

ed col. Harrison, said, *Come let us march*
several republic, I can't bear to see
at their guns were out of order, with
cuffs; to whom col. Harrison said, you
a mind to go, give your guns to those
with capt. Conway: I then said, give
ammunition and I will go, which one of
did, so down we marched, under
col. Harrison; soon after we came down
the enemy gave three loud huzzas, and
the Virginia side; with two tenders, one
rowboats; from which they landed
Brent's house, from whence they re-
an hour to their respective vessels. In
we thought ourselves very safe under the
the militia, who by this time, as we were
increased from between thirty and forty
three and four hundred. In justice to
must not omit informing, that he reman-
and resolute, encouraging his men, and
at nature could not form a more conven-
where he proposed they should be sta-
three or four o'clock in the afternoon,
and a schooner tender put off and
boats; seeing that, I said, gentlemen, I
me to offer you our services, you will be
to assist us in taking care of our boats,
arms ourselves; they said one company
us; then we ran down ourselves, and
boat about thirty or forty yards into
ther, which had baited in; we hauled on
it; by this time the company of mil-
the enemy being close ashore where
they stopped in a valley about fifty or
ance from the boat on the beach; the e-
rowed several times towards the boat
and back again; at last the rowgalley and
on which the tentinals the colonel had
his a corn field and made for the woods;
colonel called, *Come back; go, says I, they*
back till they get to Port. I obacio (at
head). They would peep at the enemy
very close to our boat, but never offered
it was the colonel, who pretended once,
without firing. Some of them said, if the
ed the would rake them up the valley
was impossible; at which they ran, the
r whom the colonel retreated; notwith-
pretty well assured the colonel would
d been supported by his men. When
y them (from the Roebuck's mast head)
they hollered at them and called them
then made signs for the rowgalley to pull
they did and launched our boat off, then
huzzas and fired several shot both small
and house where our baggage had been taken
to their ships with their booty, with a
gun fired at them. Col. Harrison seem-
a good opinion of capt. Conway, as he
sured that Conway would not be back-
a firelock. And further this deponat

JOHN THOMAS.

Fore me,
MSAY, J. P.

of EDWARD COLES and CUTHBERT EL-
midshipmen on board the Protector rowgalley,
capt. ROBERT CONWAY.

August 10, 1776.

Edward Coles and Cuthbert Elliston, two mid-
shipmen on board the Protector rowgalley, came
me the subscriber, one of the magistrates
afore said, in the commonwealth of Vir-
the accoutumary oaths, by virtue of
epoke and say; That on Tuesday the 23d
it, coming up the river Patowmack with
we came in sight of the enemy's fleet,
four ships, two tenders, and one rowgal-
made for the Maryland shore, and landed
mile below them, expecting to have been
the militia on shore, the number of whom
informed soon after our landing) was be-
and four hundred; we were eleven in num-
boats. Soon after we landed, four of the
troops. After we were with the troops
and half, some of the men offered to give
backs to us, and one in particular gave his
Thomas, our second lieutenant. We saw
two tenders, one rowgalley, and some row-
men and making for the Virginia
of coming to the Maryland shore as we
here they burnt Mr. Brent's houses; from
returned to their ships. Between three and
in the afternoon we observed their rowgal-
hooner tender making down for the place
boats lay. The little boat we pulled into
their way, and hauled the big boat on the
was stayed by James Sorrett, by captain
der, before the enemy could come night
at us with any certainty. As soon as the
galley began to fire, the militia made a pre-
at, and ran up to the woods; after which
went up; then the enemy came and took
n off the beach, without having one gun
yards of the boat when they took her off,
ce huzzas. Further said deponents say not.

EDWARD COLES,
CUTHBERT ELLISTON.

Fore me,
MSAY, J. P.

I arrived at Alexandria, my rowgalley
down to watch the motion of the enemy's
my return, to my great surprise, I found
advertisement had been stuck up at sev-
places in this town.

ERTISEMENT.

Alexandria, July 23d, 1776.

