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### ***Barber's Light Battalion, 1781 (New Jersey Light Company Personnel)***

(John U. Rees, transcription and commentary)

The battalion consisted of:

5 New Jersey companies, 2 New Hampshire companies, and  
1 company from Hazen's Canadian Regiment

#### **Officers listed in Stryker, but not on New Jersey State Archive returns:**

Francis Barber, lieutenant colonel  
Ephraim Whitlock, lieutenant and adjutant  
Jacob Harris, surgeon's mate

#### **Company Officers (not known to which light company assigned)**

Lieutenant John Reed  
Lieutenant Eden Burrows

The New Jersey light troops comprised five companies. Total strength: 4 captains, 5 lieutenants, 1 ensign, 273 non-commissioned officers, and rank and file (148 from the 1<sup>st</sup> New Jersey Regiment; 125 from the 2<sup>nd</sup> New Jersey).

In January 1781 the New Jersey line had been reduced from three regiments (four if you include Spencer's Additional Regiment, a unit not officially part of the New Jersey Continental line) to two. Numbers of officers retired, and the enlisted men were dispersed to the reorganized 1st and 2nd Jersey Regiments.

**William S. Stryker, *The New Jersey Continental Line in the Virginia Campaign of 1781* (Saddle River, N.J.: K/S Historical Publications, 1970; originally published Trenton, N.J., 1882), 29–32 (men detached from the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment). This work does not list the men from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Jersey Regiment sent south with Lafayette, and contains other inaccuracies. The five New Jersey companies under Lt. Col. Barber contained 4 captains, 5 lieutenants, 1 ensign, and 273 non-commissioned officers, and rank and file. Of that total 148 were from the 1<sup>st</sup> New Jersey Regiment, and 125 from the 2<sup>nd</sup> New Jersey.<sup>87</sup>**

#### **For an overview of the New Jersey Brigade, 1775-1783, see:**

John U. Rees, "'One of the best in the army.': An Overview of Brigadier General William Maxwell's Jersey Brigade," *The Continental Soldier*, vol. XI, no. 2 (Spring 1998), 45-53 (World Wide Web, <http://revwar75.com/library/rees/njbrigade.htm>)

**If you wish to learn the story of Lafayette’s light battalions in the 1781 Virginia Campaign, see:**

John U. Rees, “‘Their presence Here ... Has Saved this State ...’: Continental Provisional Battalions with Lafayette in Virginia, 1781”

Part 1. “‘This Detachment is Extremely Good ...’: The Light Battalions Move South”

Subheadings:

“‘The Fire of the Light Infantry ... checked the Enemys Progress ...’:

Light Battalion Composition and Service”

“‘Ill founded jealousies, and groundless suspicions.’ ‘: Unrest in the Light Battalions”

“‘The Cloathing you ... long ago Sent to the light infantry is not Yet Arrived.’ ‘: Apparel and Equipment”

*The Brigade Dispatch*, vol. XXXVI, no. 2 (Autumn 2006), 2-23.

(Revised and updated, 2009) <http://revwar75.com/library/rees/pdfs/light.pdf>

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**Prior to the 1778-79 Continental Army reorganization most Continental foot regiments had standing light infantry companies, while some even had grenadier companies. Following the reorganization begun at Valley Forge in spring 1778 each foot regiment comprised eight line companies and one light company. Whenever the regimental light company was called out for special service, either on its own or as part of an embodied Light Division or Corps, men were taken from the regiment’s line companies to bring the light company to full strength.**

**The five New Jersey companies that served under Lt. Col. Francis Barber and accompanied Lafayette south in 1781 consisted of two standing light infantry companies brought up to strength with men drafted from the battalion companies, and three newly formed ad hoc light companies comprising men picked from the battalion companies of the New Jersey line.**

**To my knowledge the 1781 New Jersey provisional light company returns are the only such documents recording the makeup of companies serving in the field with a provisional Continental Army light corps. As such they are singular manuscripts and a real rarity.**

**A comparison of the appended returns with Stryker’s lists show the inaccuracies often found in secondary historical sources.**

**Note: In the appended transcribed muster rolls a dash ( - ) denotes an illegible name.**

**(No. 3671), “Return of Capt. Aron Ogdens compy of light Infantry being a detachment from the first New Jersey regiment commanded by Lieut Col Barber ... Camp Hed of Elk April 11<sup>th</sup> 1781,”** Capt. Aaron Ogden, Lieut. John Blair, Lieut. Wessel Stout, 57 non-commissioned officers, and rank and file.  
(Taken from all eight companies of the 1<sup>st</sup> New Jersey Regiment.);

Company Officers

Capt. Aaron Ogden  
Lieut. John Blair  
Lieut. Wessel Stout

From Capt. Ogden’s Company:

