

THE BATTLES OF BROOKLYN: MEMORIALIZING THE "MARYLAND 400"

PART 1: WHERE IS THE BURIAL SITE OF THE "MARYLAND 400"?

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"I will not name any of the grand men who fought for liberty. All should be named, or none. I feel that the unknown soldier who was shot down without even his name being remembered – who was included only in a report of 'a hundred killed,' or 'a hundred missing,' nobody knowing even the number that attached to his august corpse – is entitled to as deep and heartfelt thanks as the titled leader who fell at the head of the host."

– Col. Robert G. Ingersoll, July 4, 1876

The Battle of Brooklyn (also known as the Battle of Long Island), fought on August 27, 1776, was the first major battle fought after the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The British were determined that it should be the *last* battle of the Revolution, and to that end they amassed an army of about 35,000 in the New York area, of which 22,000 soldiers fought in the battle. The Americans faced them with perhaps 19,000 men (on paper, at least), of which about 10,000 were in Brooklyn. About 3,500 of these Americans formed the front line of the defenses, and bore the brunt of the British attack. [Mark M. Boatner III, "Encyclopedia of the American Revolution," 1966 (hereafter Boatner), p. 654]

Not surprisingly, the Americans were defeated, and forced to evacuate Long Island. However, the American army was not destroyed – as it could have been – and General Washington and most of his army escaped, to fight again another day. At the time, much of the credit was given to a brigade commanded by General William Alexander ("Lord Stirling"), that held the British at bay long enough that at least 2,000 Americans were able to retreat to safety from the front lines. One of the regiments (or battalions) in that brigade was Smallwood's Marylanders, commanded by Major Mordecai Gist (as Colonel Smallwood was absent that day). The Maryland battalion, led by General Stirling and Major Gist, made a suicidal attack against advancing British forces in the vicinity of the Old Stone House (Vechte-Cortelyou House, near modern Third Street and Fifth Avenue), sacrificing themselves to save the rest of the army. It was reported that General Washington, watching this attack from atop Cobble Hill, "wrung his hands, and cried out, *Good God! What brave fellows I must this day lose!*" [Maryland Gazette, Sept. 12, 1776; also Peter Force, "American Archives," Fifth Series, Volume 2, 1848-1851, column 108 (hereafter Force S5-V2-108)].

Since about 1860, various writers describing this action have become confused about the numbers involved. For some reason, it was asserted that 400 Marylanders participated in the attack at the Old Stone House, and they became known as the "Maryland 400" or the "Immortal 400." The first writer to mention this number was Thomas W. Field, in 1869, who described the Marylanders as "sons of the best families of Catholic Maryland.... hardly numbering four hundred men" [Thomas W. Field, "The Battle of Long Island" (LIHS Memoirs 2), 1869 (hereafter Field), p. 199]. Subsequently, some writers

made a comparison to "Lady Astor's 400" – a famous list of the 400 best and most fashionable New Yorkers in 1892. In January 1895, the Maryland Society of the Sons of the Revolution proposed to erect a monument in Brooklyn for "our Maryland FOUR HUNDRED" [Owen Lourie, personal communications 2017]; the monument (in Prospect Park) is inscribed "In Honor of Maryland's Four Hundred." These 1895 mentions are the first use that we have found of the term "Maryland 400."

Some historians believed that Smallwood's battalion totaled only 400 men to begin with [Field, Boatner]. Others recognized that the Maryland battalion included at least 800 men, and suggested that only half of them had fought heroically in the battle. An article in the Maryland Historical Magazine in 1919 [Maryland Historical Magazine vol. 14 (pp. 110-120), "Battle of Long Island," 1919] concluded that five companies (out of ten) that had suffered the heaviest losses represented the 400 Immortals, and attempted to identify them. A more recent, carefully researched book by Linda Davis Reno ["The Maryland 400 in the Battle of Long Island, 1776," 2008 (hereafter Reno)]. took the same approach, and went to great length to identify which soldiers were "one of The Maryland 400." Alas, she selected some different companies, and it seems to me that the choices of which soldiers deserve to be hailed as immortals, and which should be consigned to oblivion, have been rather arbitrary.

There has also been much confusion about the fate of the '400.' Some have claimed that all 400 fell (killed or captured) at the Old Stone House; the figure of 256 dead has often been cited. A marker placed in 1952 on Ninth Street at Third Avenue reads "Maryland Heroes: Here lie buried 256 Maryland soldiers who fell in the Battle of Brooklyn." But is this true? What is the evidence? How many Marylanders fought at the Old Stone House, how many were killed, and where they are buried?

How many Maryland soldiers fought at the Old Stone House?

Tradition has emphasized the "Maryland 400" – according to legend, 400 men (5 of 10 companies) from Smallwood's Maryland battalion (or regiment) sacrificed themselves to save the rest of the army [Maryland Historical Magazine, 1919; John J. Gallagher, "The Battle of Brooklyn, 1776," 1998 (hereafter Gallagher); Reno, 2008]. In fact, more than 800 men fought with Smallwood's battalion (1100, including "independent companies"), and this tradition unfairly implies that the other half of the Maryland regiment (as well as the rest of the army) did not fight, but retreated without putting up much resistance.

The tradition of the "Maryland 400" probably stems from two sources:

- (1) Lord Stirling's statement that "the only chance of escaping ... I found it absolutely necessary to attack a body of troops ... with about half of Smallwood's" [Force S5-V1-1245].
- (2) A letter, attributed to Major Gist, which stated "the main part of our force retreated ... through a marsh ... and got in safe.... We were then left with only five companies of our battalion" [Force S5-V1-1232].

However, one soldier stated that "Lord Stirling, at the head of three companies, attempted to force his way through the enemy" [Force S5-V1-1194]. Another said "When our party was overcome ... by superior numbers surrounding them ... three companies of the Maryland broke the enemy's lines, and fought their way through; the others attempted to cross a small creek" [Force S5-V1-1244]. Yet another observed that "Major Gist, with about 100 men, kept the ground, while the rest of the brigade crossed a creek" [Maryland Gazette, Sept. 5, 1776]; Gist himself reported that, after the first attack, he found himself with Capt. Ford and "with twenty others ... nine only of whom got safe in" [Force S5-V1-1233]. Several accounts also implied that Gen. Stirling's group was not with Major Gist's group, but

was attempting to join them [Force S5-V1-1232; Maryland Gazette, Sept. 5, 1776].

It seems clear that Col. Smallwood's battalion broke up into separate groups near the close of the battle, several of which had to fight their way through the British. It may be that each group believed that they were sacrificing themselves to save the others. Probably all 800 of Smallwood's men (his 9 companies plus Capt. Veazey's independent company) fought bravely, and suffered at least some casualties.

Delaware Col. Haslett wrote: "I must also do Colonel Smallwood's battalion the justice to say, that the spirited attack made by them on the enemy, at the time the Delawares and themselves were retreating, greatly facilitated the escape of both" [Force S5-V2-881].

Twelve officers from Smallwood's battalion were killed or captured; six belonged to the Maryland 400 (as defined by Linda Reno), and six did not. However, Linda Reno's research seem to have been based on an article in Maryland Historical Magazine [1919], which unfortunately identified the wrong companies, as the authors were unaware that several of the captains had transferred to different companies before the battle. (For example, Capt. Daniel Bowie commanded the 4th Company at the time of the battle, but the earlier rolls used by Reno – and all other previous researchers – list him with the 1st Company.)