AS it appears by certificates now in my
under the hands of capt. John H. Lowe,
I. Burgess, and Mr. Geo. Fraser Hawkins

of Maryland, that capt. Robert Conway has propagated
a report, much to the dishonour of the 26th battalion
of the militia of Maryland, viz. That three or four
hundred of the said militia betook themselves to flight,
as soon as the ministerial rowgalley began to fire.
In order therefore to remove every ill impression made
by the said report, I take this method of asserting, that
it is a malicious infamous falsehood; as many gentlemen
who were present as spectators when capt. Conway says
this scene of cowardice was acted, are ready upon oath
to testify.

(Signed)

S. HANSON, S. of Sam.

No man, Mr. Printer, conscious of his own integrity,
would lay silent under such opprobrious epithets; there-
fore, in vindication of what I have already asserted,
which was altogether to the same effect as the foregoing
depositions. I desire you will publish the foregoing
narrative, for the truth of which I appeal to every im-
partial spectator, and remain, Sir,

Your humble servant,

ROBERT CONWAY.

Prince-George's county.

I DO hereby certify to all whom I may concern,
that some time last week I fell in company with several
people, who were on their way by water to Alexandria.
Amongst these there was one Mr. Conway, as I under-
stood, who said he was just from sandy-Point, where a
party of three or four hundred of the Maryland militia
was stationed; that as soon as the rowgalley began to
fire the said militia all ran; that col. Harrison walked
after them laughing at them, and never attempted to
rally them; that the only man of spirit amongst them
was one Jones, as he described; that the galley landed
a parcel of her men and launched one of his boats, car-
rying her off, after giving three huzzas, without meet-
ing with any opposition. I his conversation and a great
deal more passed in the presence of many gentlemen. I
would have been more particular, but being very un-
well with a bad fever, cannot at this time recollect every
particular conversation that passed. Given under my
hand this 29th day of July, 1776.

GEO. FRASER HAWKINS.

To all whom it may concern,

(COPY.)

WE, the subscribers, John H. Lowe and John M.
Burgess, set out on Wednesday last from Mr. Geo. Haw-
kins, with some gentlemen, by water, in order to view
the situation of the ministerial fleet that was then lying
opposite sandy-Point; and on our way down we met
with Mr. Conway, who said he was from sandy-Point,
where a party of three or four hundred of militia were
stationed, and at the appearance of a rowgalley, which
directed her course to the shore, and on firing, the said
militia ran off. He was asked whether the colonel did
not endeavour to rally the men; he said no, but walk-
ed after them and laughed. He said as the rowgalley
approached the shore the colonel addressed his men in
the following manner: You that will not fight, give
your guns to those that will; on which declaration eve-
man left the field but himself and one who we suppose to
be one Jones. The rowgalley landed a parcel of her
men, launched one of his boats, gave three cheers and
carried her off, without meeting with any opposition.
There were several other matters that he spoke, the partic-
ulars of which I do not at present remember, but all
attended to the discredit of said militia.

(COPY.) July 29th, 1776.

The variation between capt. Conway's own narrative
(as certified by Mess. Lowe, Burgess and Hawkins) and
the depositions of his lieutenant and midshipmen, and
again the variation in what they depose, must make e-
very impartial reader suspect the truth of them. Capt.
Conway asserts, that as soon as the rowgalley began to
fire, the said militia (being three or four hundred in
number) all ran—That as the rowgalley approached the
shore, every man left the field, save two—Mr. lieuten-
ant Swears, that only one company, out of the three
or four hundred, ran—and Mess. midshipmen swear,
that the whole three or four hundred made a precipitate
retreat and ran up to the woods; then they swear that
some of the militia were within less than 100 yards of
the boat when the enemy took her off.

Men, who mean to wound the characters of others in
the eyes of the public, by inventing and circulating
ill-echoes, should be extremely circumspect in what
they say or swear—and, as I already observed, the varia-
tion and inconsistency in the assertions and depositions
of capt. Conway and his party, would make every im-
partial man suspect their veracity. However, to evince
every one that they are founded only in malice and mis-
chief, I have taken the depositions of Mess. Finley,
Hunter and Lawraon, of Alexandria, and Mess. Mat-
thews and Stoddart, gentlemen volunteers, which you
will also insert, with the certificate under the hands of
the rev. Mr. Fendall and Mr. Warren Dent.

