Mobs, but a plot artfully contrived to decoy my Brother into the hands of assassins. At Midnight when the Family was asleep, had not a beneficent Providence prevented their designs, we had been a dispersed Family indeed.

Between 12 and 1 O’Clock he was wakened by a knocking at the Door. He got up, enquired the person’s name and business, who said he had a letter to deliver to him, which came from New York. My Brother puts on his Cloaths, takes his drawn Sword to one hand, and opened the Parlor window with the other. The Man asked for a Lodging—said he, I’ll not open my door, but give me the letter. The Man then put his hand, attempting to push up the window, upon which my Brother hastily clapped it down. Instantly with a bludgeon several violent blows were struck which broke the Sash, Glass and frame to pieces. The first blow aimed at my Brother’s Head, he Providentially escaped, by its resting on the middle frame, being double, at some time (though before then, no noise or appearance of more Persons than one) the lower windows, all round the House (excepting two) were broke in like manner. My Brother stood in amazement for a Minute or 2, and having no doubt that a number of Men had broke in on several sides of the House, he retired upstairs.

You will believe the whole Family was soon alarmed, but the horrors of Noise from without, and the terrible shrieks within the House from Mrs. H. and Servants, which struck my Ears on awaking, I can’t describe, and shall never forget.

I could imagine nothing less than that the House was being burnt down, after many violent blows on the Walls and windows, most hideous Shouting, dreadful imprecations, and threats cried. Struck with terror and astonishment, what to do I knew not, but got on some Cloaths, and went to Mrs. H.’s room, where I found the Family collected, a Stone thrown in at her window narrowly missed her head. When the Ruffians were retreating with loud haunts and one cryd he will fire—no asks another, he don’t fire, we will come again says a third—Mr. and Mrs. H. left their House immediately and have not lodged a night since in it.

But there is no security from the violence of Lying Tongues. Can you believe that a person shall suffer abuse, an attack upon his House, and attempt on his Life, and afterwards the reproach of having done it himself. This is really the case, the persons who are so vile as to be at the bottom of the Maelch, have in order to remove the odium from themselves, and the Town, industriously spread this report, that Mr. H. hired people to break his own Windows, for an excuse of his removal to the Castle, and to ruin this Country.

However ridiculous this Aquisition, yet it is believed or seemingly believed by one half of the people, as we are told. But the more sensible and moderate are ashamed of the absurdity, and freely say, that this outrage against Mr. H. will hurt their Country more than anything which has been done yet. And for the honour of the Township we lived in, I must say, the principal People, have of their own accord taken up the affair very warmly, exerting their endeavors to find out the Authors, or perpetrators of the Villainy. They have produced above twenty witnesses, Men in the Neighborhood who were out a Fishing that night, that prove they met upon the Road from Boston towards my Brother’s House, Parties of Men that appeared disguised, their faces blacked, with white Night caps and white Stockings on, one of them with Pufffs on and all, with great clubs in their hands. They did not know any of ‘em, but one Fisherman spoke to ‘em, to be satisfied whether they were Negroes or no, and found by their Speech they were not, and they answered him very insolently. Another person who met them declours, that one of ‘em asked him the way to Mr. H.’s house, and another of ‘em said he knew the way very well. After all, you may judge how much any further discovery is likely to be made, or justice to be obtained in this Country, when I tell you that the persons who were thus active to bring the dark deed to light, were immediately stop’d and silenced, being given to understand (as I’m well informed) that if they made any further stir about the matter, they might expect to be treated in the same manner as Mr. H. was. However, so much is proved as to clear Mr. H. from the charge of doing himself the mischief, one would think.

. . . What Government intends doing to remedy these, We are yet strangers, or whether anything effectual will be done . . . If Great Britain leaves Boston to itself, though its own honour will not be maintained thereby, it will certainly be the greatest punishment that can be inflicted on the place and people, but a cruelty to some individuals, who have shown themselves friends to Government. The Town is now in the greatest confusion, the People quarrelling violently about Imprisonment, and Expatriation . . .

Living with the British (1777)

Introduction

Born into a prestigious Philadelphia family, Elizabeth Drinker married a partner of a prominent shipping and importing firm, Henry Drinker. Both she and her husband were members of the Society of Friends. She lived in Philadelphia when the British governed the city between September 1777 and June 1778. Her two journal excerpts provide a glimpse of the relations between elite wives and British officers during the occupation, and also the rebel vengeance against two of the king’s friends after the British army evacuated Philadelphia.

