down,
And broil them in the scorching⁵⁷ Sun,
The hottest season of the year
He tramples on advice and fear,⁵⁸ [340]
Defies the waves, and adverse wind,
And leaves his friends and fame behind.

Who can the secret Drift discover⁵⁹
Of such a wonderful⁶⁰ manouvre?
Unless he meant, in special grace,
To gain⁶¹ the Rebels longer space,

⁵⁶“Glorious” has “his warlike” written above it as an alternative.

⁵⁷“Scorching” has “summer’s” written above it as an alternative.

⁵⁸Ori., “~~Disdainful of advice or fear.~~”

⁵⁹Ori., “~~How can we possibly~~ discover.”

⁶⁰Ori., “~~The wisdom of this strange~~” changed to “Of such a wonderful.”

⁶¹“Gain” has “give” written below it as an alternative.

Their shatter'd⁶² army to recruit,⁶³
And still continue the dispute,
Unless, for patriotic reason⁶⁴
He meant to lose the fighting Season [350]
And confidential friends content
With the disastrous War's Event.

After three months he lands again
His famish'd steeds and languid men,
Allow'd a fortnight to renew⁶⁵
Their wasted flesh and spirits too
Then leads his hardy veterans on
To fight at last, with Washington
And⁶⁶ his redoubled Army found,
But⁶⁷ posted now on stronger ground. [360]

What mortal can resist his force,
Or stop the British Hero's course,
Resistless if he chuse to be,
And means⁶⁸ to gain a victory?
His victory at the Brandywine
Bears witness to the man divine,
Who skilfully surrounds his foes,
Attacks, o'repowers them, and o'rethrows,
Into their thickest woods the chase
Pursues: a general Rout takes place! [370]

⁶²“Shatter'd” has “ruin'd” written above it as an alternative.

⁶³Ori., “repair.”

⁶⁴Ori., “~~by such a long digression~~” changed to “for patriotic reason.”

⁶⁵Ori., “reorient.”

⁶⁶Ori., “With.”

⁶⁷Ori., “And.”

⁶⁸“Stoops” is written in the margin, most likely as an alternative to “means.”

Their host in scatter'd parties fly
To reach the nearest towns they try,
If towns protection can afford,
And hide them from the slaughtering sword.

But How[e] his dignity⁶⁹ maintains,
And calm, and unconcern'd remains,
With folded hands, and careless ease
The flying Enemy he sees,
And timely⁷⁰ stopping the pursuit, [380]
Leaves them to rally and recruit,
Still in⁷¹ the field of battle stays,
And loiters five important days!
Plainly his actions all declare
He does not chuse to end the war
But⁷² must, whether he will or no,
If close he press⁷³ a routed foe,⁷⁴
Whose ruin then must be compleat,
If follow'd after a⁷⁵ defeat.
But suffer'd to respire again
Lo! he collects his scatter'd men, [390]
Returning to the field, to feel
If How[e] were quite invincible.

⁶⁹“Dignity” has “character” written above it as an alternative.

⁷⁰Ori., “kindly.” “Quickly” is written in the margin, most likely as an alternative to “timely.”

⁷¹“On” is written in the margin, most likely as an alternative to “in.”

⁷²“He.”

⁷³“Which if he press” changed to “If close he press.”

⁷⁴Wesley originally had lines 385 and 386 reversed, but numbered them in the margin to show the order shown above.

⁷⁵Ori., “his.”

How[e] sees him rising in his might,
And meditates a second fight,
The fight—and the defeat's begun;
The Britons shout, the Yankies⁷⁶ run!
When How[e] suspends his conquering power,
Discourag'd by a sudden shower,
And thro' the interposing rain
The runaways are sav'd again, [400]
They fly, and fleeter than the wind
Escape; but leave their arms behind.

With valor equally discreet⁷⁷
Again at the White Marsh they meet,
Or might have met, for full three days
They look'd each other in the face;
But neither show'd much appetite
Or passionate desire to fight;
One General, because he could not
Or'ecome, and one, because he would not: [410]
So having gain'd their different⁷⁸ ends,
They both drew off, and parted friends.

⁷⁶Ori., “~~Rebels.~~”

⁷⁷Wesley originally began this line with “~~Again at the~~” but decided to use it in the next line.

⁷⁸Ori., “~~several.~~”

Howe neither woud⁷⁹ himself alarm them
Nor yield his Officers shoud harm them
When⁸⁰ Yanki's from Cornwallis ran
The moment they espied his van:
Not willing to be kill'd, or taken,
They broke the bridge, to save their bacon:
But had not How[e] forbid the chase,
In pity of their desperate case, [420]
Himself incautiously confesses,
"They must have all been cut to pieces."⁸¹

The Conquer'd his⁸¹ attempts renews,
Sure that the Conqueror ne'er⁸² pursues⁸³
To Germantown unnoticed⁸⁴ flies
By night and takes them⁸⁵ by surprize.
What now shall the unguarded brave
From foul defeat and ruin save?
It only can prevented be
By Musgrave's intrepidity, [430]
Who stems the tide, the fight restores,
Repels, and routs the hostile Powers,
While How[e], the Patron of distress,
Permits them to depart in peace!

