



## Chapter 2 'Statement of Significance' to the Battlefield

This chapter looks to National Park Service guidelines for historic American battlefields and 2013 Plan methodology to describe the particular significance (termed 'Statement of Significance') of eastern battlefield Landscapes to the overall battle and battlefield. Outlining significance provides a basis by which to examine and evaluate battle events and features (Chapters 4 & 5) for their role in the Landscapes and battlefield, and entails identifying specific importance, Landscapes' relation to the Battlefield National Historic Landmark, historic context and setting, existing conditions and integrity, and historic contextual themes.

Brandywine Battlefield, a National Historic Landmark (NHL) since 1961, is among the most precious and important treasures in our nation. As related to the eastern battlefield, the NHL nomination form states: "By September 10, [Washington] was in position on the eastern bank of the Brandywine, centered around Chadds Ford. He deployed his forces (11,000 men) in two portions; one under his personal command on either side of the Baltimore Pike, which crossed the creek at Chadds Ford (here, on the eastern heights, Proctor emplaced his artillery), and the other portion, under General Sullivan, upstream, to intercept any crossings made above Chadds Ford. Howe arrived in Kennett on the 10th, and on the morning of the 11th, he put his plan into action, sending a force under General Knyphausen down the Baltimore Pike towards Chadds Ford. The Hessian troops encountered sharp resistance, especially at the Kennett Meetinghouse, but pushed on until they gained the western bank of the Brandywine Creek. Here no effort was made to ford, but their heavy artillery and small arms fire kept the main body of the American army occupied in this diversionary feint. Meanwhile Howe directed Cornwallis to march twelve miles north with the rest of the army, (10 thousand) where he crossed at Jeffries Ford, well above Sullivan's position. Washington's intelligence reported this flanking movement early in the day, but this report was contradicted by a later one from Sullivan's scouts. When the attack was confirmed, Washington rushed Greene to the north to bolster Sullivan's hastily reformed line. Cornwallis, directing his troops from Osborne Hill, attacked Sullivan along Street Road, and here on the heights around the Birmingham Meetinghouse, the heaviest fighting raged. Just as Greene arrived Sullivan's line broke, and Greene put up a stiff delaying action to cover the retreat. Meanwhile, at Chadds Ford, Knyphausen, seeing the depletion of the American forces by troop movements to the north, and hearing the sound of the battle in the north, chose to attack across the ford. These troops under General Wayne were being slowly forced to retire, when they were attacked on their unprotected flank from the north and were put to rout. Nightfall ended the battle, with the Americans retreating to Chester, defeated, but still intact..."<sup>1</sup> This significance is withstanding and enhanced by the degree to which portions of the eastern battlefield have remained unchanged. Firsthand accounts and other primary documentation provide insights into the events of September 11th on the eastern battlefield.

## Specific Importance of Eastern Battlefield Landscapes to the Battle

Phase 3 focuses on the American encampment and two combat zones of the battle, Chadds Ford and Birmingham Road area. It ends with the retreat of America forces the evening of the 11th.

This section entails identifying specific importance of eastern battlefield landscapes to the battle and battlefield as a whole. To do so, it summarizes Phase 3 findings, with Chapters 3 and 4 going into details about findings in regard to geospatial military analysis and identifying features.

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<sup>1</sup> National Historic Landmark nomination, 1961

## Chadds Ford and The Fords Landscapes

Before dawn on September 11, 1777, Gen'l Knyphausen's Division (Eastern Column) led by Capt. Ferguson and his company of British riflemen began an advance east from today's Kennett and East Marlborough Townships along the 1743 Great Nottingham Road (today's Baltimore Pike). As they marched toward the Brandywine for engagement with American troops, Knyphausen's Rangers and Ferguson's Rifles engaged with Maxwell's Light Infantry most of the distance to Chadds Ford. The initial engagement with Crown Forces was with American artillery along Brandywine Creek at Chadds Ford. Full scale engagement begins around 10:00 am at both the upper and lower crossings of Chadds Ford.

These are all important landscapes in that they are at the heart of the combat areas of the Battlefield.