Owen E. Lourie ["Finding the Maryland 400: A Maryland State Archives Research Project." msamaryland400.wordpress.com] generously provided a correct list of the captains who commanded each company during the battle, as well as a copy of a pay abstract [MdHR 19,970-4-5/1] which counted the number of men present in each company during September 1776. By subtracting from the original (theoretical) strength of each company, we can estimate *total losses* from all causes (not only killed or captured, but also disease, desertion, transfer, discharge, etc.). It is known that there were losses from other causes before the battle, and most companies were under strength. (In Aug. 1776, most regiments in the Continental Army had only half of their men present and fit for duty [Boatner, p. 927].) In July 1776, the Maryland 4th Company (Capt. Bowie) mustered only 58 (out of 74) men, the 5th Company (Capt. Ramsey) 70 men, and the 8th Company (Capt. Smith) 68 men [Owen Lourie, personal communications 2013-2017]. In early August 1776, 4 men deserted from Capt. Smith's company, and 6 men deserted from Capt. Ford's company [Philadelphia Ledger, Aug. 31, 1776].

Estimated Losses from January to September 1776:

1st Company, Capt. Stone: 9 of 74 (12%)
2nd Company, Capt. Sim: 11 of 74 (15%)
3rd Company, Capt. Lucas: 47 of 74 (64%) [commanded by Lt. Sterett, as Capt. Lucas was sick]
4th Company, Capt. Bowie: 60 of 74 (81%) [Capt. Bowie was wounded, and died in captivity]
5th Company, Capt. Ramsey: 10 of 74 (14%) ["in the front" but few died]
6th Company, Capt. Adams: 54 of 74 (73%)
7th Company, Capt. Scott: 11 of 74 (15%) ["in the front" but few died]
8th Company, Capt. Smith: 9 of 74 (12%)
9th Company (Light Infantry), Capt. Ford: 40 of 78 (51%)
4th Independent, Capt. Hindman: 6 of 106 (6%) ["lost only 3 men on Long Island"]
5th Independent, Capt. Thomas: 2 of 106 (2%)
7th Independent, Capt. Veazey / Harrison: 65 of 106 (61%) [Capt. Veazey was killed]

Total Losses = 324 – so this must include 68 losses from other causes, as well as the 256 casualties in the Battle of Brooklyn.

I note that Major Gist's narrative said that he was with 20 men of Capt. Ford's company at the end, and that only nine men escaped. A private from Capt. Ford's company claimed that "only fifteen escaped" out of 74 men [pension application of Michael Hahn Jr., file R.5109]. Yet the September payroll shows that 38 men remained from Ford's company – suggesting that they had broken up into small groups, each of which fought independently, and was unaware of the fate of the others. In fact, more than half of the men in Capt. Ford's company survived the battle, and escaped captivity.

Likewise, a private from Capt. Lucas's company claimed that "at the Battle of Long Island, his Captain Barton Lucas became deranged in consequence of losing his company ... all of whom except seven, were killed or taken prisoners" [pension application of John Hughes, file S.5594]. Captain Lucas was absent, sick, and the company was commanded in the battle by Lt. Sterett (who was captured). The September payroll shows that 26 men (in addition to Capt. Lucas) escaped – not just seven.

It seems unlikely that the '400' (out of 800 or 1100) fought together as a single unit at a single location. Although I don't doubt that some portion of the Marylanders made a heroic stand under the leadership of Gen. Stirling, and another portion made a heroic stand under command of Major Gist; perhaps these two groups combined included about 400 men. Other parts of the regiment, including Capt. Veazey's and Capt. Bowie's companies, suffered heavy losses earlier in the battle. Probably at least one stand occurred near the Old Stone House [Henry Onderdonk Jr., "Revolutionary Incidents of Suffolk and Kings Counties," 1849 (hereafter Onderdonk), pp. 128, 142; Benjamin J. Lossing, "Pictorial Field Book of the Revolution," 1850 (hereafter Lossing), p. 604], but we don't know how many men were involved in that fight, nor which companies they represented. Fighting occurred at a number of locations, and the dead from the Maryland regiment – as well as other regiments – must have been scattered across a wide area.

(Regarding the Old Stone House, it is notable that Joseph Plumb Martin said that, at the climax of the fighting, the British stationed several field-pieces "by a brick house" in an attempt to cut off the American retreat [Onderdonk, pp. 154-155; Martin, "Private Yankee Doodle," 1962, p. 26]. The Vechte-Cortelyou House was the only building in Brooklyn known to have substantial brickwork [de Halve Maen 57 (1): 1-5; 59 (1): 1-6; 60 (1): 12-16].)

It is true that five of the Maryland companies suffered much heavier casualties than the others, but it appears that some of the other companies who lost relatively few men still fought heroically in the battle. One account specifically singled out Capt. Smith for praise ("Capt. Smith and Lieut. Steret [of Lucas's company] conducted their companies to a charm" [Maryland Gazette, Sept. 5, 1776]). Another soldier reported that "the companies commanded by Captains Ramsey and Scott were in the front, and sustained the first fire of the enemy, when hardly a man fell.... Major [Gist], Captain Ramsey, and Lieutenant Plunkett [of Ramsey's company], were foremost, and within forty yards of the enemy's muzzles, when they were fired upon by the enemy.... they entirely overshot us, and killed some men away behind in our rear" [Force S5-V2-108]. Capt. Ramsey reported that "I have lost no officers and but few men" [Force S5-V1-1195]. Sgt. William Sands (of Scott's company) was killed, but few others were lost [Owen Lourie, personal communications 2017]. Under the circumstances, the low number of casualties perhaps resulted from good luck (or bad British marksmanship), not lack of valor. Despite their conspicuous bravery, the companies of Captains Ramsey, Scott, and Smith have not been counted as part of the '400.'

Linda Reno noted the important role played by Capt. Thomas's independent company in assisting the retreating soldiers – she correctly called them "unsung heroes" [p. 157] – yet they suffered the fewest casualties of any of the Maryland companies. How much more unsung are Capt. Veazey's independent

company, who lost almost two-thirds of their men, but are unmentioned in modern accounts, as they are not considered to have been part of the '400'!

We should also notice Col. Samuel Atlee, who, with a small group of about 40 men from his Pennsylvania regiment, were among the last to retreat. They observed "a few brave fellows" – evidently some of the Marylanders – attacking a party of British Grenadiers who were trying to cut off the retreat, and joined in the attack, thereby "preventing the Grenadiers from destroying the rear in their retreat over the water." The commander of the Grenadiers (Lt. Col. Monckton) was shot through the body (but later recovered), and several British officers (including two captains) were killed. The Grenadiers were forced to retreat, and were held off for "upwards of a quarter of an hour." Atlee, out of ammunition, was unable to escape, and "was obliged to surrender to the 71st Highlanders" [Pennsylvania Archives, second series, vol. 1 (1874), pp. 515-516]. William Faden's official map of the battle ["A Plan of New York Island, with part of Long Island...", dated Oct. 19, 1776] included a notation "NN: A Party of the 2d. Grenadiers, supported by the 71st Regt." – located at the intersection of Gowanus Road and Porte Road (near modern Fifth Avenue and First Street), showing that this action occurred in close proximity to the Old Stone House (Fifth Avenue and Third Street).

How many Maryland soldiers were killed during the Battle?