Alexandria, 15th 23d October, 1776.

ON Tuesday the 23d of July last, we, the subscribers,
set off from this place with intention to see the enemy's
ships, which we were informed were proceeding up Pa-
towmack, and arrived opposite them at sandy-Point, in
Maryland, about half an hour past 6 o'clock in the
evening, where we found a body of militia stationed,
who informed us there were more men a little lower
down the river, to whom we immediately went, and
were by them told that col. Harrison, with a detach-
ment of 25 men, was gone down to prevent the enemy's
taking off capt. Conway's boats, by means of a gondola
and armed schooner, which had left the ships for that
purpose, as was conceived. We saw the Roebuck
under way turning down, and firing now and then
across the field, between the detachment and main body,
and heard other great guns, which we supposed were
from the gondola and armed schooner. We returned
to the main body where we immediately heard a brisk
firing of small arms and swivels, which was thought to
be an engagement betwixt the detachment and the
enemy. We think about sixteen cannon were fired in
the whole. The men appeared to be all drawn up
ready with their arms, and during the firing seemed in
good spirits, and we heard several of them ask if they
ought not to go to the assistance of the detachment.

We saw, nor discovered, nothing like cowardice; but
on the contrary, a willing spirit seemed generally to
prevail.

JOHN FINLEY,
WILLIAM HUNTER,
JAMES LAWRAON.

Sworn before me,

WILLIAM RAMSAY, J. P.

(COPY.)

Charles county, the 18th October, 1776.