⁷⁹Ori., "~~He~~ neither ~~will~~" changed to "Howe neither woud."

⁸⁰Ori., "~~The~~."

⁸¹Ori., "~~their~~."

⁸²Ori., "~~he never will~~" changed to "the Conqueror ne'er."

⁸³Wesley originally had lines 423 and 424 reversed, but numbered them in the margin to show the order shown above.

⁸⁴Ori., "~~their Leader~~."

⁸⁵Ori., "And takes ~~his conquerors~~" changed to "By night and takes them."

Exulting in superior might
Himself invincible in fight,
Unrival'd now the Hero reigns,
Lord of the Pennsylvanian plains;
Or'ejoy'd, the ransom'd people meet,
Transported, their Deliverer greet; [440]
His host abundantly supply,]
And with his bravest veterans vie]
In England's cause to live, and die
The loyal Capitol receives
The Man thro' whom again she lives,
Pleas'd in a thousand ways to prove
Her zeal and loyalty⁸⁶ and love,
From an Egyptian yoke set free,
Blest with a taste of liberty,
And confident to see take place [450]
Plenty, and peace and halcyon days.

⁸⁶“Loyalty” has “fidelity” written below it as an alternative.

[PART III.]

'Twas here repos'd for months He lay
As Hannibal in Capua,
Ingloriously⁸⁷ his station kept,
And spite of all opponents slept:⁸⁸
But always took sufficient care
Not to conclude "a⁸⁹ ruinous war,"
Not to employ his country's friends,
Not to defeat his Party's Ends,
Not to or'turn th' Usurper's⁹⁰ throne, [460]
And not to conquer⁹¹ Washington.

Washington, at his friend's devotion,
And near to watch his every motion,
A ragged Regiment employs
(To rob, or starve, their only choice)
And daily sends them forth to plunder
And keep the harass'd Country under,⁹²
Make every Royalist their prey,⁹³
Imprison, brand, and tear and slay,
Beseige, and cut the General short, [470]
Nine months imprison'd within his fort.

⁸⁷Ori., "~~'Twas here the Christ~~" changed to "~~'Twas here unmov'd.~~" Wesley's next rewrite attempt shows: "~~Immoveable~~" before he decided on "Ingloriously."

⁸⁸Ori., "~~Inactive, and inglorious slept.~~"

⁸⁹Ori., "~~the.~~"

⁹⁰"Usurper's" has "Oppressor's" written above it as an alternative.

⁹¹Ori., "~~fight with.~~"

⁹²Ori., "~~Harrass, and keep the Country under~~" changed to "~~Or'cawe~~" for "~~Harrass.~~" Wesley's next rewrite attempt shows the addition of "harass'd" later in the line as shown above.

⁹³Ori., "~~Destroy, and burn, and kill, and slay.~~" Wesley rewrote the line to that above with "~~whip~~" changed to "~~burn~~" before he decided on "tear."

The suffering Loyalists⁹⁴ complain,
The Poor opprest cry out in vain,
And faithful multitudes attend
For leave their Country to defend,
For arms the Ruffians to repel⁹⁵
Their cruel⁹⁶ foes implacable,
T' assert their injur'd Sovereign's⁹⁷ right
In his, and England's Cause to fight
Till all shoud sheath⁹⁸ the civil⁹⁹ sword, [480]
And¹⁰⁰ all rejoice¹⁰¹ in peace restor'd.

To doubt their faith the Chief affects,
Their needless services rejects,
Unwilling his own sloth shoud be
Compar'd with their activity,
He cannot prudently consent¹⁰²
To raising of a regiment¹⁰³
Yet rashly¹⁰⁴ in an evil day
Intrusts a troop to G[alloway]?
Whose loyalty too warmly glows¹⁰⁵ [490]
While busy to infest the foes,¹⁰⁶
To vex and¹⁰⁷ harass and distress,
Their persons and their prey to seize,

⁹⁴Ori., "~~injured Citizens~~" changed to "~~harass'd Husbandmen~~" before Wesley decided on "suffering Loyalists."

⁹⁵Ori., "~~For arms t' assert their Sovereign's right~~" as line 476. Wesley then expands his rewrite to lines 476–78 as shown above.

⁹⁶Ori., "~~Against their~~" changed to "Their cruel."

⁹⁷Ori., "~~To vindicate their Monarch's~~" changed to "T' assert their injur'd Sovereign's."