Tradition states that 256 (or 259) of the Maryland 400 were killed at the Old Stone House, and nearly all of the remainder were captured, only 9 men escaped [Gallagher, p. 130 – this is a misinterpretation of Major Gist's letter, which says that 9 *out of 20* escaped, not 9 out of 400!] For example, a plaque placed near the Old Stone House in 1897 stated "Here ... two hundred and fifty out of four hundred brave Maryland soldiers ... were killed in combat" [Brooklyn Daily Eagle Jan. 10, 1897, p. 12; Aug. 10, 1902, p. 9.]. However, the original reports are quite clear that 256 (or 259) was the total number of casualties – killed, wounded, *and captured* – from the entire Maryland battalion of 800 (or 1100), in all parts of the battlefield.

An anonymous Marylander, Sept. 1, 1776: "The Maryland battalion has lost two hundred and fifty-nine men, amongst whom are twelve officers.... who of them are killed, or who prisoners, is yet uncertain" [Force S5-V2-108].

Major Gist, Aug. 30, 1776: "The principal loss sustained in our battalion fell on Captains Veazey, Adams, Lucas, Ford, and Bowie's companies. The killed, wounded, and missing amount to two hundred and fifty-nine" [Force S5-V1-1233]. He went on to name nine officers, and counted 13 sergeants and 235 privates (total 257 – I think he omitted two officers). Col. Smallwood, Oct. 12, 1776: "Have enclosed a list of the killed and missing, amounting to two hundred and fifty-six, officers included" [Force S5-V2-1011].

Sadly, Col. Smallwood's list has been lost, so there is no record of the names of the 256 casualties, nor any tally of how many were killed on the battlefield, and how many were captured alive. In some ways, this is a trivial distinction: for the majority of privates, captivity was a death sentence, as more than half – perhaps 70% – of the captives died in prison [Onderdonk, p. 211; Edwin G. Burrows, "Forgotten Patriots: The Untold Story of American Prisoners During the Revolutionary War," 2008, pp. 200, 253]. But it does affect the question of where the soldiers were buried.

"The wounded prisoners taken, Aug. 27, were put in the [Dutch Reformed] churches of Flatbush and New Utrecht ... being neglected and unattended" [Onderdonk, p. 172]; those who died soon after the

battle (including Gen. Woodhull) were buried in the adjacent churchyards. Subsequently, the privates were moved to various prisons in Manhattan, and buried there; still later, prisoners were placed on ships in Wallabout Bay, and buried in shallow graves on the shore, within the modern site of the Brooklyn Navy Yard. A small fraction of the bones of the latter were collected after the Revolution, and eventually reburied in Fort Greene Park [Onderdonk; Lossing; Burrows].

The twelve officers who were included in the 256 Maryland casualties can be traced. Of the twelve, only one was killed in combat (Capt. Edward Veazey), the other eleven were captured. Two of the prisoners were badly wounded (Capt. Daniel Bowie and Lt. Joseph Butler), both died in captivity [alive on Sept. 5: Force S5-V1-1250-1251]. Linda Reno did not consider Veazey and Butler to have been part of the '400,' one account says "Captain Veazey and Lieutenant Butler fell early in the engagement" [Force S5-V1-1195]. The remaining nine officers survived, and eventually were exchanged. (Officers received better treatment than privates, and had a much higher survival rate.)

If the same ratio of killed-to-captured held for the privates, then perhaps only 25 out of 248 were killed on the battlefield, and the large majority were captured. Even so, the Maryland battalion had the heaviest losses of any unit in the battle, and these statistics should not detract from their heroism – they fought bravely, and their sacrifice saved many soldiers from other units. As noted by Johnston [Henry P. Johnston, "The Campaign of 1776 Around New York and Brooklyn," (LIHS Mem. 3), 1878 (hereafter Johnston), p. 188n], "The conduct of the Marylanders was soldierly beyond praise. But the proportion of men killed was doubtless small."

British tallies of prisoners indicate that the proportion of wounded also was small. Only 9 out of a total of 91 captured officers, and 58 out of 1006 privates, were listed as wounded [Force S5-V1-1258].

Several accounts indicate that most of the Marylanders who were killed or wounded, fell early in the Battle – while all 800 Marylanders were still fighting as a unit – probably near Battle Hill (Green-Wood Cemetery). As noted, Capt. Veazey and Lt. Butler (of Capt. Bowie's company) "fell early in the engagement," as did Pennsylvania Lt. Col. Parry [Force S5-V1-1195-1196]. The heaviest casualties were in Capt. Bowie's company, who lost all of their officers, and mustered only 1 sergeant, 12 privates, and a drummer in September 1776. Their original (theoretical) strength was 74 officers and men, but in July 1776 they had only 58 men present for duty [Owen Lourie, personal communications 2013-2017]; only 14 men remained after the battle. One of the soldiers in that company, Sgt. William McMillan, wrote a vivid account in his pension application. He says that, first, "we had a perty severe fite with [Hessian] Yagers and it was a draw battle, there was a good many on each side killed, other retired and we did not pursue them." At this time, his Captain (Bowie) and first Lieutenant (Butler) were mortally wounded, "second Lieutenant shot through hand, two Sarjents was killed, one in front of me, same time my baynet was shot off my gun, two Corporals killed."

Later in the battle, Capt. Bowie's company "were surrounded by Hilanders [71st Regiment] one side, Hessons on the other" and "about 50 or 60 of us were taken." After they were captured, "the Hessons broke the butts of our guns over their cannon, and robbed us of everything we had, lite their pipes with our money ... and gave us nothing to eat for five days" [William McMillan, pension file S.2806].

Col. Samuel Atlee, whose Pennsylvania regiment was posted to the left of Smallwood's Marylanders, began the battle with a severe fight for a hilltop about 300 yards to the east (Battle Hill?). They repelled three attacks from the British 23rd, 40th, and 44th regiments; during this action both British Lt. Col. Grant and Pennsylvania Lt. Col. Parry were killed (both shot through the head). Atlee ordered that the body of his friend Parry, "in the midst of the action and immediately after he fell ... to be borne by four

soldiers off the field into the lines at Brooklyn." Later, when Atlee retreated, he left the bodies of Lt. Col. Grant and the other dead on the field, unburied. Subsequently, surrounded and out of ammunition, Col. Atlee and about 40 of his men were forced to surrender to the 71st Highlanders [Pennsylvania Archives, second series, vol. 1 (1874), pp. 513-516].

The British originally claimed to have killed as many as 6,000 Americans [London Evening Post, Oct. 8-10, 1776], while the British commander, Gen. Howe, officially estimated total American losses in the battle as 3,300 – including 2,200 killed [Force S5-V1-1257]. This number was obviously a huge exaggeration, and was disputed even at the time. One British critic, noting the contradictions in Howe's report, concluded that "the loss in killed and wounded among the Provincials is but very trifling. Were it otherwise, why have we not had a list of them? ... if any considerable numbers fell in the field, where ... did the victors bury their dead?" [St. James's (London) Chronicle, Oct. 17-19, 1776].