John Hubbell, sergeant  
Benjamin Beagle, sergeant  
John George, sergeant  
Benjamin Osman, corporal  
Abijah Scudder, corporal  
Jonas Kent  
William Westin  
Daniel Boose [Buzzy]  
Abram Emins [Abraham Emmons]  
George Reed  
Jacob Beagle  
Robert Wherry  
Edward Guage [Gage]  
Levi Ross  
Samuel Sears  
Benjamin Bryant  
Joseph Wright

From Capt. Coxe’s Company:

Thomas Cobbs, sergeant  
William Broderick, corporal  
Benjamin Norcross  
Paul Brewer  
James Morris  
Peter Smith  
-  
-  
-  
John McCulley  
Barney Banghart  
William Lyons  
Henry Flaner [Flinner]  
Luke Courtney  
George Smith

William Mayes  
Timothy Brown  
William Steven

From Capt. Mitchel's Company:

John Miller, sergeant  
James Burrowes, fifer  
Timothy Sullivan  
David Welch  
David Beal  
David Gordon  
Levi Peters  
Josiah Halsey  
John Ruker  
Martin Chandler

From Capt. Dayton's Company:

Francis Carbury, sergeant  
Richard Sweeten

From Capt. Mead's Company:

Nathaniel Osborne, corporal  
Searing [Serring] Lyons  
David Fowler  
Moses Hedley  
David Whiting

From Capt. Anderson's Company:

James Bowers, drummer

From Capt. Anderson's Company:

Nathan Hall  
Amos Whitemore  
Henry Dunfield  
John Johnson

**(No. 3672), “Return of Capt. Jonathan Forman’s Company of light Infantry being a Detachment from the first New Jersey Regiment ... Head of Elk April ye 11<sup>th</sup> 1781.”**

Capt. Jonathan Forman, Lieut. John Howell, Lieut. John Reucastle

57 non-commissioned officers, and rank and file.

(Taken from all eight companies of the 1<sup>st</sup> New Jersey Regiment.);

Company Officers

Capt. Jonathan Forman

Lieut. John Howell

Lieut. John Reucastle

From Capt. Anderson’s Company

James Birch, sergeant

John Whitaker (noted by Stryker to have been killed during the assault on Redoubt No. 10, 14 October 1781. Barber’s Battalion played a support role, so Whitaker did not take a direct part in the assault.)

Charles Morgan

John Rose (noted by Stryker to have been discharged in September 1781, due to disability.)

James Horn

From Capt. Forman’s Company

David Amy, sergeant

Henry Gray, sergeant

William Walker, fifer

John Roberts, drummer

Thomas Williams

Joseph Killsey

Moses Biddle

William Woods

James Compton

Jacob White

Francis Walker

Ebenezer Jones

George Compton

-

Isaac Wooley

Moses Quick

William More

William Robertson

Solomon Tharp

Jacob Adams

John Davis

Jacob Lacey

From Capt. Mitchell’s Company

John VanMarter, sergeant

Joseph Dean, corporal

Jacob Valentine, corporal  
[David Royall?]  
Daniel Donnelly  
Swain Parsells  
Eliakim Ogden  
William Van [Vaughan]  
Samuel Toomey  
Jonathan Howell  
John Williams

From Capt. Mead's Company

David Lee, sergeant  
Robert Hampstead, corporal  
Henry Wade, corporal  
John Burnett  
Benjamin Lewis (noted by Stryker to have been killed during the assault on Redoubt No. 10, 14 October 1781. Barber's Battalion played a support role, so Lewis did not take a direct part in the assault.)  
Benjamin Bonnell

From Capt. Piatt's Company

Samuel Hill  
John Willson  
-  
Jacob Wooly  
-  
-

From Capt. Dayton's Company

John McMillen  
John Smith  
George Powers  
Thomas Loper

From Capt. Cox's Company

Thomas Keeler  
-  
-

**(No. 3673), “Return of the men[s] names in Cap. Dharts Compy of light Infantry ... April 11<sup>th</sup>. 81,”** Capt. Cyrus D’Hart, Lieut. James Paul, Ensign Peter Faulkner  
56 non-commissioned officers, and rank and file.  
(Taken from seven companies of the 2<sup>nd</sup> New Jersey Regiment.);

Company Officers

Capt. Cyrus D’Hart  
Lieut. James Paul  
Ensign Peter Faulkner

Company of origin uncertain

Joseph Fox

From Capt. Hendry’s Company

David Fisher, sergeant  
William Turner, sergeant  
William Blair, drummer  
Phillip Peters  
John Clark  
Jeremiah Foster

From Capt. Helms’ Company

John Polan, sergeant  
Abraham [Rosier?, Rogers?]

From Capt. Phillips’ Company

James Gibson, sergeant  
Henry Cunningham  
John Coalman  
George Long  
Nathan Thomas  
Samuel [Jobes or Jones]

From Capt. Holmes’ Company

Josiah Hunt, sergeant  
John Lane, corporal  
Samuel Morgan  
Samuel [Muir?, Noe?]  
[Abram or Andrew] Cole  
George Mount  
Anthony Parcell [Purcell?]