⁹⁸Ori., "~~put up~~" changed to "shoud sheath."

⁹⁹"Civil" has "hostile" written above it as an alternative.

¹⁰⁰Ori., "~~Till~~."

¹⁰¹"Rejoice" has "exult" written above it as an alternative.

¹⁰²Ori., "~~Does he not seriously repent.~~" Wesley rewrote the line to that above, with "needlessly" changed to "prudently."

¹⁰³Ori., "~~Of ever giving his consent?~~"

¹⁰⁴Ori., "~~Does he not~~" changed to "Yet rashly."

¹⁰⁵Ori., "~~Too warm a loyalty~~ "who shows."

¹⁰⁶Ori., "~~Too busily infests his foes.~~"

¹⁰⁷Ori., "~~Watches to~~" changed to "To vex and."

On every side his blows to deal;
He¹⁰⁸ never loiters, or sits still,
Till all th' inactive¹⁰⁹ General blame,
And fancy, He might do the same.

The General his own ease prefers
To idle¹¹⁰ skirmishes, and wars,
Plenty and peace he still maintains, [500]
And leaves his Foe the martial pains
Suffers him for himself to carve,
And live by pillaging, or starve,
As a gaunt wolf, by day and night
To keep the country in a fright,
To¹¹¹ whip, or hang the countrymen,
And then slink back into his den.

How can th' indignant Muse forbear
The different Leaders to compare?
One in the friendly Town she sees [510]
Dissolv'd in luxury and ease,
With fulness of superfluous bread,
With choicest delicacies fed,
Suffering his friends to fall opprest
And die for furnishing his feast

¹⁰⁸Ori., "And."

¹⁰⁹Ori., "~~the lazy~~" changed to "th' inactive."

¹¹⁰Ori., "endless."

¹¹¹Ori., "And."

The other self-supported Chief
Without supply, without relief,
Demands an enemy's applause
So worthy of a nobler cause:
The lord of an unconquer'd mind, [520]
Can in himself resources find,
(What present times will scarce conceive,
Or late posterity believe)
Can raise an army with his foot,
Or build a camp out of an hut,
Repelling at each gaping flaw
The wintry blast with mud and straw.

Behold him with his burrough'd host
Four thousand feeble men at most,
Whose numbers every hour decrease [530]
Reduc'd by famine and disease,
That starv'd, and sick, and dying lie
Expos'd to the inclement sky,
The sharpest frost for months sustain
The billowing snow, and pouring rain,
As nothing could their courage quell
Who pain and want disdain'd to feel.

Now let us his strong Camp survey!
Around it an Entrenchment lay,
The ditch, to tempt a desperate leap, [540]
Was six feet broad, and three feet deep,
The battering cannon to defy,
The mound no less than four feet high:
A precipice secur'd his rear,
The river and the bridge were near;
Level the front appear'd in sight,
Alike accessible the right;
And Howe a few miles off was seen
Safe with his twice ten thousand men.

The men of war, and loyalty [550]
Expected every day to see
The Camp assaulted, or beset
With Howe's inevitable Net;
In such a dangerous position
The Camp, in such a weak condition
The men, by rapid Sickness wasting,
By hundreds from their colours hasting,
Nor could they shun the ruin¹¹² nigh
Unable to resist, or fly.¹¹³

¹¹²“The ruin” has “destruction” written below it as an alternative.

¹¹³Wesley began a new paragraph on this page following line 557 that read: “~~Soldiers and Colonists exclaim.~~” Wesley reused this line to begin the second paragraph on the next page.

But Howe, persisting in his plan, [560]
In peace permits them to remain:
For why shoud he the Naked scourge
To death, or desperation urge,
Or in their tents the wretches seize
Half dead thro'¹¹⁴ hunger and disease?
He might indeed their Chief or'ethrow
And crush him by a parting blow,
Or taking captive all his host
Redeem our fame and army lost;
But for Six months the task refus'd, [570]
And chose¹¹⁵ at last—to be excus'd!

Soldiers and Colonists exclaim
And all the slow¹¹⁶ Commander blame,
But fixt in his resolve was He
Not to accept of victory:
Who having thrown 9 months away,
Finding he coud no more delay,
But whatsoe'er his friends it cost,
Conquer th' Americans he *must*,
And conquer them against his will [580]
His country's Orders to fulfil;

¹¹⁴Ori., “with.”

¹¹⁵“Chose” has “beg'd” written above it as an alternative.

¹¹⁶Ori., “The treacherous” changed to “And all the slow.”

“Seeing alas, he cannot please
“With all his faithful services,
“Seeing his word is not regarded,
“Nor yet his worthiest friends rewarded^[b”]
He humbly sues for his dismissal,
And leaves things in a worse condition
After so many battles won,
Than when the war was first begun.