- Direct combat between forces at Chadds Ford. After two days of marching and positioning their troops, the initial engagement of forces took place at Chadds Ford, both the upper and the lower crossings. The American forces were able to maintain their positions along the east bank of the Creek.
- Brinton Ford Cannon Duel Combat Area. Throughout September 11th, Crown and America artillery engaged in combat. American artillery was in the hills on the east side of the Brandywine with Crown Forces in the hills on the west side of the creek.
- The Landscapes continue to display elements of 18th century Brandywine Valley landscape (including buildings and lands American and Crown Forces viewed) and retain cultural roots and identity (including local Quaker community and continuously used 18th century structures and properties).
- Approach and Combat landscapes of Knyphausen's troops from their Kennett encampment to, and engagement at, Chadds Ford. General Washington executed his defensive strategy against Gen'l Knyphausen's troops in this landscape. Chadds Ford was a natural feature in the landscape, used to the American's advantage to slow and/or prevent the capture of Philadelphia by Crown Forces. Although there were initial skirmishes at the two crossings of Chadds Ford, the heaviest fighting took place in the late afternoon as the American troops under Wayne, Stephens, and Greene retreat from the area. By evening, Crown Forces secured Chadds Ford and remained in the area overnight.
- The Landscapes continue to display elements of 18th C Brandywine Valley landscape (including buildings and lands American and Crown Forces viewed) and retain cultural roots and identity (including local Quaker community and continuously used 18th century structures and properties).

## Osborne Hill & Birmingham Road Landscapes

Engagement between forces continues till 2pm and Sullivan's and Stirling's troop begin moving north to engage Howe and Cornwallis at Osbourne Hill. Combat around the Birmingham Meetinghouse and Thornbury Farm commences around 4:15 pm with the height around 5:30 pm. By 6pm, Washington's forces are retreating from the area through Thornbury and Concord townships, heading south towards Chester. The final skirmishes take place around the William Brinton House, at the edge of Thornbury Township, before leaving the area.

- Pushing two divisions of American forces to engage with Sterling and Cornwallis to protect the northern flank. As Knyphausen deployed his divisions along the west bank of the Brandywine, Sterling and Cornwallis moved their troops north from their Kennet encampment. Traveling through East Marlborough and Pocopson, their plans were to engage American forces along their northern flank. Staging troops for engagement in the vicinity of Strode's Mill, Crown Forces headed south. They established themselves, in an east-west line, at the border of Birmingham and Thornbury townships, engaging American troops at the Birmingham Meetinghouse, then Sandy Hill area.
- Skirmishes in and around Dilworthtown, to protect the rear flank, and allow for retreat of the American forces to Chester. Following the engagement, American forces leave through Dilworthtown, pursued by Crown Forces, to retreat from the area of engagement for Chester.
- Landscapes continue to display elements of 18th century Brandywine Valley landscape (including buildings and lands American and Crown Forces viewed) and retain cultural roots and identity (including local Quaker community and continuously used 18th century structures and properties).

- Approach and combat landscapes to Sterling's and Cornwallis' troops from their Kennett encampment through Sconnetown/Strode's Mill to the area combat at Birmingham Road. The forces under the command of Howe and Cornwallis proceed in a large arc from their encampment the morning of September 11th to prepare for engagement in the late afternoon.
- Combat landscapes of the final combat area between Crown Forces and American troops and the subsequent retreat of the Americans from the area. Following the later afternoon combat around Birmingham Road area, American forces retreat south through Birmingham and Thornbury townships, engaging Crown Forces south of the William Brinton home along the township line. Following an engagement with Crown Forces at Chadds Ford, the remaining American troops retreat east along Nottingham Great Road. All American forces meet in Concord township as they retreat to Chester.
- Landscapes continue to display elements of 18th C Brandywine Valley landscape (including buildings and lands American and Crown Forces viewed) and retain cultural roots and identity (including local Quaker community and continuously used 18th century structures and properties).

## Associated Encampment & Approach Landscapes

Associated Encampment and Approach Landscapes are associated areas to combat related area. Early on the morning of September 11th, Crown Forces left their Kennett encampment. Knyphausen's troops marched eastward on Nottingham Great Road to engage with American forces at Chadds Ford. Sterling and Cornwallis' move troops moved north and east, crossing the West Branch of the Brandywine Creek at Trimble's Ford to engage the right flank of American forces. Following the two major engagements, American forces leave the area through Concord township for an encampment in Chester. Crown Forces remain in the area, with their encampment in and around Chadds Ford.