Oct. 11 . . . S. Emlyn sent us word that he and ye other Friends, vis: Nicholas Wells, James Thornton, Win Brown, Joshua Morris, and Warner Mufflin were removed from a visit to G. Washington. I apprehend they have no good news, or I think I should have heard it.
I have been more distressed in mind this day than for some time past—not from anything that I have heard, but my spirits seem much affected.

Oct. 12. Sitter and ye children went to seeing this morning. Sam Emlen and Sam Smith called after dinner. S. E. related some particulars of their reception at Washington's Camp; as I had little expectations from their application, I am not much disappointed that little has come of it. Enoch Story and wife called; ye latter went to evening meeting with me, where Nichah Waln appeared in Testimony and prayer. When I came home I found Hannah Sansom and her son William at our house.

H. D. Jr. called to let us know that he was to be on guard to night—I went down for Chalfley, who is to be engaged on ye same business, so that Abel J. Just lodged with us to night.

S. Smith's wife's brother was taken by ye Americans bringing provisions to Town at the time of our Yeasty meeting, and was carried to Washington's Camp, where, 'tis said, he is to be tried for his life...

Oct. 16. I stepped over to Neighbors Waln's this afternoon and drank Tea with them.

Last night one ye Hessians Guards, who stood on Race street who's was fired at from, or nearly from A. James' back store. The inhabitants have met today, and yesterday, to regulate a nightly watch, which has been dropped for some time, but which is thought to be again necessary...

Oct. 18. Ye Troops at Germantown are coming within 2 or 3 miles of this city to encamp. Provisions are now scarce with us now, that Jenny gave 2/6 qr. for oatmeal this morning. Ye people round ye country dare not come near us with anything what little butter is brought is 7/6 qr. Ye fleet is yet up, not likely to be soon, I fear. Jenny and Billy went this afternoon with coffee and whey for ye soldiers.

Oct. 19. Post day. Ye troops have come this afternoon within a mile of us. J. Hunt's family, I hear, have moved to town, and many from Germantown. Ye Americans have stopped several who were out, and were returning home, and have sent them back again. M. Hains is one, we hear. A. James and wife, whom went to Franks town to bring away their clothes 60c., were told while there that some of ye Provincial were at J. Dickinson's place, which intelligence occasioned them to get into ye waggon and come home by the Point road as fast as they could. A great firing below to day.

Oct. 20. Dr. Parke called to tell us of a letter he had received from his Father-in-law, James Pemberton, dated ye 10th last four days since ye last—no fresh intelligence that concerns ye friends. Stepped into S. Pleasants, Polly has lost their waggon, 2 Horses, and negro boy; also a negro man who was forred to go with them to Germantown to bring some things away from Israel's place; they were all taken up by ye Provincial. A waggon was stopped that was loaded at J. Hunt's door with his goods, and obliged to unload. A. Morris and son

Billy, who went to wait on R. Hunt were stopped, and their horses taken from them—they escaped themselves with some difficulty.

There has been a skirmish this morning between Germantown and Philadelphia, the particulars of which I have not learnt, and there was very heavy firing below a great part of ye afternoon, I know not yet upon what occasion. Last night, 16 or 18 flat bottom boats came up, and got safely by the Grondellow and Battery, but were fired upon by some of ye English who did not know them, and one man was killed.

If things don't change ere long, we shall be in poor plight; everything scarce and dear, and nothing suffered to be bought in to us. Tom Prior is taken up to day, on suspicion, as 'tis said, of sending intelligence to Washington's army.

Oct. 21. John Cunsey who has been threatened has left his home on that account. 2000 of ye Hessians were landed in ye Jerseys this day. 'Tis supposed their intentions are against ye Mud Island Battery. We saw a number of them crossing in ye flat bottomed boats from our garden window. There has been application made by ye English for Blankets, as ye fleet is at a distance, and they lost a number in ye Battle near Germantown. As I was not in ye way, sister came off well with that escape.

Oct. 22. Amos Taylor, (who was here trying on ye children's clothes), informs us that Richard Wals is taken up, and sent to New York. He had his choice of 3 things, either to go to Jail, take ye Test, or go within ye English lines. Ye latter was chosen.