Before he went, the City pray’d [590]
In vain, for leave themselves to aid,
For arms, depriv’d of his assistance,
To keep the rebels at a distance,
His friends without defence he leaves,
As victims to the Congress gives,
Sure, as the foe’s return they see,
To die for their fidelity.

What now has our great Captain done?
Wilfully lost whate’er he won,
Done to his friends as little good, [600]
And as much mischief, as he could;

Our army and their Chief forsook,
And made them pass beneath the yoke;
Branded us with eternal shame:
Blown up the spark into a flame:
The Royalists *alone* subdued,
And prodigal of British blood,
Wasted our lives with wanton pleasure,
And twenty millions of our treasure:
His Sovereign boldly¹¹⁷ disobey'd,
His trust perfidiously¹¹⁸ betray'd;
His country sold; his duty slighted;
The Colonies with France united;
Made our amazing Efforts vain;
Imbroil'd us both with France and Spain
Gain'd his own Party the ascendant,
And made AMERICA INDEPENDENT!

[610]

¹¹⁷“Basely” is written in the margin, most likely as an alternative to “boldly.”

¹¹⁸Ori., “ungratefully.”

**The American War
under the Conduct of Sir W[illiam] H[owe].¹¹⁹**
[Draft 2]

*Tu maximus ille es,
Unus qui nobis cunctando restituis rem.*¹²⁰

[Part I.]

The Americans, we all allow,
Were conquer'd by Immortal H[owe],
(The younger of th' illustrious Pair,
The British Thunderbolt of war,)
As oft as met, as oft as seen,
Agen he beat them, and agen;
(Whene'er he thought it worth his while)
As sheep he drove them from the Isle, ^(a)
Resistless on their Armies fell,
And storm'd their Forts impregnable; ^(b)
Scatter'd their fugitive Remains
(But not pursued them) on the plains ^(c)
With ease their Provinces he took, ^(d)
Their Provinces with ease forsook, ^(e)
And threw them wantonly away,
As if he took them but in play.

[10]

Full oft (that all might wondring see
An Hero's magnanimity)

- ^(a) Long Island ^(b) New York, Fort Washington
^(c) the White plains ^(d) New York, the Jerseys
^(e) New Jersey and Pennsylvania

¹¹⁹Published posthumously in *Unpublished Poetry*, 1:41–57. The original title was “The American War under General H.”; corrected by Wesley to the above.

¹²⁰Virgil, *Aeneid*, vi. 845–46. “You, O Maximus, are he who singly by delaying restores the state.” This refers to Q. Fabius Maximus, who defeated Hannibal by delaying tactics.

Not to destroy, or conquer wholly,
He check'd his thunder in mid volley, ^(a) [20]
Gave the unequal contest over,
And time allow'd them to recover.
Advantage he disdain'd to take,
Or hurt them, when they turn'd their back,
Or push a victory too far,
For Valour true delights to spare:
But tho' he chasten'd them in measure
He always did it ... at his pleasure.

Why was not then the Contest ended?
Because it never was intended: [30]
A sudden Period of their Quarrels
Had robb'd the Valiant of his lawrels;
The war concluded in a day
Had robb'd the Needy — of his Pay;
To Conquer, or to Reconcile
Had barr'd his soldiers of their spoil:
And the Rebellion's swift conclusion
Had put the Patriots to confusion:
"Why then pursue a routed foe,
"And end the business at a blow? [40]
"No: let him rise, whene'er brought under,
"To yield us more renown and plunder,"
He spake, to clemency inclin'd,
And all the troops were of his mind.

But let us with a nearer view
The conquering Hero's steps pursue:
The Island is already won,
The Town and Fortress are his own:

^(a) At the battle of Brandywine, etc.

Repuls'd, and scatter'd by his eye,
The Rebels, and their Leader fly. [50]
Victorious now in every place,
He finds, where'er he turns his face,
The foe to cope with him not able,
The Country *not impracticable*:
A panic-struck defeated Rout
He drives the feeble Yankies out,
The Province rapidly reduces —
But all his Country's Friends refuses.

Invited by his Proclamation, ^(a)
And eager to embrace th' Occasion, [60]
While Thousands their assistance bring
To serve Old England and their King,
In strict confederacy to join
And fight beneath the British Sign;
Sole Arbiter of war and peace,
He spurns their proffer'd services,
Commands them tamely to sit still,
While Rebels do whate'er they will,
Roughly forbids them to resist,
And quells the rising Loyalist. [70]

To such as follow his direction
He promises assur'd protection:¹²¹
“And doth he not the grace afford
“To those that rest upon his word?”

^(a) His proclamation of 1777.¹²²

¹²¹Ori., “He kindly promises protection.”