There are several landscapes that are critical to combat engagement and retreat. They are divided by the two areas of combat.

## Relationship to the NHL

The intent of the Brandywine Battlefield National Historic Landmark designation is to recognize the significance of the battle in the founding of the U.S. and in determining the course of American history. The 2013 Plan and 2010 Battle of Brandywine Historic Resources Survey and Animated Map Study (2010 Study) are the first planning documents that brought forth part of the eastern battlefield's importance for local planning. The eastern landscapes that comprise the majority of 'major battle combat areas,' the NHL generally captures in its bounds. (Map 1-1). The Landscapes contribute to the intent of the NHL for their 1) significant military and tactical roles in the battle, and 2) areas of 18th Century Brandywine Valley landscape that reflect the battle story (military events and local community impacts) and the battle's contribution to American independence.

## Historic Context & Setting

### Historic Overview: Chadds Ford and the Fords

The September 11th battle events and context of eastern battlefield landscapes, remain significant today. Chadds Ford, and the fords to the north and south, all saw combat and/or troop movement on the 11th at different times of the day. Chadds Ford was the center point for American troops at the start of the battle. Author Tom McGuire states: "Washington's force...was encamped behind the hills of Birmingham Township on the east side of Brandywine Creek. His center was at Chad[s] Ford on the Great Nottingham Road, where the creek could be crossed on foot, and at Chad[s] Ferry, a few hundred yards south of the ford, where the water was deeper and a ferryman on a flat boat would pull goods and passengers across the water."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> McGuire 2006: 169-170

As the battle begins, “Washington’s main force stretched along the left bank (east side) of the Brandywine for five miles, covering eight possible crossing places [fords]”<sup>3</sup>. The first skirmishes take place between Crown Troops, the Queen’s Rangers and Ferguson’s Rifles, and Washington’s advance forces, Maxwell’s corps of light infantry. According to McGuire, the opening shots of the battle were fired around 6:00 am. Maxwell engages Crown Forces from the Kennett Meetinghouse to Chadds Ford. Crossing the Brandywine at Chadds Ford, Maxwell joins the American troops.

Throughout the morning there is little engagement between forces. Around noon, Sullivan engaged Crown Forces at Brintton’s Ford. To the south, at Chadds Ford, Greene engaged with Crown Forces. In less than an hour, Sullivan broke off engagement and this phase of combat was over.

A second phase of combat took place at Chadds Ford in the late afternoon, around 5pm. While Howe and Cornwallis were engaged with Sterling and Sullivan to the north, Greene and Wayne remained on the east side of the Brandywine at Chadds Ford. There was heavy artillery fire on both sides of the creek. Crown Forces cross the Ford, engaging with Maxwell’s Brigade. During this time, under the cover of artillery, Greene, Wayne, and Stephens begin their retreat. Approximately an hour later, around 6pm, Maxwell’s Brigade retreats, while Crown Forces remain at Chadds Ford. By the evening, American troops are retreating to Chester.

## Historic Overview: Osborne Hill and Birmingham Road

General Howe divided Crown Forces into two columns. Knyphausen’s troops proceeded to Chadds Ford. Howe and Cornwallis headed north and east from their Kennett encampment. Around noon, they crossed the west branch of the Brandywine at Jefferis Ford and headed south, eventually settling on the high ground in the vicinity Osborne Hill. The goal of the Crown Forces was to attack and neutralize the American forces at their right flank.

Around noon, Gen. Washington received reports of troop movements of Howe and Cornwallis to their north. Orders were given to Sullivan and Sterling to head north to observe and engage the Crown Forces. Around 2:00, they left Chadds Ford. Sterling’s troops formed a line across the ridge and high ground of Sandy Hollow, awaiting the arrival of Crown Forces on the opposite side of the shallow valley.