Oct. 23. This day will be remembered by many. Ye 2500 Hessians, who crossed ye River, the day before yesterday, were last night driven back 2 or 3 times, in endeavoring to storm ye fort on Red head; 200 were slain and great numbers wounded. Firing this morning seemed to be incessant from ye Battery, the Grondellow, and ye Augustus man-of-war, of 64 Cans. She took fire, and after burning near 2 hours, blew up. Ye loss of this fine vessel is accounted for in different ways. Some say she took fire by accident; others that it was occasioned by red hot bullets from Mud Island Battery. Another English vessel, somewhat smaller, it is said is also burnt. Many of ye inhabitants of this city are very much affected by ye present situation and appearance of things while those on ye other side of ye question, are flushed, and in spirits. Count Dook is said to be among ye slain. It was between 11 and 12, near noon, when ye Augustus blew up many were not sensible of any shock others were. Ye Hessians, and other of ye British Troops are encamped in ye Jerseys this night; we can see their fires for a considerable distance along ye shore...

Oct. 24. We have heard a few cannon fired this day, but cannot tell ye occasion.
Oct. 25. An officer called to day to know if General Grant could have quarters with us. I told him my husband was from me, and a number of young children around me; I should be glad to be excused. He replied, as I desired it, it should be so. Tom Kite tells us that neige Stiler's House near Frankford, was broken open ye night before last by ye Americans, and much plundered.

November 1. ... Accidents in Town to day are that Gen Bragg is with 5000 men, has surrendered. This account seems to gain credit. A poor soldier was hung this afternoon on ye common for striking his officer. Ye Hessians go on plundering at a great rate; such things as wood, potatoes, turnips ets. Provisions are scarce among us.

Nov. 2. First day. The Hessian Court is not dead, but wounded.

Nov. 5. A Soldier came to demand Blankets, which I did not in anywise agree to; notwithstanding my refusal he went up stairs and took one, and with seeming good nature begged I would excuse his borrowing it, as it was by G. Howe's order. We have not bought a pound of butter for 3 or 4 weeks past. All we get is from our Cow, about 2 pounds a week, and very few of the cattle have any...

Nov. 13. I went this afternoon to G. Morgan's wife. She sets off tomorrow with Bucky James Jr. for Frankford, to stay at Abel's place till her Husband comes back from Pittsburg, where, she say's, he is called on extraordinary business. I called on Caleb Carman on my way home. He was here this evening, I paid him four dollars to renew ye Insurance on our House. J. Drinker, was here this evening, and tells us that a company of soldiers have taken possession of our House in Water street, near Vine street. Johnny called on them; they promised to take care that nothing was destroyed. No news from ye Baterv.

First, clear, cool weather...

Nov. 15. ... I had the great satisfaction this evening of receiving two letters from my dear Henry—ye first I have received from him since he left Reading. He mentions 2 others, written before these, which have not yet come to hand. If I can judge by ye dear by his letters, he is in good Spirits, which is pleasing to me...

Nov. 21. I was awakened this morning before 5 o'clock by ye loud firing of cannon—my Head aching very badly. All our Family were up but little Molly, and a fire was made in ye Parlor more than an hour before day. All our neighbors were also up, and I believe most in Town. Ye Americans had set their whole Fleet on fire, except one small vessel, and several of ye Gondelows, which passed by ye city in the night. Ye firing was from ye Delaware, which lay at Coopers Point, on ye Gondelows—which they did not return. Billy counted 8 different vessels on fire at once; in sight; one lay near ye Jersey shore opposite our House; we heard ye explosion of 4 of them when they blew up, which shook our windows greatly. We had a fair sight of ye blazing Fleet from our upper windows...