The best analysis of the American casualties in the Battle of Brooklyn was by Johnston [1878], pp. 202-206. Based on regimental muster rolls, he showed that the total losses for the entire army (excluding militia and civilian prisoners) did not exceed 1000. Since the British claimed to have taken 1097 prisoners [Force S5-V1-1258], there could not have been very many more killed. As Major Gist reported, "our whole loss that day supposed to be near one thousand, chief part of whom are prisoners" [Force S5-V1-1233]. General Parsons (who was with Stirling's command) said "our loss in killed and wounded is inconsiderable, but many are missing" [Johnston, part 2, p. 34]. Colonel Silliman, who made a careful inquiry at the time, concluded that "on the whole I do not think we had 50 men killed in the action" [Johnston, p. 205]. Linda Reno's analysis of the men she identified as "part of The Maryland 400" shows that, *at most*, 142 (out of 383) soldiers died (or left the service from other causes, including expiration of enlistment, without further record) between June and December 1776. Owen Lourie [personal communications 2013-2017] has been able to identify only 4 men who were killed or mortally wounded, and 70 who were captured (and survived); the names and fates of the other 182 missing Marylanders are unknown.

Where are the Maryland soldiers buried?

I can not find any first-hand or eye-witness sources that describe burial of the dead after the Battle of Brooklyn. It is true that several British soldiers reported second-hand rumors that hundreds, even thousands, of American dead had been buried in mass graves. However, none claimed to have personally witnessed this. One officer wrote that "some of the Hessians told me they had buried between 400 and 500 in one pit" [Farley's Bristol Journal, Oct. 19, 1776]. Another officer (who admitted that he was only a "spectator" to the battle) claimed "fourteen hundred of the rebels, dead, have been buried by our people. Several still [on September 5] remain upon the ground, in the woods near Flat Bush, whose carcasses stink confoundedly" [Lloyd's (London) Evening Post, Oct. 25-28, 1776]. While the figure of 1,400 dead was perhaps a ten-fold exaggeration (as was the same officer's claim that 40,000 Americans fought in the battle), the statement that some dead Americans had not been buried probably was a first-hand observation.

Admiral Howe's secretary, Ambrose Serle, likewise noted in early September that "putrid dead bodies are lying in the fields about the country," and "the woods near Brookland are so noisome with the stench of the dead bodies of the rebels ... that they are quite inaccessible" ["The American Journal of Ambrose Serle," 1940, pp. 87, 91]. Ten months after the battle (in June 1777), a traveler on the road from Brooklyn to Jamaica claimed that "our noses were now and then regaled with the stink of dead Rebels, some of them have lain unburied since last August" ["The Journal of Nicholas Cresswell,"

1924, p. 231]. And a later historian reported a local tradition that one dead American rifleman, killed near Battle Hill, was deliberately left unburied, "and his remains were exposed on the ground, till the flesh was rotted" [Gabriel Furman, "Notes, Geographical and Historical, Relating to the Town of Brooklyn," 1824 (hereafter Furman), p. 51].

A British Brigade morning order of Aug. 29, 1776, directed that "the Q[uar]ter M[aster]s of Corps ... take care that the dead of the enemy in the vicinity of their Corps are properly buried" [unpublished *Orderly Book of a British Regiment of Foot Guards*, New-York Historical Society]. However, there is no evidence that this order was carried out. The British were distracted both by the construction of siege works, and by heavy rain, throughout the day on August 28 and 29, and both sides withdrew from the battlefield on August 30 – with the exception of a detachment of Hessians, "with orders to burn [the] hospitals and the straw and rubbage, [the enemy] left in their encampment" ["From Redcoat to Rebel: The Thomas Sullivan Journal," 2004, p. 52]. Perhaps these Hessians also buried some of the bodies of the dead.

Joseph Plumb Martin visited the battlefield of White Plains two years after the battle, and remembered that "We saw a number of the graves of those who fell in that battle. Some of the bodies had been so slightly buried that the dogs or hogs, or both, had dug them out of the ground. The skulls and other bones and hair were scattered about the place" ["Private Yankee Doodle," 1962, p. 134]. Such very casual, shallow, and informal burials appear to have been the typical fate of soldiers who died in the Revolution. There is no evidence that battlefield dead were ever gathered in formal cemeteries, or marked or recorded. (That practice did not begin until the Civil War, with the first National Cemeteries created in July 1862 ["American Military Cemeteries," by Dean W. Holt, 2010; "Honoring the Civil War Dead," by John R. Neff, 2004].)

An example is Lt. Col. Thomas Knowlton, who was mortally wounded while heroically leading his troops during the Battle of Harlem Heights, a few weeks after the Battle of Brooklyn. The next day, he "was buried with military honors near the road [Broadway]," but there is no record of the location of his unmarked grave. Johnston said the location "is a matter of conjecture." And the probable site of Knowlton's wounding (a rocky knoll between 123rd and 124th Street) was blasted away to construct Broadway, before 1897. Even though Gen. Washington called Knowlton "a brave and good officer" whose death was a "great loss," no attempt was made to memorialize him until 1897 – five months after the dedication of Grant's Tomb in the near vicinity ["The Battle of Harlem Heights" by Henry P. Johnston, 1897, pp. 77-79].

Even such a prominent leader as Gen. Joseph Warren, killed at Bunker Hill, was buried where he fell in an unmarked grave. According to the British officer who buried him, "Doctor Warren ... I found among the slain, and stuffed the scoundrel with another rebel, into one hole" [New England Quarterly vol. 25 (1952), p. 367]. The bodies were not collected at one spot and buried in a mass grave; rather, they were buried individually, or in pairs, in separate small holes. Nine months later, Warren's friends located his body, and reburied it in Boston [ibid., p. 368n; "Encyclopedia of the American Revolution," by Mark M. Boatner III (1966), p. 1165]. However, none of the other bodies were removed, and it appears that these graves were destroyed when the Bunker Hill Monument was subsequently erected (after 1827) on the spot where Warren (and others) had been buried.

It seems that only the highest-ranking officers (such as Gen. Warren) were ever buried (or reburied) with any care – even by their friends. Another example was Gen. Richard Montgomery, killed in the assault on Quebec, "decently interred" at first in a churchyard there, and then (decades later, in 1818) reburied at St. Paul's Church in New York City [The North British Intelligencer (1776), vol. 3, no. 9, p.

271; "Encyclopedia of the American Revolution," by Mark M. Boatner III (1966), p. 726]. The officers and men who fell beside Montgomery remained in unmarked and unrecorded graves, not having received "decent" burial.

In Brooklyn, there is some evidence that the British buried three of their four highest-ranking casualties (probably Lt. Col. Grant and two Grenadier captains) in a small fenced plot between Battle Hill and the Old Stone House. A fellow officer reported (in a letter dated September 2) that he "saw poor Captain Logan interred" [London Chronicle, Oct. 10-12, 1776]. A schematic map ["Chart and Plan of the Harbour of New York...", published by J. Bew in Political Magazine, Nov. 30, 1781] marks "three graves" on the southeast side of Gowanus Road, opposite "Thibault's" [Teunis Tiebout's] house (according to Stiles, near modern Sixth Street between Fourth and Fifth Avenues). Gabriel Furman noted that they were "buried in a field, near where they fell, and their graves fenced in with some posts and rails, where their remains still [in 1824] rest" [Furman, 1824, p. 51]. Col. Atlee, while prisoner, "several months after, was shown the graves of several of the [British] officers who fell" while fighting against him [Pennsylvania Archives, second series, vol. 1 (1874), p. 516] – most likely this same plot. There is no record that any other British soldiers, or any Americans, were buried with similar respect.