Cornwallis convened his forces around Strode’s Mill. From there, they marched to the south fanned out in three fans to engage American forces. As American forces were using the Birmingham Meetinghouse as a hospital, the Society of Friends were holding their mid-week meeting at another location, a wheelwright’s shop in the hamlet of Sconnetown. A member of the meeting, Joseph Townsend, described the arrival of Cornwallis’ forces to the area. “In a few minutes,” writes Townsend, “the fields were literally covered with them, and they were hastening towards us. Their arms and bayonets being raised, shone as bright as silver, being a clear sky and the day exceeding warm”<sup>4</sup>. Once the Crown Forces were in place, “Cornwallis’s front was half a mile wide”<sup>5</sup>. Around 5pm, the Crown Forces advanced from their position, pushing American troops back to the main line. Sullivan’s divisions are reenforcing the left flank of the Americans but are attacked by the British Guards, pushing them south. American and Crown Forces exchange musket and artillery fire. By 6pm, American troops are retreating southeast. The final engagement takes place south of Dilworthtown when Greene’s forces engage with two of Cornwallis’s divisions. Heavy fire is exchanged and Crown Forces suffer heavy losses. By dusk, the American forces are retreating southeast, and the battle is over.

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<sup>3</sup> McGuire 2006, 171

<sup>4</sup> McGuire 2006: 194

<sup>5</sup> McGuire 2006: 206

## Landscapes Overall Historic & Context Setting

Phase 1 and 2 identified key features to understanding the battle on September 11th. In the military sciences they are known as ‘significant terrain features.’ Phase 1 indicates 10 fords along Brandywine Creek that are key features to understanding the battle. Of those fords, seven were guarded and monitored by American Forces as possible crossings by Crown Force troops, and three were unguarded. Phase 2 examines Kennett Square as ‘the heart of the southern battlefield’, the route there, formation/location of the two columns, areas of engagements, impacts on civilians and their properties, and overlapping southern battlefield landscapes bounds/histories. Phase 3, the final phase, examines the American encampment, two combat zones, and Americans retreat.

## Chadds Ford & the Fords Historic Context & Setting

### 2013 Plan description

The 2013 plan identified several strategic landscapes. They include areas and actions identified in the 2010 survey, that were key areas of combat. It describes “Knyphausen’s Assault in Chads’s Ford/Crossing of Brandywine Creek” as a core combat area where “Hessian troops seized control of the Chadds Ford area which the Americans used for their artillery post and encampment.”<sup>6</sup>

The strategic landscapes recommended in the 2013 plan include:

- ‘Chadds Ford Staging and Combat Area’ - This is described as the area of encampment for American troops, with relatively light engagement throughout the day with heavy engagement from approximately 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Ultimately, Crown Forces took the area and Americans retreated.
- ‘Brinton’s Ford Cannon Duel Area’ - Throughout the day, approximately 10:00 am to 7:00 pm, there was periodic cannon fire between forces from the hills east and west of the Brandywine.
- ‘Jones Ford Skirmish Area’ - American forces, under Sullivan, used this as a staging area mid-day as the battle shifted to Birmingham Hill. The 2013 plan describes the ford as strategically important even though there was no direct combat.

### Phase 1 Summary

The Phase 1 plan did not examine any of combat landscapes. The plan examined adjacent areas, describing the troop movements of Crown Forces and Americans to and from the Chadds Ford landscape.

### Phase 2 Summary

The Phase 2 plan examined landscapes adjacent to the Chadds Ford combat area. It identified the landscapes of the Crown Forces encampment from which Crown Forces started their pre-dawn march to Chadds Ford. Phase 2 analysis identifies troop movements and the first skirmishes with American troops.

## The Project’s Update of Previous Battle information

Phase 3 refines the various previously associated landscapes, creating a unified Chadds Ford and Fords Landscape. The exact location of Chadds Ford and Chadds Ferry are now definitively identified. Although the southern battlefield was covered in previous technical reports, the locations of the southern fords of the Brandywine, as well as the locations of the Americans as they entered Pennsylvania, are now identified.

Other locations identified connected to the combat at Chadds Ford includes the artillery positions of Crown Forces west of the Brandywine and the high ground that once contained Maxwell’s Redoubt.



Documentation was found that most of the troops from North Carolina were not engaged in the Battle of Brandywine. There was a small contingent that fought with Maxwell's Light Infantry Corps on the west side of the Brandywine in the morning and assisted in the defense of Chadds Ford in the afternoon.

## Osborne Hill & Birmingham Road Area Context & Setting

### 2013 Plan description

"Cornwallis' Assault on Birmingham Hill" is identified as another key area of combat and is "the heart of the Battlefield."<sup>7</sup> "Greene's Rearguard Defense near Dilworthtown" is identified as the final phase of the battle, where Major General Greene attempted to halt the advance of Crown Forces. The final setting is defined as "Continental Retreat to Chester," retreating through the village of Thornton as troops headed south.