From Capt. Bowman’s Company

Joseph Bennett, corporal  
James Hall, corporal  
Ashbrook Dixon (Dickinson)

Josias Bell  
Richard Palmer  
Richard Mills  
Walker Lounsberry  
Thomas White  
William Wright  
Zebulon Brown  
Nathaniel Sheppard  
Enos Cambell  
William Ervin [Evans?]  
Jacob Little  
Joseph Merriam  
John Blackstone  
Isaac Doty  
Neal Nemnough  
Thomas Young  
George Lemman  
Thomas Finn  
John Flake  
George [Smallicker?]  
James Mc[Quay?]  
Henry Grimes [Graham?]  
Samuel Sickells

From Capt. D'Hart's Company

John Sithin, fifer  
David James  
Samuel Lumley  
Jacob Grey  
John [Insell?]

From Capt. Lloyd's Company

Patrick Kelly  
William Gaskill  
James Christie



**(No. 3674), “Return of the Men[s] Names of Capt Holmes Compy of Light Infantry from the second Jersey Regimt taking the Different Companies they belong to,”** 11 or 12 April 1781, Capt. Jonathan Holmes, 50 non-commissioned officers, and rank and file.

(One man from the 1<sup>st</sup> New Jersey Regiment, the balance taken from five companies of the 2<sup>nd</sup> New Jersey.)

Company Officers

Capt. Jonathan Holmes

From Capt. Lloyd’s Company:

John Johnson, sergeant

William Griffey

John Osman

Neale O’Neale

Thomas Hamilton

From Capt. Holmes’ Company:

Barrett Mooney, sergeant

Elisha Stout

John Johnson, corporal

Joseph McHerson

Zachary Thomas

David Youngs

John Quick

Thomas Price

Dennis Lynch

James Holliday

McConnell

-

Daniel Lewis

John Weatherhawk

Matthew [Mathias?] Pierson

David Scudder

George Davis

Amos Day

Andrew Patterson

From Capt. Helms’ Company

Andrew Mason, sergeant

John Shelock

Philip Nult[y?]

Henry O’Neal

Patrick Sullivan

Harman Pierson

John Patterson

John Patterson, corporal

From Capt. Phillips' Company

David Fancy  
John O'Flaherty  
Lott Loveless [Lovelace]  
Nathaniel Turner  
Joshua Giffens  
John Say  
John Thomas

Capt. DeHart's Company

Henry Wolf  
-  
Andrew Cramer  
John Williams  
James Clark  
Ebenezer Woodruff  
Cornelius Clark  
John Taylor  
Abel Buntin [Bunting]

From Capt. Reading's Company

John Curney [Curley?]

From Capt. Piatt's Company

William Darby, drummer

**(No. 3675), “A Return of the light Infantry company commanded by Captn. Piatt ... April 12<sup>th</sup> 1781,”** at “Camp Head of Elk,” Capt. William Piatt, 53 non-commissioned officers, and rank and file.

(33 men from the 1<sup>st</sup> New Jersey Regiment, and 20 men from the 2<sup>nd</sup> New Jersey.)  
Revolutionary War Manuscripts (Numbered), Nos. 1–10811, microfilm edition, reel 159  
(Box No. 5807861909), items 3671–3675, New Jersey Bureau of Archives and History.

Company Officers

Capt. William Piatt

From Capt. Anderson’s Company

James Riley, sergeant

William Tuttle, sergeant

William Ross, sergeant

Thomas Aumock

John Harding

John Grace

Bennett Garrison

-

Nathan Tarbell

James Coalston

Joseph Fowler

Thomas Blackman

George Hautman [Hottman]

Lawrence Carney

John Lipes

Valentine Thomas

Daniel Mahone

-

-

Garret Voorhees

James VanVark [Van Varrick]

William Radley

From Capt. Helms’ Company

Frederick Mapps, sergeant

John Smith

John Space

Joseph Shaver

Thomas Davis

Jesse Saxon

Cornelius Stevenson

From Capt. Hendry’s Company

Obadiah Clutch

James B. Strong

From Capt. Mead's Company

Richard Shires, drummer

From Capt. Dayton's Company

John Smith, corporal

Matthias Shirts, corporal

Robert Sillimore

Ambrose Jones

Hugh Hailey

Joseph Smith

Jacob Likens

From Capt. Piatt's Company

Richard Jackson, corporal

William Dunneen, fifer

From Capt. Lloyd's Company

James Kinsey

James Emmerton

William Hitcher

From Capt. Reading's Company

John Huntly

William Dal[ton?]

James McBurney

From Capt. D'Hart's Company

Daniel Cartey

John Carty

Richard [Chin?]

Leamon Durkey

Reuben Mickle

From Capt. Holmes' Company

John Brian