Aside from this plot, the earliest mention I have found of battlefield graves in Brooklyn is in an 1839 lecture by Samuel Ward Jr. He noted that Green-Wood Cemetery was then being laid out in the locality of the battle: "Beneath the fight-scene, the dead are soon to rejoin those who perished there" [Samuel Ward Jr., "The Battle of Long-Island: A Lecture," 1839, p. 22]. He made no mention of any other burial sites.

It is noteworthy that neither Onderdonk [1849] nor Lossing [1850] made any mention of battlefield burial sites in Brooklyn, even though both authors devoted considerable attention to the location of British prisons, and the burials of the dead from those prisons (as well as from prison ships). Onderdonk quoted several accounts that claimed the dead from the Manhattan prisons were left unburied, merely thrown into ditches outside the City [Onderdonk, pp. 208, 213, 216]. One account said the bodies were buried haphazardly, by conscripts, in shallow graves – "thrown into a hole promiscuously, without the usual rites" [Onderdonk, p. 212].

Although we lack any detailed descriptions of battlefield burials during the Revolution, there are some lurid accounts from the Civil War, especially Gettysburg. Like the Battle of Brooklyn, Gettysburg was fought on a warm summer day, followed by a heavy rainstorm. Decomposition of the bodies began rapidly, with the stench increased by the rain and heat. Because of this, the corpses would have been buried as close as possible to where they fell, with the least possible handling. Clear evidence is seen in some famous photos of battlefield dead at Gettysburg, moved a short distance in order to be buried in a single trench – many bodies have ropes or belts tied about their limbs, so that the burial parties could avoid touching the corpses ["Gettysburg: A Journey In Time," by William A. Frassanito, 1975, pp. 206-207]. And the Gettysburg dead were buried by their comrades, while the American dead in Brooklyn were buried by hostile strangers (most likely Hessians, or slaves conscripted by the British for the task). They certainly would not have been buried "in regular military order"!

From Dr. Joan Geismar, urban archaeologist: "I find it interesting that Onderdonk (1849) does not mention a burial ground at all. Moreover, he has a note in regard to what are identified on the map as (w) Stirling's force on Wycoff's Hill (which he questions) on the morning of August 27, (x) the location of Grant's force on the same morning, and (y) 'The scene of Stirling's last encounter with the enemy, while his main body escaped over the Creek and Mill-dam.' The note reads: 'N.B. The precise spots w, x, y, cannot now [1849] perhaps be identified. The hills remain, but all else is changed.' [Onderdonk,

pp.127-128]. After the street grading in the 1850s, even the hills had changed" [personal communications, 2008].

A good summary of the claims for the location of the Marylanders' burials can be found in a manuscript: "Historical Orientation Report for Archeological Investigation, Marylanders' Burial Site, Brooklyn, New York," by Frank Barnes, Regional Historian, National Park Service, Philadelphia, Nov. 2, 1956 [copy on file in James Kelly's papers at Brooklyn College: Special Collections, 89-003. But note that this was superseded by a subsequent final report by Barnes, May 20, 1957.]

Barnes's research showed that the first mention of a supposed burial ground was by Thomas W. Field in 1867 (repeated in his "Battle of Long Island," 1869, pp. 202-203). Stiles (also 1867) explicitly quoted Field [Henry R. Stiles, "A History of the City of Brooklyn," 1867, vol. 1, p. 280n]. According to Stiles, "These noble martyrs of the Maryland and Delaware regiments were buried on a small island of dry ground, scarcely an acre in extent, which formerly rose out of the marshy salt-meadow on the farm of Adrian [*sic* - Adriance] Van Brunt. This spot ... was carefully preserved intact from axe or plough during Mr. Van Brunt's lifetime.... Third avenue intersects its westerly end, and Seventh and Eighth streets indicate two of its sides."

Field and Stiles identified the burial ground as including the whole block from Seventh to Eighth Streets (at Third Avenue). However, Barnes examined street profiles (created prior to street grading in 1853), and concluded that the top of the rise (representing the supposed "island") was Ninth Street at Third Avenue, to Eighth Street at Fourth Avenue. Therefore, Barnes suggested that the supposed burial ground could lie anywhere within the two blocks between Seventh to Ninth Street, from Third to Fourth Avenues.

An anonymous article in the Brooklyn Daily Eagle (Dec. 1, 1870, p. 3) elaborated on Field's claim:

"There is a current tradition among the families whose farms covered the site where the Marylanders were engaged, that their dead were buried by the residents on a mound that rose from a salt meadow in the vicinity of Third avenue and Seventh street. After frequent examination of the ground, I am of the opinion that few of the bodies were interred at that place originally, as it was too distant. It is probable, however, that after the war ... that the skeletons were collected and buried on the island mound.... Adrian Van Brunt, who lived until within a few years [and died in 1863], was often heard to say that the ground was sacred ... because it held the remains of the Maryland Regiment."

Field and Stiles apparently based their identification on a tradition in the Van Brunt family, probably reported to them by John Van Brunt (1802-1881), who also wrote to Teunis G. Bergen on Dec. 16, 1869 [Bergen correspondence at Brooklyn Historical Society, call no. 1978.157; see also Wildhack collection, call no. 1973.232; and Kelly papers at Brooklyn College: Special Collections, 89-003]. At that time, Van Brunt had not seen Field's publications, but he had read the first volume of Stiles's "History." He wrote that Stiles "has made some mistakes and there are unpardonable blundering now and then."

John Van Brunt described the burial place as a well-wooded "island" in a meadow, on the former Staats farm, location not specified. He had "always understood that it had been the burial place of American soldiers who fell in the battle of L.I." It should be noted Van Brunt made no mention of trenches at this site, only individual "forms of graves" – some marked with "headstones briefly memorializing the deceased giving names and date of their deaths," and "a greater number" of others unmarked. (This description sounds like a family cemetery – perhaps for the Staats family? Certainly battlefield burials

would not have individual headstones!)

The problem with this tradition is that the supposed burial ground belonged to the Staats family during the Revolution, it was not purchased by Cornelius Van Brunt Sr. (father of Adriance and John) until 1786, ten years *after* the Battle. So the Van Brunt traditions were second-hand, at best.

Another problem (in parts of John Van Brunt's letter that were not mentioned by Barnes), is that he appears to have been describing (and confusing?) three or four different burial sites. The second was a Van Brunt family plot, "selected by my father after his purchase. It was situated northerly of 8th St. between 3 & 4th Avenues." He "had a very faint recollection of there once having been a [separate] negro burying ground" near Third Avenue. In a burial ground near Fifth Avenue "were buried among others Nicholas Vechte and [his son-in-law] Teunis Tiebout, aged 100 years, and I believe there they are still." [John Van Brunt to Teunis G. Bergen, Dec. 16, 1869. BHS call no. 1978.157].

Nicholas Vechte (owner of the Old Stone House, who died in 1779) was buried in his own family burial ground, near Second Street and Fifth Avenue [New York County Wills, liber 32, pp. 125-131]. Perhaps John Van Brunt (and Field) confused two or three burial locations, and the Marylanders were actually buried near the Old Stone House, in the Vechte-Cowenhoven burial ground? John Van Brunt was recalling childhood memories (and family traditions) from "60 years since;" he lived in New Jersey for most of his life. And Field (and Stiles) certainly confused the location of the Van Brunt family cemetery (near Eighth Street and Third Avenue), with the alleged military burial site (a different, and unknown, location).