- 'Birmingham Road area Combat' - This was a combat area in the late afternoon of 11 September, approximately 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm. There was heavy gun fire and heavy casualties on both sides.
- 'Dilworthtown/Rearguard Defense Combat Area' - This landscape is where American forces convened prior to the combat at Birmingham Hill. It was also a combat site at the end of the battle, approximately 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, where American forces stopped the advancement of Crown Forces and coordinated their retreat.

### Phase 1 Summary

Phase 1 did not examine any combat landscapes. The plan examined adjacent areas, describing the troop movements of Crown Forces toward the Osborne Hill Landscape as well as convening locations prior to combat. This phase also highlights the Rearguard and Retreat landscapes.

### Phase 2 Summary

Phase 2 identified the "Lower Flank Northern Column Landscape that encompasses the initial stage of the Crown Force northern flanking movement. It examines and defines northern eastern routes of march, and the occurrence and locations of skirmishes." [Page 2-5]. Additionally, "the resulting Eastern Column Advance Landscape includes both eastern march of Crown Force troops ('Eastern Column') and trailing 'column' of army supply provision wagons ('Baggage Supply Train'). Phase 2 defines the eastern routes of march, baggage supply caravan route, and the occurrence and locations of skirmishes"<sup>8</sup>

Phase 2 identifies troop and supply train movements but does not address areas of combat.

## The Project's Update of Previous Battle information

In the past, there have been various areas of terrain that were identified as Sandy Hollow, Sandy Hill, and Battle Hill. Documentation confirmed the proper locations of each geographic entity. Three potential locations for mass-burials were confirmed at Sandy Hollow (on the Spackman Farm), the Painter Craig Farm, and at Spering Run, west of the Brandywine. Although the route and placement of the Crown Forces Supply Train was largely covered in Phase 2, the general location of the Supply Train the evening of 11 September was identified.

## Associated Encampment & Approach Context & Setting

### 2013 Plan Description

The 2013 Plan identifies the American Forces encampment as follows.

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<sup>7</sup> Brandywine Battlefield Protection Plan 2013: 3-6

<sup>8</sup> 2020: 2-6

- ‘Chadds Ford Staging and Combat Area’ - This is described as the area of encampment for American troops, with relatively light engagement throughout the day with heavy engagement from approximately 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Ultimately, Crown Forces took the area and American forces retreated.

## Phase 1 Summary

The Phase 1 plan did not examine encampment or approach landscapes to Chadds Ford and the Fords. The plan examined adjacent areas, describing the troop movements of Crown Forces and Americans to the Osborne Hill & Birmingham Road area Landscapes.

## Phase 2 Summary

Crown Forces encampment in Kennett Square Borough and Kennett Township were identified in Phase 2. When Howe’s and Knyphausen’s brigades arrive in the area, they “camp[ed] in two defensive parallel north-south lines ready to stand into formation that early morning of battle”<sup>9</sup>. Phase 2 also identifies various Crown Force Approach Landscapes. They include:

- Lower Flank Northern Column Landscape - Embedded in this landscape the route Gen. Cornwallis used to move his troops to out flank American forces, a tactic that proved critical to the success of Crown Forces at the Battle of Brandywine.
- ‘Concord Meetinghouse Staging Area’ - Not an area of combat, the landscape is where American forces staged their retreat from the area. The meetinghouse was used as a field hospital.
- Eastern Column Advance Landscape - This landscape includes the location of the Crown Forces baggage supply train, first skirmishes between forces, and where Crown Forces used diversionary tactics “to spur Gen’l Washington to deploy his army in a matter of combat what he thought was the full Crown Force army”.

## The Project’s Update of Previous Battle information

North of Chadds Ford, Americans built a temporary bridge across the Brandywine to facilitate the movement of troops and equipment. Documentation identifying the potential location of the bridge was found.

Location of the abandoned trace of Brinton’s Ford Road was identified. Records indicate that Maxwell’s and Conway’s brigades used the ford to cross the Brandywine. This is an important distinction in that it means not all of Washington’s troops used the crossings at Chadds Ford with some using northerly crossings.