An inferior Hessian officer; an elderly man, who lodges at the baken next door, insisted on parting his Horse in our Stable, which I refused. He came in this morning, and asked for Harry. I called him into ye Parlor; he either could not, or pretended he could not, understand English, but told Harry in Dutch that he must and would put his Horse in our Stable. A. James, who came in some time afterward, was kind enough to go to Jon. Calloway, and get a few lines from him—which he took in next door, and had some talk with them, which I hope will settle ye matter...
Chalkley up ye middle noon, and we shut ourselves in ye parlour where he knocked, desiring entrance. Our poor, dear children were never so frightened before, to have an enraged, drunken man as I believe he was with a sword in his hand, swearing about ye House. After going two or 3 times up and down ye Entry, desiring we would let him in to drink a Glass of Wine with us, he went to ye end of ye alley where Harry locked ye Front door on him. He knocked and desired to come in, when J. Howell and A. James, whom Joshua had gone for, came to him. They had some talk with him, and he went off, as I supposed. I had all ye back doors bolted, ye Gate and Front door locked; when in about 10 minutes after, Harry came out ye kitchen and told us he was there. I then locked ye paper door, and would not let Chalkley out. Harry ran into Howells for Joshua, who did not come for some time after ye Fellow was gone, and Ann with him. He came over ye Fence, and they went out ye same way. 'Tis now near one o'clock in ye morning, and I have not yet recovered from ye fright. Ann called him Capt. Tape, or John Tape... Dec. 5. A number of Troops have gone out of Town, and this said, they are this afternoon at Chasterton Hill. Fine winter weather. Dec. 6. Our neighbour Sillies sent over this morning to borrow our good Horse, Tommo, but as he was not shod we denied him; she sent again, and we lent him to her to go to Frankford—her boy Sam with her. She returned in ye evening on foot, having lost her Chaise and our Horse; they were taken from her ye English Light-Horse just as she was getting in ye Chaise at their place. They have been plundered at their country House lately of all ye valuables Furniture, Provisions, Cloth, Horses, 8 or 10 negroes, etc. Dec. to a great amount. Dec. 7. I drank Tea at neighbor Howells', who was last night robbed of a Bed from one of ye 2 Pr. inns Chamber. The Fellow, being surprised, got off without ye rest of ye Bough, which he had laid out; ye Door was ready to take away. There have been many robberies committed lately in Town. Dull, rainy weather to day this' not very cold. We have but 9 Persons in our Family this winter; we have not had less than 13 or 14 for many years past... Dec. 9. I took a walk after dinner to Barrow's shop in Market street; called at Owen Jones'. Hannah Moore called while I was out to read some letters from George Ellwyn. Things seem to wear but an unsatisfying appearance at present, but ye absence of my dear Husband is worse to me than ye rest put together. Nothing will pass at this time, (unless with a few), but Gold and Silver, which is hard upon those who have a quantity of ye old paper money by them. The force of Boards round our House in Water street is pulled down, and I suppose burnt. Neighbor Whin sent a Horse and Chaise here this afternoon to put into our stable—which Patterson's 3 sisters came with from Bristol. C. James and Tommy lodge here again tonight, as H. B. Jr. is gone a foraging. I wrote to my dear Henry to day by J. Sturt of Wiltshire, who goes out of Town tomorrow... Dec. 11. These are sad times for thiefing and plundering; 'tis hardly safe to leave the door open a minute. A number of Friends to Government, about ye country, have lately been plundered and ill-used by the British Troops; things wear a very gloomy aspect at this present time... Dec. 13. I have found it hinted today, that our friends, John Parish and John James were confined in Lancaster Jail. Dec. 14. First day. Thomas Riddell called; he brought word that Drovers Smith was returned from Winchester, which news at first much surprised and flattered me. I have not yet seen him, but I am told that my dear Henry and those with him, have ye same liberty—but many of them are not free to take it, so that I know not yet what to think, but am loath to be too suspicious, or to give way to such pleasing expectations as would naturally occur on a certainty of their being set properly at liberty. We were a little frightened about 11 o'clock by seeing 2 fellows peeping into Becky Jones' yard, and climbing on ye top of her Oast. Watch harked, and Harry went into ye yard. They went off. It causes me to recollect last night, at about one o'clock, I heard a noise against our fence; ye Dog barked violently. I wakened Jenny, who looked out ye window, and saw 2 men in ye alley, who went out of sight. I often feel afraid to go to bed. Dec. 15. Last night about 11 o'clock, as we were going to Bed, we saw 2 soldiers in ye alley, standing by ye Fence. We went down stairs again, and into ye yard. We asked Harry aloud if John and Tom were yet in Bed? Harry answered, Yes. Sister ordered him to unlace ye Dog and then come in. While we were conversing in this manner down stairs, Jenny ran them from our room window, made off with a large bundle which she took to be a Bed. After we had been in Bed about an hour we heard a great noise in ye alley. Jenny, Sister and ye children ran to ye window, and saw ye Baker next door running up ye alley in his shirt, with only a little Jacket on; ye rest of his Family were with him. We did not discover ye cause of ye uproar until this morning, when we found the Baker had been robbed of some of his wife's clothes—which we suppose was ye bundle ye Fellow went off with some time before... Polly Reynolds, formerly Ritchie, with 2 other women called before dinner. She is here to solicit ye General on account of her Husband, who has been a prisoner in ye Jerseys ever since last Christmas... Friends have had several meetings lately, and have agreed to send orders to sundry merchants in London for a cargo of provisions and coal, as ye present prospect, ye inhabitants will stand in need of such a supply. Ye officers and soldiers are quartering themselves upon ye Families generally. One with his Family is to be at J. Howells. I am in daily expectation of their calling upon us. They were much frightened last night at Isaac Catheralls by a soldier...
who came into ye House, drew his Bayonet on Isaac, and behaved very dech.

ately. Anthony Morris, son of Samuel is said, to be dangerously wounded ... 