When Adriance Van Brunt sold his farm in 1835, the deed included a clause "reserving thereout all that certain piece or parcel of ground, containing five perches [about 40 feet square], now enclosed as a burial ground" [Brooklyn Evening Star, Apr. 22, 1844]. This was certainly the Van Brunt family cemetery – not a Revolutionary mass burial site. Almost identical language was used to describe the Vechte-Cowenhoven family cemetery, which was excluded when they sold the land to Jaques Cortelyou in 1790, and excluded again when the Cortelyous sold the land in 1853: "a certain burying ground ... as is now within fence ... not exceeding 50 feet square." This Vechte-Cowenhoven burial ground was located much closer to the Old Stone House than was the Van Brunt burial ground – and was in use during the Revolution – so it seems a much more likely burial place for those Marylanders who were killed near the Old Stone House. It was located midway between Second and Third Streets, about 100 or 150 feet east of Fifth Avenue [Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Jan. 22, 1911, magazine section p. 8]. Some of the bodies (including Nicholas Vechte and Teunis Tiebout) were removed in 1865 from this site to Green-Wood Cemetery [lot 182, a Polhemus family lot next to the Van Brunt lot], but others were never removed; the headstones reportedly were smashed by developers, prior to the construction of row houses on this block.

The Van Brunts removed at least 15 family members (along with 12 headstones) from their burial ground(s) in 1846 (including Cornelius Van Brunt Sr., his wife Jane, Jane's parents, and Cornelius's children and infant grandchildren who had died before that date), reburying them in Adriance Van Brunt's lot in Green-Wood Cemetery [lot 183, section 64]. If they believed the Marylanders were buried in this same burial ground, and considered their remains to be "sacred," why were they not moved too? Or were they? There are a couple of unmarked spaces in this large family plot, although it does not appear that there are more graves than can be accounted for by Van Brunt family members. Still, it might be useful to see the Green-Wood Cemetery interment file for this lot, to see if any additional unidentified bodies were reburied there.

In 1853 or 1854, Third Avenue was graded, and development began on the former Van Brunt farm. About 1891-1895, apartment buildings were built on the three lots just south of Seventh Street. In 1956, Dr. Nicholas Ryan (son of the contractor who did the work) claimed that his father had uncovered (60 years earlier) "the bones of some thirty bodies, in regular or military order." (If this is true, it's surprising – in fact amazing – that the newspaper articles of 1905-1906, as well as numerous ones in 1895-1897 (when a memorial plaque was placed at 256 [now 431] Third Avenue), made no mention of this. Therefore I conclude it is not true; childhood memories from 60 years before are notoriously unreliable.)

The plaque placed in the sidewalk at 431 Third Avenue in 1897 stated that it was the "Burial Place of ye 250 Maryland Soldiers...." This statement has been accepted as an established fact, ever since.

In 1905, a coal dealer named Henry Wildhack purchased the four lots (including 431 Third Avenue) immediately south of the three apartments [see New York Herald (Brooklyn section), July 28, 1906; Brooklyn Daily Eagle, July 24, 1910, p. 7]. He claimed at the time (and his son claimed in 1956/7 – again, childhood memories from 50 years earlier) that there were then visible 15 burial trenches, each 100 feet long, running in a southeasterly direction from Third Avenue towards Eighth Street. He also reported that the grading of Third Avenue in 1854 had "obliterated" part of the burial trenches. (However, if this was true, it is surprising that neither Field nor Stiles made any mention of this.) In 1957, the son remembered digging, fifty years earlier, and finding fragments of bone and metal (I suspect these were domestic refuse – a photo in the Brooklyn Daily Eagle [October 15, 1905] shows this lot was thickly strewn with trash).

At some later date, Wildhack raised the lot to the street level by adding 7 or 8 feet of fill (his son remembered 7 to 10 feet), burying the "trenches." During the 1930s to 1946, a company purchased all of Wildhack's properties down to Eighth Street, and built a Red Devil Paint factory. The "upper" part of this property was improved in 1946 with eight underground (6 to 8 feet) tanks for storage of volatile paint ingredients; in 1956, the contractor did not remember encountering any bones or relics of any description.

I note that a 1957 sketch map by Henry Wildhack Jr. [copy in the James Kelly papers at Brooklyn College: Special Collections, 89-003] shows the 'trenches' in exactly the same location and orientation as the former Hammond Avenue, which was closed in 1849 [Laws of 1849, chapt. 311; see 1941 Commissioners Map, sheet 87]. This may be a coincidence, but it seems possible that the former roadbed / ruts / ditches of Hammond Avenue (assuming it was ever constructed) were mistaken for trenches. There also seems to have been a small tributary drainage at this location; this natural ditch may again have been mistaken for burial pits. (And such a low point would be an unlikely selection as a burial site.) Finally, a 1905 photo of this lot shows parallel ridges and ditches that appear to be only about 2 feet apart – they look like agricultural furrows, far too small and closely spaced for human burials [Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Oct. 15, 1905, p. 27].

Based on Barnes's research, there were archaeological excavations on this block (between Seventh and Eighth Streets) in 1957, directed by Dr. Richard Woodbury of Columbia University, assisted by Robert Suggs (a graduate student) and Borough Historian James Kelly. An article in the New York Times [Jan. 17, 1957] says "have not found anything worth mentioning." Many years ago, I went to the site with the late Rev. John O'Halloran, who had participated in the 1957 excavations. He said that they dug at several different spots in the backyards on the east side of Third Avenue (everywhere that they could gain access), he thought they had dug as deeply as 15 feet. They found nothing, and he vividly remembered Kelly's frustration – "I can't understand it, they should have been here."

Frank Barnes wrote a final report to the U.S. Congress, dated May 20, 1957: "The Maryland 400 at the Cortelyou House, Brooklyn: The Action and Burial Site" [copy in the James Kelly papers at Brooklyn College: Special Collections, 89-003]. This report summarizes the archaeological work in detail (in Appendix C) – no evidence of burials was found. While I would dispute Barnes's conclusion that "the action of the Marylanders ... and their burial site are not of national significance," I can not dispute his final conclusion: "Despite hearsay and traditional evidence, the burial site of these Marylanders killed (more may have been captured) in this action cannot be conclusively authenticated, either by historical or archaeological means." Sadly, this conclusion is as true today as it was in 1957. There is *no* credible evidence of the location of any graves of U.S. soldiers who were killed in action in the Battle of Brooklyn.

Can modern (post-1957) archaeological techniques assist in locating the burials?

In the past few decades, various remote sensing techniques (including electromagnetic induction, electrical resistivity, magnetometry, and ground penetrating radar) have been employed by archaeologists to locate unmarked burials. Typical reports can be found in the journal "Archaeological Prospection." All of these techniques rely on measuring very small variations in the characteristics of soil; these variations might indicate the presence of burial pits. (None of these techniques can detect bones, they only detect the presence of pits or other disturbances in the soil.)

Unfortunately, *all* of these techniques are highly sensitive to the presence of (1) ferrous (iron) metal objects, and (2) ash, clinkers, and burned soil. Either of these will produce a much stronger signal than the targeted soil disturbance; a single iron nail can mask the presence of a large pit. I had discussions with a number of exhibitors at the 2008 Society for American Archaeology meetings, who were promoting various state-of-the-art remote sensing technologies. They were all of the opinion that such techniques would be useless under the conditions prevailing at the traditional burial site (Third Avenue between Seventh and Ninth Streets). These lots are reported to be capped by at least seven feet of late 19th - early 20th century fill, which contains abundant metal debris, quantities of ash and clinker, and live utilities. There are also steel reinforcements in the surficial concrete slabs of paved lots. At the 2008 SAA Meetings, one of the exhibitors let me try his GPR machine by running it across the concrete floor of the exhibition room; each time we passed over a reinforcement rod, the readings spiked and went off the scale – masking all other sources of variation.