## Osborne Hill & Birmingham Road Historic Context & Setting 2013 Plan Description

The plan identified the landscapes associated with both staging and combat.

- ‘Osbourne Hill/Sconnetown/Strode’s Mill Staging Area’ - Crown Forces staged their troops in this area, approximately 3pm to 4pm, prior to their engagement with American forces at Birmingham Hill.
- ‘Birmingham Hill/Meetinghouse Road Combat Area’ - This was a combat area in the late afternoon of 11 September, approximately 4pm to 6pm. There was heavy gun fire and heavy casualties on both sides.
- ‘Dilworthtown/Rearguard Defense Combat Area’ - This landscape is where American forces convened prior to the combat at Birmingham Hill. It was also a combat site at the end of the battle, approximately 6pm to 8pm, where American forces stopped the advancement of Crown Forces and coordinated their retreat.

## Phase 1 Summary

Phase 1 identified landscapes that were utilized by Crown Forces for troop movement to what became the Birmingham Road area combat zone. Crossing Trimble’s Ford on the West Branch of the Brandywine and Jefferies Ford over the East Branch of the Brandywine, traveling south to Osborne Hill area.

## Phase 2 Summary

The landscapes that are the focus of Phase 2 are related to the Crown Force's march to flank Gen'l Washington's troops. The first leg of the approach is the focus in Phase 2. Specifically, the plan examines "the initial stage of the Crown Forces northern flanking movement. It examines and defines northern eastern routes of march, and the occurrence and locations of skirmishes"<sup>10</sup>.

## The Project's Update of Previous Battle information

Two discoveries were made regarding the movement of American troops on 11 September. The possible location of Seal's Road was found, used by portions of Sullivan's Division the afternoon of the battle. This was a portion of the route used to re-join other American troops. The routes used by Greene's brigades to join the rear guard of troops fighting were refined. Finally, using pension records, it was discovered that troops under the command of Woodford clearly indicated they were engaged in combat.

# Existing Conditions & Integrity

## Landscapes Overall Existing Conditions & Integrity

Chadds Ford and Birmingham Road areas were two regions of combat between Crown Forces and the Americans. These landscapes are the heart of the battlefield. The initial engagement of the two sides was at Chadds Ford the morning of the 11th, followed by a period of more intense combat at the end of the day. The heaviest combat, and greatest losses, took place at Birmingham Road areas.

The landscapes of the eastern battlefield are varied in their development with a mix of intense suburban development along the Route 202 corridor and parts of Chadds Ford Township versus the largely rural setting of Osborne Hill, Birmingham Road area, Chadds Ford crossing, and the other crossings of the Brandywine. Even with continual use through the 19th C and 20th C, significant historic buildings and landscapes connected to the combat areas of the battlefield remain.

Despite the changes and subsequent development, numerous roads retain their 18th century right of way. The direct route to Chadds Ford from the Crown Forces encampment in and around Kennett borough and township is US Route 1 or Baltimore Pike, formerly known as the Great Nottingham Road. The modern highway largely follows its 18th C trace. There are remnants, still in use, of the original Nottingham Road that parallel Baltimore Pike. With this, and other roads, still used for contemporary travel and circulation, they play an important part in maintaining the overall integrity of the battlefield. There were smaller scale farm roads that provided avenues of approach to the areas of combat that no longer exist, but their traces follow contemporary property lines. This is the case for various routes around the area.

As stated in Phase 2, "landscapes exhibit characteristics, such as areas of historic and current farmlands, which make them well-suited for targeted land conservation efforts through agricultural land and open space preservation. They also display characteristics that make them suitable for historic resource protection and for focused battle interpretive efforts"<sup>11</sup>.