¹²²Howe's proclamation of 1777 offered pardon to American revolutionaries who would voluntarily surrender to his troops.

He lets his Lawless soldiers loose
To rob, and plunder, and abuse,
Whose mercy no distinction knows
Of age, or sex, of friends or foes:
Nothing their violence escapes;
They seize the Subjects of their rapes, [80]
While fathers, friends, and husbands *see*
The Ruffians foul Brutality.
Tis thus their new Allies they spoil,
Their daughters and their Wives defile,
Out to the fields their infants turn
And wantonly their houses burn;
That all the Public Faith may see,
With joy to their Protector flee, }
Confirm'd in zeal and loyalty.

Who can his rapid course arrest, [90]
When foes and friends are *thus* suppress,
And terrified by their disgraces,
The Yankies dare not show their faces?
Congress alarm'd by Howe so nigh,
Forsake their Capitol, and fly; ^(a)
The rebel chiefs, by his successes
Awed and reduc'd himself confesses; ^(b)
The high and mighty States come down,
From hopes of a Colonial Crown,
Ready again to swear subjection [100]
For peace, and pardon, and protection
And all the Country to come in,
So they may sleep in a whole skin.

^(a) When Howe passed by Trenton, the Congress fled from Philadelphia to Maryland.

^(b) In his official letter.

One only Step there yet remains
For bringing back th' Americans;
They all must suddenly submit,
And cry for mercy at his feet
With humble, supplicating prayer
If Howe but pass the Delaware!

When Washington the river crost, [110]
And wept, and gave up all for lost
With pity mov'd, the British Chief
Made a full halt for his relief,
Unwilling in his last distresses
T' o'retake, and break him all to pieces,
Disperse the Relicks of his host,
And make his Cause give up the ghost.

“But his pontoons were left behind;
“How should he then a passage find?”
Or listen to the idle words [120]
Of such as pointed out the fords,
Engag'd with ease to carry o're
His Legions to the farther shore,
Annihilate the Adverse Power
And crush Rebellion in an hour!

The Knight intended no such thing
As making absolute the King,
And by a short decisive Action
Stopping the mouth of his own Faction:
Why should he raise his Rivals higher [130]
By quenching the last Spark of fire,
Or force the Rebels to submission
Without resource, without condition?

He deem'd it prouder by far
Still to procrastinate the war:
Nor could he so ungenerous be
To spurn a prostrate enemy,
But let him rise, brought down so low,
And rise—without a rising blow.

Sav'd by the Patriot's compassion [140]
Washington took the intimation,
Avail'd himself of the delay,
And rose to fight another day.
Resolv'd his honor to retrieve,
And bid his dying Party live,
He watch'd, by some important blow
To pour his vengeance on the Foe,
But when his Cantonments he spied
Drawn out in length and scatter'd wide, [150]
And full in sight the weakest post,
Where men and strength were wanted most,
(As if the Noble General meant
To aid, and favor his intent,
Beckon him back, and tempt him over,
His fame, and fortune to recover)
He seiz'd the moment of success,
The unsuspecting troops t' oppress,
The river pass'd, his glory bent on,
And took them napping all at Trenton.

As swiftly back again he flew, [160]
For Six to *One* the foes he knew,
Well able to retake the Post,
The Town, and Him, and all his host.
But Howe th' unkind attempt forbore,¹²³
Resolv'd the Province to restore

¹²³Ori., "gave."

Nor trust, or Loyalist, or Hessian,
Or his own troops to keep possession.

Retreating now the Victor see
Before his vanquish'd Enemy,
The better yielding to the worse, [170]
The greater to the lesser force:

Without regret, or shame, or stop,
He tamely gives his conquests up
As if afraid to keep them longer
Ev'n with an Army six times stronger,
In all respects superior far,
Inur'd to discipline and war,
By bold, experienc'd Captains led,
Well arm'd, and habited, and paid,
Brave Veterans who danger sought, [180]
And always conquer'd when they fought:

Their foes, a despicable host
Who nothing had whereof to boast,
Undisciplin'd, half arm'd, half fed,
To labour not to battle bred,
Drag'd from their shops, or from the plough
To face unconquerable Howe,
Forc'd by the bay'onet to comply,
And fight against their will, or die.

To These, for reasons of his own [190]
Perhaps by his Associates known,
He yields, tho' uncompel'd; to These
Relinquishes his victories,
Gives both the Jerseys back again,
(Lest Patriots shoud at home complain)
And finishes his First Campaign. }

Second Part.