I discussed this with Dr. Joan Geismar, a highly experienced urban archaeologist. She monitored a construction project in 2008 at one of the lots (433-435 Third Avenue, between Seventh and Eighth Streets); nothing of significance was encountered, during an excavation to a depth of ten feet. Her response: "Thank you for investigating the possibilities of remote sensing in regard to the proposed Marylanders' burial site. Would that this could have been helpful, but, alas, remote sensing cannot only be thrown off by bituminous deposits, but also by *any* disturbance, and the components of fill. It just isn't applicable in an urban setting. (It did work quite well in a New Jersey burial ground located on a sand hill where 'development' had been limited solely to burials.) Maybe someday there will be a technology that can disregard the disturbance of urbanization, but not as yet" [personal communications, 2008].

Aside from remote sensing techniques, a more direct way of examining subsurface deposits is with soil borings. While it is true that such borings (typically, two inches in diameter, and up to 50 feet deep) can only sample a tiny fraction of any site, and might miss small, isolated features (such as a single human

burial), they should easily detect large disturbances (such as 100 foot long burial trenches), buried soil layers, and fill deposits. Such soil borings have been undertaken in a couple of lots in this neighborhood (including 168-170 Eighth Street, in 2012) either for the purposes of environmental investigations, or in preparation for construction. Nothing of archaeological significance was reported.

In the last two decades, attention has shifted to the block between Eighth and Ninth Streets, south of the "traditional" site. Members of the Rawley American Legion Post, located on Ninth Street near the corner of Third Avenue, have been active in commemorating the Marylanders. A historical marker was placed on their facade in 1952, stating "Here Lie Buried 256 Maryland Soldiers." A second plaque was installed in 1988 on a flagpole in their backyard, "In Honored Memory of Maryland's 400, Forever Remembered." In 2005, a Heritage Trail sign was placed in front of the Post on Ninth Street marking the "Maryland Regiment Burial Site," although it admits (in smaller print) that "the exact location of the burial ground is unknown."

In the 1990s, a former garage / gas station / factory building was demolished, leaving a vacant lot next door to the Rawley Post. This lot, capped by a concrete slab, extends from 191-201 Ninth Street to 168-170 Eighth Street. The potential availability of this lot prompted some neighborhood enthusiasts, starting in 2012, to advocate the creation of a "Marylander Green" memorial park on this site. They proposed that either Maryland or New York should purchase this lot (for more than five million dollars). Their cause was not helped, unfortunately, by their exaggerated claims and misrepresentations that the Marylanders were buried within that specific lot, in a formal military cemetery.

Soon after, the City of New York considered the purchase of this lot as the site for a Pre-Kindergarten school. This led to five years of continued advocacy by the same neighborhood groups (and others), for the preservation of the alleged burial site, eventually receiving international attention [see Baltimore Sun, Aug. 27, 1996 and July 14, 2017; New York Times, May 25, 1998 and Aug. 25, 2012; New York Daily News, July 5, 1998; New York Post, Mar. 24, 2017; The Guardian (U.K.), July 16, 2017; Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Oct. 18, 2017].

To resolve this question, extensive archaeological excavations were undertaken in this lot in June 2017, and again in September 2017. The archaeologists reported that "No evidence of human remains or grave shafts was observed anywhere within the ... work area. Given the extent to which the site was disturbed and the large sample collected, it was determined that it would be exceedingly unlikely that intact 18th century archaeological sites or human remains are located in the untested portion of the project site..." [Elizabeth D. Meade, "Proposed Pre-Kindergarten Center, 168 8th Street ... Final Archaeological Technical Report," AKRF, Inc., March 2018, p. 2]. These excavations, together with those of 1957, conclusively show that there are no large burial trenches or mass graves within the two blocks between Seventh Street and Ninth Street, east of Third Avenue. Nor was any evidence found of any individual burials of soldiers, Van Brunt family members, or enslaved persons.

The first draft of my paper was written in 2012, in response to some of the claims made by the advocates for the proposed "Marylander Green" park. It is not my intention to discourage any effort to locate the burials, only to point out that we don't have enough evidence to focus on any single site, to the exclusion of all others. As it stands, the claimed "traditional" burial site is one of the least likely candidates to contain preserved burials. It would be desirable to educate local residents, and contractors, about the possibility of isolated military burials *anywhere* in the neighborhood – from Green-Wood Cemetery, to Tenth Street, to the Old Stone House, to Union Street, to Grand Army Plaza, to Prospect Park.

Regarding Prospect Park, the "Seventh Annual Report of the Commissioners of Prospect Park" by J.S.T. Stranahan [1867, p. 7; also Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Feb. 5, 1867, p. 2], has an anecdotal mention that "Mingled balls and bones are frequently turned up by the workmen" during construction of the park. An accompanying map shows that, at that date, construction had been limited to Grand Army Plaza and the area between East Drive and West Drive, from the Plaza to about the line of First Street. This seems a likely area for the burials of soldiers who were killed while retreating from Battle Pass (some of whom were reportedly bayoneted in the woods by the Hessians).

We need the cooperation of contractors, to monitor their sites during construction, to watch for any human remains that might be unexpectedly encountered, anywhere in the Park Slope and Gowanus neighborhoods. As far as we know, Stranahan's workmen casually discarded the remains that they unearthed in Prospect Park. We need to better inform modern workers, so that this is not repeated.

It is also not my intention to discourage the creation of more park space – green space is desperately needed in this neighborhood, for good, sound environmental and social reasons. But I don't think it is helpful for this cause to make unfounded and exaggerated historical claims, based on careless research and misrepresentation.

The facts are, that more than 800 Marylanders fought heroically in the battle – not just 400. There is no basis for singling out any group of 400 soldiers as "Immortals." While "Maryland 400" is a memorable label, it is not an accurate description. Further, 256 Marylanders were *not* killed on the battlefield – more likely only a tenth of that number. Those that were killed, were not all killed in one location, nor were they buried in mass graves (or trenches) at one spot. It is highly likely that those who were killed were interred in widely scattered shallow graves close to the spots where they fell (or left unburied), and not carried half a mile (or more) through a marsh. And even if a few were (although there is *no* valid evidence to support this), they certainly were not buried in anything like a formal military cemetery – but possibly they were added to a preexisting family burial ground. In that last case, most likely the bones were either moved to Green-Wood Cemetery in 1846, or destroyed by subsequent street grading and development.



Figure 1: Detail from the Ratzer map ("Plan of the City of New York," 1766), with annotations by Stiles (1867).

- 5 = Vechte-Cortelyou House [Old Stone House]
- 6 = Teunis Tiebout House
- 8 = Cowenhoven House
- 18 = Upper Mill (Freeke's)
- 19 = Lower Mill (Brower's, later Denton's)



Figure 2: Detail from the Faden map ("A Plan of New York Island, with part of Long Island...", 1776):

LL = "Lt. Gen. de Heister attacking the front of the Enemy" [at Battle Pass, Prospect Park]

MM = "Maj. Gen. Grant ... attacking a large corps on the Enemy's right" [Green-Wood Cemetery]

NN = "A party of the 2d. Grenadiers, supported by the 71st Regt." [near Fifth Avenue and First Street]



Figure 3: Detail from the Bew map ("Chart and Plan of the Harbour of New York...", Political Magazine, 1781), showing "three graves" of British officers across the road from "Thibaults" [Teunis Tiebout's] house.