## Chadds Ford & Fords Existing Conditions & Integrity

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<sup>10</sup> 2020: 2-5

<sup>11</sup> 2020: 2-8



## 2013 Plan Description

- ‘Chadds Ford Staging and Combat Area’ is described as an area having potential for historic resource preservation and interpretation, and medium potential for additional land conservation that adds to existing conserved properties. It also suggests future study of opportunities for protecting open space, establishing an interpretive center, investigating archaeological sites, and researching more information on known and suspected historic battlefield resources.
- ‘Brinton’s Ford Cannon Duel Area’ is described as an area having medium potential for historic resource preservation and interpretation, especially the undeveloped hillsides that frame the landscape. The flood plain of the creek is largely undeveloped, affording a medium potential for additional land conservation. As with Chadds Ford, it also suggests future study of opportunities for protecting open space and investigating archaeological sites. Because the landscape retained its original use, the area may be well suited for inclusion in a biking or driving tour.
- ‘Jones Ford Skirmish Area’ is described as an area having medium potential for historic resource preservation and interpretation and medium potential for additional land conservation that adds to existing conserved properties. It also suggests future study of opportunities for protecting the wetlands and agricultural lands that serve as open space.

## Phase 1 Summary

The focus of the various landscapes addressed in Phase 1 are not associated with or connected to Chadds Ford.

## Phase 2 Summary

The existing conditions of Chadds Ford and the Fords is not addressed in Phase 2. Rather, the focus is on the approach of Crown Forces to Chadds Ford, the Eastern Column under the command of Gen’l Knyphausen. In addition to examining the existing condition along the corridor to Chadds Ford, it also highlights the skirmishes with American troops, but not the area of combat. The current right of way of Baltimore Pike mostly follows the right of way used in 1777. The report states “while existing structures are dispersed along this busy corridor, they have strategic battle meaning and/or importance”<sup>12</sup>.

## The Project’s Update

There are landscapes and surviving crossings at fords that still convey battle-era setting and battle-related features important for interpretation, land conservation, and historic resource recommendations. The areas of combat on the east and west side of the Brandywine. Both the upper and lower ford remain evident and remarkably intact. Although there is some contemporary development, the banks of the Brandywine integrity of location and setting and are evocative of the historically rural character of the battlefield.

Highway 1 generally follows the 18th C route of the Great Nottingham Road, the route Crown Forces used from their encampment in Kennett Borough and Township, to the first engagement with Americans on the east side of the Brandywine. The modern bridge highway bridge crosses north of the 18th C ford.

The location of the abandoned trace of Brinton’s Ford Road, used by Maxwell’s and Conway’s Brigades, was identified. The modern road, now known as Brintons Bridge Road, continues across Route 202 and terminates at Creek Road. The portion of the road that continued to and across the Brandywine was abandoned sometime in the 20th C following the washout of Brintons Bridge during a flood. The trace used in the 18th C is now on private property. The landscape remains rural and retains much of the character from the time of the battle.

## Osborne Hill Existing Conditions & Integrity

### 2013 Plan Description

- ‘Osbourne Hill/Sconnetown/Strode’s Mill Staging Area’ - is described as an area having high potential for historic resource preservation and interpretation due to the number of historic structures in the area. There is limited open land in the area but some of the properties could provide open space, especially the undeveloped hillsides that frame the landscape. With much of the surrounding land developed, there are future opportunities to preserve what’s available and establishing an interpretive site.
- ‘Birmingham Hill/Meetinghouse Road Combat Area’ - As a major combat zone, there are numerous landscapes and structures that have a high potential for preservation and interpretation. Although there is much protected, there are opportunities for additional protection of open space. There is the potential of future study of opportunities for protecting open space, establishing an interpretive center, investigating archaeological sites, and researching more information on known and suspected historic battlefield resources.
- ‘Dilworthtown/Rearguard Defense Combat Area’ - Although there are a limited number of historic structures and landscapes, this area was of strategic importance to the final phases of combat. Although there is not much open space, there are large plots suitable for open space. Future study of opportunities for protecting open space and investigating archaeological sites. Additionally, the area may be well suited for inclusion in a biking or driving tour.

### Phase 1 Summary

The entirety of the landscape of the northern column’s march is covered in both Phase 1 and Phase 2. Phase 1 covers the latter half of Howe’s and Cornwallis’ march to the Osborne Hill area. The conditions of the crossings at Trimble and Jefferis Fords are explored as is the convening area of Crown Forces around Strode’s Mill. The landscape covered ends with the final march to Osborne Hill.

The landscapes examined in this Phase were recognized, despite their proximity to urban and suburban development, to “have retained a colonial-era character due to intact rural and farmland surroundings...[making these landscapes] especially well-suited for land conservation, agricultural preservation, and open space protection”<sup>13</sup>.