An officer who calls himself Major Crammond, called this afternoon to look for Quarters for some officer of distinction. I plead off, he would have persuaded me that it was a necessary protection at these times, to have one in ye House. He said that I must consider of it, and that he would call in a day or two. I desired to be excused, and after some more talk we parted. He behaved with much politeness, which has not been ye case at many other places. They have been very rude and impudent at some Houses. 

I wish I may come off well, but at the same time no fear must have some one with us, as it appears likely to be a general thing. This has been a trying day to my spirit ... 

Dec. 19. Sister went out to inquire how Polly Pleasants had managed ye matter in respect to taking in officers, as they have had their doors marked. They had been to Jos. Galloway, but E. Story seems likely to settle ye matter with ye quarter master General Robinson. While sister was out, Major Crammond came to know if I had consulted any of my friends upon ye matter. I told him that my sister was out on that business, that I expected that we, who were at present lone women, would be excused. He said he feared not, for the' I might put him off, (as it was for himself he applied); yet, as a great number of foreign Troops were to be quartered in this neighborhood, he believed they might be troublesome. We had a good deal of talk about the misbehavior of British Officers, which he, by no means, justified. I told him how I had been frightened by ye officer, that thief-like stole my servant Orry over ye Fence, and of many other particulars of their bad conduct that had come to my knowledge. He said, that yesterday I had told him what sort of a man would suit in my Family, if I was obliged to take any, he was conscious that some of those qualities were his; (which were early hours, and little company), that there were very few of ye officers he could recommend; that W. Galloway knew him very well; and that he would call again tomorrow to know my mind further. So he went off. I am surprised how to act, and yet determined. I may be troubled with others much worse, for this man appears to be much of a Gentleman—but while I can keep clear of them, I intend so to do. They have marked ye doors of Houses against their consent, and some of ye inhabitants have looked out for officers of reputation, (if any such there be), to come into their Families, by way of protection, and to keep off others. 

E. Story called this evening; he says he thinks he shall be able to get us, whose Huskums are gone from us, clear of ye military gentlemen. He says they are much chagrined at the difficulty they find in getting quarter, and ye cool reception they have met with, or something to that effect; that several young Noblemen are at this time obliged to sleep at Taverns, on board Ship, or in ye Rocks, for which I think they try, in great measure, thank themselves; tho' at the same time, it appears to me there was, perhaps too much back-

ness shown towards them in ye beginning. We are told this evening that Owen Jones's Family has been very ill-used indeed, by ye officer who wanted to quarter himself, with many others, upon them. He drew his sword, used very abusive language, and bid ye front door split in pieces. Mary Eddy has come with her, who, they say, will not suffer her to use her front door, but oblige her and her Family to go up and down the alley. Molly Poulke has been afflicted, and so have many others. We have come off as yet, wonderfully well. My resolution and fortitude have failed me much of late; my dear Henry's absence, and ye renewed bans on his account, and thoughts of our dear children, and my health but very middling—all together—it seems, at times, hard to bear up against ... 

Dec. 20. ... Crammond called a third time with ye same story over again. I put him off as before; he said he would call again tomorrow. After he was gone, sister went down to consult Abel James. Abel went to Enoch Storys, and came here in ye evening. He believes we shall not be able to free ourselves from them. Mary Pemberton and M. Pleasants have been in trouble about it to day. J. Drinker went this evening to Mary Pemberton's, for our information, to find out how she had come off. She had promises of being excused, on account of her being an ancient woman, her Husband from her, and a Meeting held in her House, as ye Fourth street meeting house is taken up with ye poor, who are turned out of ye House of Employment, for ye Soldiers. For ye above reasons she was to be excused, provided it could be got from under ye hand of General Howe; so that on ye whole I fear we shall have our Family disagreeably encumbered. We must trust in Providence on that and on all other accounts ... 

Dec. 23. Monthly meeting. Sister and ye 4 children went to meeting this morning. Sister met Ann in ye street, who promised to pay for her time. Ye soldier's wife who lives in our House in Water street came to me this morning to inform that someone was tutorin ye shed. So sister went down after meeting and desired them to dese. They said they would not, for it was a Rebel's House. She assured them it was not, and after more talk, they promised, if she would let them take ye large Oser, they would desist; she agreed thereto, and came away ... 

Dec. 24. This is Christmas Eve, and the few Troops that are left in this city I fear are frolicking ... 

Facing British Evacuation (1778)

Introduction
Elizabeth Drinker describes the aftermath of the British evacuation from Philadelphia. She notes the celebration of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, and of the French king's birthday on August 25. She laments the