Fatigued with his victorious toil,
Tis fit he now should rest a while,
Diversion taste, and in his Fort
Enjoy the pleasures of a Court: [200]
The Rebel-General, with his Tartars,
Escorts him to his Winter-quarters,
And taking a position near him
Affects to show, he does not fear him;
His thirty thousand men, or more,
Besieges, and insults with Four:
His stragling parties he defeats,
Cuts off his Outposts, and Pickets,
Slaughters his foragers, and seizes
The prey, and does just what he pleases, [210]
His army harasses and lessens
Attacking at all times and seasons,
The spirits cheers of his own men
And hardens them to fight again
Keeps them employ'd, prevents desertion
By enterprize and fresh exertion: }
And this is Washington's Diversion.

Howe has no eyes his sport to see
But grants him full impunity,
Or if sometimes perforce he sees it, [220]
He never once returns the visit,
Who by one quarter of his force
Might stop the rash Invader his course
Or take him, while secure he lies
Within his reach and scorns surprize.

But lo! the Spring returning warms
The earth, and calls his host to arms,
When mighty kings go forth to war
And smell the battle from afar:
Why lingers then th' godlike Man [230]
Immortal fame with spoil to gain?
Glory invites; but softer charms
Detain him in Armida's arms,
Wasting the time in careless ease
In revels, sports, and wantonness,
In dear, luxurious dissipation,
And doubly dear Procrastination.

What doth our Chief Commander say
For his unsoldierly delay?
"He cannot move, for on the ground [240]
"No forage *green* is to be found."
But might he not his steeds supply
With better far, with forage *dry*?
He might; yet never once appears
In spring, like common Chiefs, but fears
Beginning the campaign too soon,
Or marching to the field, till June,
Since Rebels cannot be prepar'd
Before, to stand upon their guard,
And only baseborn Cowardise [250]
Woud take an Enemy by surprize.

Behold the Champion, rous'd at last
(More than the vernal Season past)
Goes out with twenty thousand men,
And, Louis like, goes back again:

But first he boldly reconnoiters,
Demurs, and hesitates, and loiters,
Loth to compel a weaker foe
To fight, whether he will or no.

Washington in his quarters lay, [260]
But kept our General at a bay,
Watch'd all his motions, and lay still
Safe as a thief within a mill,
Safe—at the mercy of his foe,
For Howe, he *knew*, woud mercy show
Nor force his trenches, or devour
An Handful always in his power.

Between two mighty rivers pent, ^(a)
With his Antagonist's consent,
Secure for months he kept his station [270]
Without alarm, or molestation,
Sure, if assaulted to be beat,
Who could not possibly retreat.

How[e] had a mortgage on his foes,
Which still he scrupled to foreclose,
And spar'd a *corresponding* brother,
For well they understood each other,
And Washington by *instinct* knew
What Howe intended *not* to do,
Or learnt it in a whisper kind [280]
Like sly Sertorius from his Hind. ^(b)

^(a) The Delaware and the North rivers.

^(b) Which (he persuaded the Spaniards) brought him intelligence of every thing.¹²⁴

¹²⁴Referring to Plutarch's account of Sertorius, and how Sertorius persuaded the Spaniards that his tamed albino red deer doe (or "hind") brought him intelligence of the moves of the opposing army.

Howe has it in his choice to make
An end of him, by one attack;
Or if he pass the Delaware
He drives the Rebels to despair
Their stores and magazines destroys,
An host of Loyalists employs,
Th' unguarded Capitol possesses,
And all the war at once suppresses.

But it was never his intent [290]
To please the Tools of Government,
Under his auspices to take,
And conquer, for his Rival's sake
The Ministry by his successes
Confirming in their envied places,
That They might still direct the helm
Exalt the King and save the Realm.

So when the French were in his power
The Admiral *of the Lee-shore*,
Refus'd to sink but half their fleet [300]
And lingring, let them all retreat,
Lest Sandwich should the honor share
Or North remain Prime Minister
Or Britain end its "ruinous war."]

Commanded by his King to join
The brave, unfortunate Burgoigne,¹²⁵
(Alone unequal to oppose
Whole armies of surrounding foes)
He flies, impatient of delay,
But turns — and flies another way: [310]

¹²⁵I.e., John Burgoyne.

Another way he *must* be gone,
To seek, and fight with Washington,
The man, already found, to *seek*
By sailing round the Chesapeak,
To meet the Enemy before
His face, and always in his power:
Whom that he may more soundly beat,
By a precipitate retreat
Out of the Province he withdraws,
As seeming to give up the Cause; [320]
For well he knew, Burgoigne and he,
If join'd, were sure of victory,
And, for the patriots confusion,
Must bring the war to a conclusion,
'Twas better far to sacrifice
A Leader more resolv'd than wise,
Indulge his own malignant hate
And leave our Army to its fate. ^(a)

His skill and strength at once to show,
And fight in earnest with his foe, [330]
(Yet not by marching a few miles
To save himself the glorious toils,)
He goes, in haste to find him out,
At least one thousand miles about;
In the ships' holds compact and close,
His soldiers with his horses stows,
(To bring their strength superfluous down,
And broil them in the scorching Sun,
The hottest season of the year)
He tramples on advice and fear, [340]

^(a) At Saratoga.