### Phase 2 Summary

There was an in-depth description of the eastern column landscape and resources used by the Crown Forces under the command of Gen’l Howe and Cornwallis. The conditions described focus on their encampment in Kennett Square and Kennett Township landscape through East Marlborough Township. The remainder of the march is covered in Phase 1.

The existing landscape examined in Phase 2 “still convey battle-era setting and battle-related features important for interpretation, land conservation, and historic resource recommendations” [2020: 2-9]. The route is relatively intact and contains a high level of integrity, especially on the segment from East Doe Run Road to Northbrook/Red Lion Roads.

## The Project’s Update

Much of the area at the heart of the Osborne Hill and Birmingham Road areas has a high degree of integrity and preservation. It remains rural in character and continues to be used to support agriculture, as it did in the 18th C.

Previous research suggested that, due to the heavy combat in the Birmingham Road area, that there was likely to be mass burials of casualties in the area. Further research identified three areas where the burials likely exist.

Areas of intensive combat are preserved. The Brandywine Conservancy maintains the 113 acres of the Birmingham Hill Preserve in Birmingham Township. According to the Conservancy's website, the landscape was the location of the "first and second defensive line of the Continental [American] Army."<sup>i</sup> Also in Birmingham Township, the Sandy Hollow Heritage Park preserves 42 acres of the battle. Maintained by the township, the park was designed for passive recreation and retains rural character of the surrounding landscape. The township's website states "the park has a 1.1 mile asphalt path for pedestrians. An interpretive sign acknowledging the historic event is located along the path."<sup>ii</sup>

## Historic Context Themes

### Battle of Brandywine

The analysis and significance of the Landscapes to the battle speaks to several overarching battlefield themes that are broadly categorized as 'military events,' '18th century landscape,' and 'local community.' Themes are vetted in Chapter 6, and a summary is included here for statement of battlefield significance purposes. Under (one or more) of those broad thematic categories fall specific themes for this plan:

- Crown Force army logistics
- Gen'l Howe's two columns military tactic
- American military activity and reconnaissance
- Battle skirmishes
- Brandywine Valley settlement patterns
- Civilians/local community and battle impacts
- Quaker roots and Peace Testimony
- Still readable battlefield landscape areas

### Chester County

Landscapes' history also mirrors major themes in Chester County's overall history including multi-generational rural agricultural tradition, Brandywine Valley Quaker settlement, enduring historic landscapes, prosperous commerce/industry foundations, and the American Revolution. Such themes are imbedded in throughout this plan and serve as a broad basis for heritage interpretation.

### American Revolution

Themes for the battle, and this plan as applicable, relate to and through phased strategic landscapes planning are being coordinated in broad terms with Museum of the American Revolution's (MAR)<sup>iii</sup> Revolutionary War interpretative themes. For this plan, MAR's major themes can be summarized as: 'Citizens turned Revolutionaries', 'Surviving the Darkest Hours', 'Radical Nature of Revolution', and 'Lasting Meanings'.

As eastern battlefield landscapes are just one part of the larger Philadelphia Campaign and much larger Revolutionary War and embody a unique cultural background as part of the Brandywine Valley's largely rural agrarian Quaker roots, not all MAR themes speak directly to the Landscapes. In general terms for these Landscapes, this plan's themes of American military activity and citizen involvement could fall under the MAR theme of 'Citizens turned Revolutionaries'; Battle impacts on civilians/the community could fall under 'Radical Nature of the Revolution'; Battle skirmishes and Crown Force military logistics and tactics under 'Surviving the Darkest Hours'; and still readable battlefield landscape areas, Brandywine Valley settlement patterns and Quaker roots/Peace Testimony could fall under 'Lasting Meanings'. The overarching theme for the Brandywine Battlefield as a pivotal moment in the American Revolution, discussed in the 2013 Plan speaks to all MAR's themes.

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<sup>i</sup> From the Brandywine Conservancy website [<https://www.brandywine.org/conservancy/preserves/birmingham-hill-preserve>] accessed 22 July 2024

<sup>ii</sup> From the Birmingham Township website { <https://www.birminghamtownship.org/history/pages/sandy-hollow-heritage-park>] accessed 22 July 2024

<sup>iii</sup> MAR is the National Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia, which is coordinating their efforts to interpret the battle with Brandywine Battlefield Task Force.