Figure 4: Reconstructed view of the terrain around the Vechte-Cortelyou House (just right of center). The Teunis Tiebout House is at the left. (Plate 1 of Thomas W. Field, "The Battle of Long Island," 1869.)



Figure 5: Remembered (or imagined) view of the Van Brunt farm. The house was located near the modern intersection of Tenth Street and Fourth Avenue. The Vechte-Cortelyou House is visible in the distance (left of the central farm house). (Watercolor by James Ryder Van Brunt, about 1865. Brooklyn Museum: BM 1999-112.)

Burial Place of y^e 250
Maryland Soldiers who
fell in y^e Combat at y^e
Cortelyou House in y^e
Battle of Long Island on
y^e 28th day^e of Aug^{ust} 1776

SECOND CORTELYOU TABLET.

Figure 6: Plaque placed in the sidewalk at 431 Third Avenue in February 1897 (Brooklyn Daily Eagle, January 10, 1897). As was common at this time, the plaque nostalgically used artificially archaic spelling and typography, to give the impression of age. The plaque was funded by money left over from the construction of a Maryland Monument in Prospect Park in 1895; the site undoubtedly was selected based on information from Field's and Stiles's 1867-1869 publications. This plaque was seen (and believed) by Henry Wildhack in 1905, but was damaged by his coal wagons driving over it, and has been missing for at least sixty years.

DISGRACEFUL CONDITIONS OF PLOT WHERE SOLDIERS ARE BURIED



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Figure 7: Photo from the Brooklyn Daily Eagle (October 15, 1905), showing the claimed burial site (near 431 Third Avenue) about the time that Henry Wildhack purchased the property.

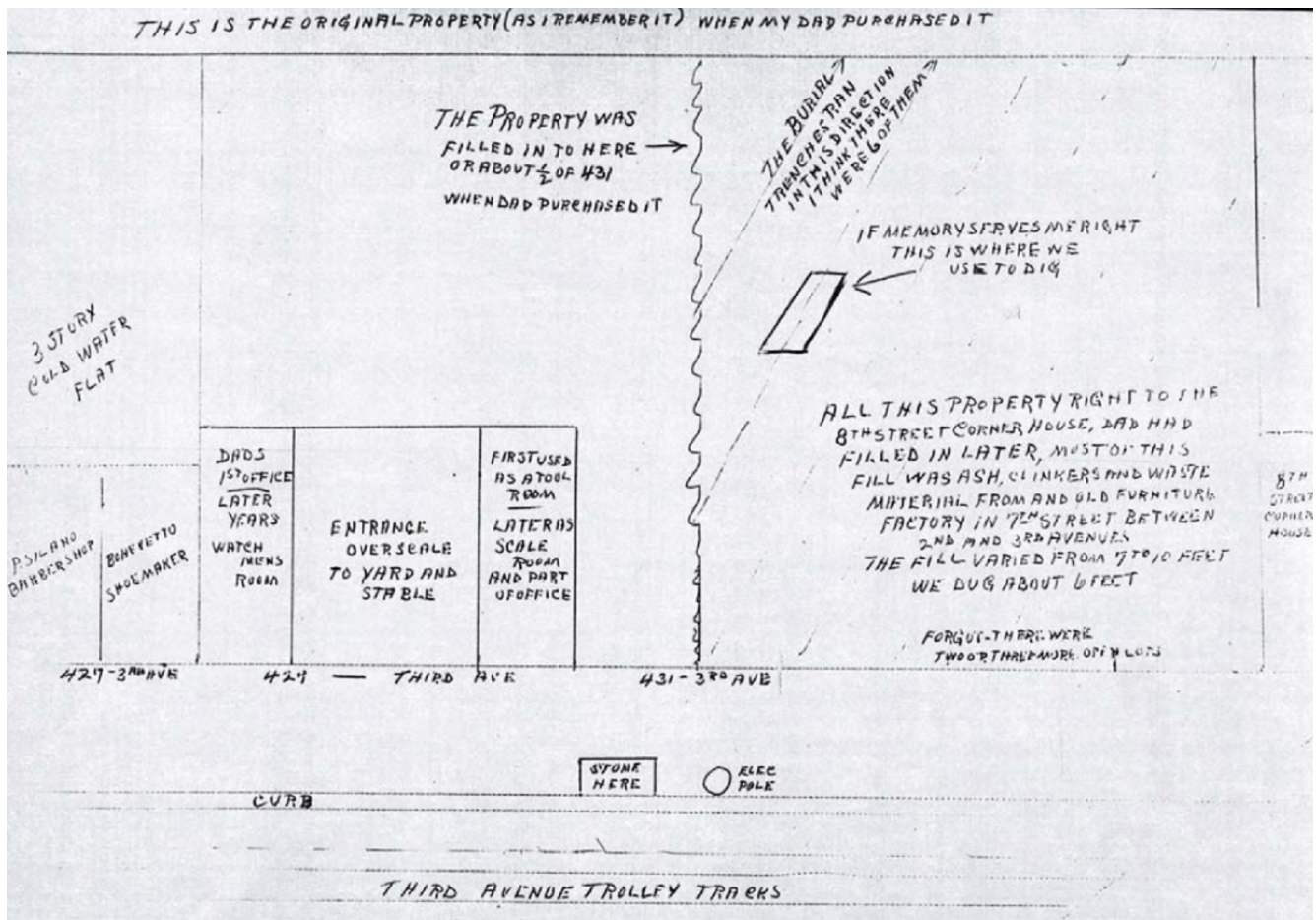


Figure 8: Sketch map by Henry Wildhack Jr., drawn in 1957, showing his father's property as he remembered it from 50 years earlier (James Kelly papers, Brooklyn College Special Collections, 89-003).

Name <i>Van Brunt - Albert C.</i>				
Late residence _____				
Age	Years	Months	Days	M S W
—	—	—	—	—
Date of Death	Date of interment		Birthplace	
—	<i>Apr. 16 "1846</i>		—	
Lot	Grave	Section		
<i>183 re</i>	—	—		
Cause of death	Undertaker			
<i>Removed from family B. G. of Cornelius</i>	<i>Van Brunt Sr.</i>			
Remarks				
Library Bureau Y79202 -A				

Figure 9: Index card recording the 1846 reburial of a member of the Van Brunt family, "removed from family B[urial] G[round] of Cornelius Van Brunt Sr." (Records of Green-Wood Cemetery, Brooklyn.)



Figure 10: Headstones of Cornelius Van Brunt Sr., his wife Jane, Jane's parents, and some of Cornelius's children and infant grandchildren, removed from their family burial ground in 1846, and placed flat in Adriance Van Brunt's family plot in Lot 183, Section 64, Green-Wood Cemetery (FindAGrave.com).



Figure 11: Map showing the progress of construction of Prospect Park, as of January 1867. It was reported that "mingled balls and bones ... [were] frequently turned up by the workmen," somewhere within the shaded areas. (From "Seventh Annual Report of the Commissioners of Prospect Park," by J.S.T. Stranahan, 1867.)