Defies the waves, and adverse wind,
And leaves his friends and fame behind.

Who can the secret Drift discover
Of such a wonderful manouvre?
Unless he meant, in special grace,
To give the Rebels longer space,
Their ruin'd army to recruit,
And still continue the dispute,
Unless, for patriotic reason
He meant to lose the fighting Season [350]
And confidential friends content
With the disastrous War's Event. ^(a)

After three months he lands again
His famish'd steeds and languid men,
Allow'd a fortnight to renew
Their wasted flesh and spirits too
Then leads his hardy veterans on
To fight at last, with Washington
And his redoubled Army found,
But posted now on stronger ground. [360]

What mortal can resist his force,
Or stop the British Hero's course,
Resistless if he chuse to be,
And mean to gain a victory?
His victory at the Brandywine
Bears witness to the man divine,
Who skilfully surrounds his foes,
Attacks, o' repowers them, and o' rethrows,
Into their thickest woods the chase
Pursues: a general Rout takes place! [370]

^(a) See his Letters to Mr Kirk

Their host in scatter'd parties fly
To reach the nearest towns they try,
If towns protection can afford,
And hide them from the slaughtering sword.

But Howe his character maintains,
And calm, and unconcern'd remains,
With folded hands, and careless ease
The flying Enemy he sees,
And timely stopping the pursuit, [380]
Leaves them to rally and recruit,
Still on the field of battle stays,
And loiters five important days!
Plainly his actions all declare
He does not chuse to end the war
But *must*, whether he will or no,
If close he press a routed foe,
Whose ruin then must be compleat,
If follow'd after a defeat.
But suffer'd to respire again
Lo! he collects his scatter'd men, [390]
Returning to the field, to *feel*
If Howe were quite invincible.

Howe sees him rising in his might,
And meditates a second fight,
The fight—and the defeat's begun;
The Britons shout, the Yankies run!
When Howe suspends his conquering power,
Discourag'd by a sudden shower,
And thro' the interposing rain
The runaways are sav'd again, [400]
They fly, and fleeter than the wind
Escape; but leave their arms behind.

With valor equally discreet
Again at the White Marsh they meet,
Or might have met, for full three days
They look'd each other in the face;
But neither show'd much appetite
Or passionate desire to fight;
One General, because he could not
Or'ecome, and one, because he would not: [410]
So having gain'd their different ends,
They both drew off, and parted friends.

Howe neither would himself alarm them
Nor yield his Officers should harm them
When Yankies from Cornwallis ran
The moment they espied his van:
Not willing to be kill'd, or taken,
They broke the bridge, to save their bacon:
But had not Howe forbid the chase,
In pity of their desperate case, [420]
Himself incautiously confesses, ^(a)
"They must have all been cut to pieces."

The Conquer'd his attempts renews,
Sure that the Conqueror ne'er pursues
To Germantown unnoticed flies
By night and takes them by surprize.
What now shall the unguarded brave
From foul defeat and ruin save?
It only can prevented be
By Musgrave's intrepidity, [430]
Who stems the tide, the fight restores,
Repels, and routs the adverse Powers,
While Howe, the Patron of distress,
Permits them to depart in peace!

^(a) In his Official Letter.

Exulting in superior might
Invincible in every fight,
Unrival'd now the Hero reigns,
Lord of the Pennsylvanian plains;
Or'ejoy'd, the ransom'd people meet,
Transported, their Deliverer greet; [440]
His host abundantly supply,
And with his bravest veterans vie }
In England's cause to live, and die
The loyal Capitol receives
The Man thro' whom again she lives,
Pleas'd in a thousand ways to prove
Her zeal and loyalty and love,
From an Egyptian yoke set free,
Blest with a taste of liberty,
And trusting soon to see take place [450]
Plenty, and peace and halcyon days.

Third Part

'Twas here repos'd for months He lay
As Hannibal in Capua,
Ingloriously his station kept,
And spite of all opponents — slept:
But always took sufficient care
Not to conclude a “ruinous war,”
Not to employ his country's friends,
Not to defeat his Party's Ends,
Not to or'turn th' Usurper's throne, [460]
And not — to conquer Washington.

Washington, at his friend's devotion,
And near to watch his every motion,
A ragged Regiment employs
(To rob, or starve, their only choice)
And daily sends them forth to plunder
And keep the harass'd Country under,
Make every Loyalist their prey,
Imprison, brand, and tear and slay,
Beseige, and cut the General short, [470]
Nine months shut up within his fort.

The suffering Loyalists complain,
The Poor opprest cry out in vain,
And faithful multitudes attend
For leave their Country to defend,
For arms the Spoilers to repel
Their cruel foes implacable,
T' assert their injur'd Sovereign's right
In his, and England's Cause to fight

Till all shoud sheath¹²⁶ the civil sword, [480]
And all rejoice in peace restor'd.

To doubt their faith the Chief affects,
Their needless services rejects,
Unwilling his own sloth shoud be
Compar'd with their activity,
He will not therefore give consent
To raising of a regiment
Yet rashly in an evil day
Intrusts a troop to Galloway?
Whose loyalty too warmly glows [490]
While busy to infest the foes,
To vex and harass and distress,
Their persons and their prey to seize,
On every side his blows to deal;
He never loiters, or sits still,
Till all th' inactive General blame,
And fancy, He might do the same.

The General his own ease prefers
To idle skirmishes, and wars,
Plenty and peace at home maintains, [500]
And leaves his Foe the martial pains
Suffers him for himself to carve,
And live by pillaging, or starve,
As a gaunt wolf, by day and night
To keep the country in a fright,
To whip, or hang the countrymen,
And then slink back into his den.

How can th' indignant Muse forbear
The different Leaders to compare?
One in the softn'ng Town she sees [510]
Dissolv'd in luxury and ease,

¹²⁶Ori., "shield."

With fulness of superfluous bread,
With choicest delicacies fed,
Suffering his friends to fall opprest
And die for furnishing the feast
The other self-supported Chief
Without supply, without relief,
Demands an enemy's applause
So worthy of a nobler cause:
The Lord of an unconquer'd mind, [520]
Can in himself resources find,
(What present times will scarce conceive,
Or late posterity believe)
Can raise an army with his foot,
Or build a camp out of an hut,
Repelling at each gaping flaw
The wintry blast with mud and straw.

Behold him with his *burrough'd* host
Four thousand feeble men at most, [530]
Whose numbers every hour decrease
Reduc'd by famine and disease,
That starv'd, and sick, and dying lie
Expos'd to the inclement sky,
The sharpest frost for months sustain
The billowing snow, and pouring rain,
As nothing could their courage quell
Who pain and want disdain'd to *feel*.

Now let us his strong Camp survey!
Around it an Entrenchment lay, [540]
The ditch, to tempt a desperate leap,
Was six feet broad, and three feet deep,
The battering cannon to defy,

The mound no less than four feet high:
A precipice secur'd his rear,
The river and the bridge were near;
Level the front appear'd in sight,
Alike accessible the right;
And Howe a few miles off was seen
Safe with his twice ten thousand men.

The men of war, and loyalty [550]
Expected every day to see
The Camp assaulted, or beset
With Howe's inevitable Net;
In such a dangerous position
The Camp, in such a weak condition
The men, by rapid Sickness wasting,
By hundreds from their colors hasting,
Nor could they shun destruction nigh
Unable to resist, or fly.

But Howe, persisting in his plan, [560]
In peace permits them to remain:
For why should he the Naked scourge
To death, or desperation urge,
Or in their tents the wretches seize
Half dead thro' hunger and disease?
He might indeed their Chief or'ethrow
And crush him by a parting blow,
Or taking captive all his host
Redeem our fame and army lost;
But for Six months the task refus'd, [570]
And chose at last—to be excus'd!

Soldiers and Colonists exclaim
The indolent Commander blame,

But fixt in his resolve is He
Not to accept of victory:
Who having thrown 9 months away,
Finding he could no more delay,
But whatsoever his friends it cost,
Conquer th' Americans he *must*,
And conquer them against his will [580]
His country's Orders to fulfil;
Seeing alas, he cannot please
With all his faithful services,
Seeing his word is not regarded,
Nor yet his worthiest friends rewarded
He humbly sues for his dismissal,
And leaves us in a worse condition
After so many battles won,
Than when the war was first begun.

Before he went, the City pray'd [590]
In vain, for leave themselves to aid,
For arms, depriv'd of his assistance,
To keep the rebels at a distance,
His friends without defence he leaves,
As victims to the Congress gives,
Sure, as the foe's return they see,
To die for their fidelity.

What now has our great Captain done?
Wilfully lost whate'er he won,
Done to his friends as little good, [600]
And as much mischief, as he could;
Our army and their Chief forsook,
And made them pass beneath the yoke;

(Branding us with eternal shame)
Blown up the spark into a flame:
The Loyalists *alone* subdued,
And prodigal of British blood,
Wasted our lives with wanton pleasure,
And twenty millions of our treasure:
His Sovereign basely disobey'd,
His trust perfidiously betray'd;
His country sold; his duty slighted;
The Colonies with France united;
Made our amazing Efforts vain;
Imbroil'd us both with France and Spain
Gain'd his own Party the ascendant,
And made AMERICA INDEPENDENT!

[610]