WE, the subscribers, joined three companies of the
26th battalion of militia under the command of col.
Harrison, at sandy-Point, on Tuesday the 23d July
last, early in the morning, in the character of volun-
teers. About 9 o'clock the ships began to man their
tenders and small boats, when col. Harrison ordered the
three companies to stand to their arms, and after
watching the motions of the enemy a few minutes, gave
orders for capt. Maitin's company, consisting of about
45 men, including officers, to repair to the head of a
valley, which led down to the river nearly opposite the
Roebuck. We fell in with this company at the head
of the valley. A little while after there came three or
four strong boats, who were questioned by col. Harrison,
and informed him that they had come up the river,
were going to Alexandria, and had landed a little be-
low in two small boats;—those we understood to be
capt. Conway, his lieutenant, and two men. By this
time ten rowboats, two tenders and a gondola were
filled with men along-side of the Roebuck, which lay
near 400 yards from the Maryland shore. It was every
moment expected the enemy would land and attack us.
Col. Harrison told capt. Maitin's company that, in
case the enemy attempted to land there, he should in-
stantly march down to their head and post them behind
the beach; and after admonishing them, begged that
if any one felt confused or under any panic, to candidly
inform him and turn out of the ranks;—on which one
of the privates turned out, and told him that he did not
like to march down the hill. He was then ordered to
give up his gun and ammunition to some other; that
would, and col. Harrison delivered his gun to capt.
Conway's lieutenant, who said he would march down
with us. About ten o'clock the enemy's boats, ten-
ders and gondola, left the Roebuck, giving three
cheers, and, contrary to our expectation, went over to
Virginia, where they landed and set fire to Mr. Brent's
houses. Col. Harrison marched the company down to
the beach, in order to show them where he intended to
post them, had the enemy attempted, or in case they
should attempt a landing at that place. Before the
enemy returned from Virginia, we were reinforced with
about 120 men under col. Hanson. About 5 or 6 o'clock
afternoon, the enemy's small tender, and the gondola,
were observed to be manning, and in a few minutes left
the Roebuck and directed their course towards the bay
where capt. Conway's boats were landed. Col. Harri-
son immediately ordered the men to arms, and con-
ceiving the enemy's design was to take off capt. Con-
way's boats, gave capt. Maitin orders to take about 20
of his best-armed men, and follow him down to watch
the motions of the tender and gondola. His detach-
ment we joined, with two other volunteers—in the
whole we think it consisted of 25 persons. We pro-
ceeded down towards the bay with all haste, and near
the head of a valley met with capt. Conway and some
of his men. Capt. Conway went down the valley with
col. Harrison to show where his boats lay, and we fol-
lowed close after in Indian file, and were halted at the
mouth of the valley. He told the colonel that one of
his boats was drawn over the beach into a marsh, the
other was on the shore, which was about 150
yards from us, though we could not see her from the
mouth of the valley on account of some bushes which
grew on the beach. The tender had got in the bay
before we reached our post, and lay about 150 yards
off;—as soon as we were halted, the tender fired one
of her carriage guns, which was presently succeeded by
a discharge of grape shot from the gondola; this load
grounded within a few paces of us, and many of the
muzzles, with several cannon balls, were picked up the next
day—undry great guns were discharged at us whilst
we remained at this post. The gondola, after she came
against the boat, rowed off and on, and, after a short
time, seemed to be gradually getting more into the bay,
as if designing to open the valley and rake it. We
heard capt. Conway say to col. Harrison, that he
thought he was endeavouring to rake the valley, and
advised him to order a retreat, or words to the same
purpose. The colonel, after taking a view of the gon-
dola, turned about, and in a low tone gave orders for
a retreat to the head of the valley, the gondola being
within 70 or 80 yards of us at the time. Five or six
of the men who were in the rear retreated some dis-
tance beyond the place intended, which we firmly be-
lieve proceeded from their not having heard the orders
distinctly, as most of them returned immediately to the
head of the valley, on being called to by some of the
officers. From this place we observed the Roebuck
had got under way and fallen down, and began to fire
on us; also the tender, our situation being open to
them both. The colonel returned to the mouth of the
valley, and we and others went different ways to take
another view of the gondola, which we found lying
quite still, nearly opposite the boat, with her hatches
close shut, and nothing visible but her oars and gups,
though capt. Conway's lieutenant had just before in-
formed, that her hatches were up and men exposed,
which raised our hopes of getting a shoot. We reco-
lect that, previous to our leaving the mouth of the val-
ley, capt. Conway asked col. Harrison to let the gondola
be fired at; to scare her off from the shore, which was
refused, as there was no living object to shoot at. A
retreat was then ordered to the main body by col. Harri-
son, and the detachment directed to scatter as they
retreated through the old fields, to observe the flash of
the enemy's cannon, and to fall down whenever they
saw it. The fire from the Roebuck, armed schooner,
and gondola, grew very warm, and the frequent falling
down of the men occasioned a general laughter. We
retreated to a fence at the edge of a wood, and lay be-
hind it until the enemy's fire ceased—then returned to
the main body, with which we remained until the ships
went down the river, and the troops were discharged.

JOHN MATTHEWS,
WILLIAM STODDART,

(COPY.)

Charles county, October 18, 1776.

THEN came Messrs. John Matthews and William
Stoddart, gentlemen, and made oath on the holy Ev-
gelists of Almighty God, that the above is a true state
of the transactions at sandy-Point, under col. William
Harrison, on the 23d of July last.

G. R. BROWN.

Charles county, October 20, 1776.

WHEREAS we find, by sundry depositions published
in the Baltimore Gazette, and by certificates under the
hands of George Fraser Hawkins, Esq; capt. John H.
Lowe, and Mr. John M. Burgess, that reports have
been falsly and industriously propagated, reflecting on
the courage, and tending to injure the character of the
26th battalion of Maryland militia, under the com-
mand of col. William Harrison. And whereas we
think it a duty incumbent on us, and on every man, to
releive injured merit from undeserved reproach, and
check any idle reports that may reflect disgrace on the
American arms,—we think it but common justice to
declare that many of the most injurious assertions, con-
tained in the above-mentioned publication and certifi-
cates, are, within our knowledge; totally false, and in
every sense groundless. And we do further assert,
that we attended the said militia from the Monday of
the enemy's arrival at sandy-Point, until their depar-
ture from said place;—and that said militia appeared to
us to assemble with cheerfulness and alacrity—and we
have all the reason in the world to believe, that had the
enemy attempted a landing, they would have been
warmly and vigorously opposed—for on two different
occasions—the one on Monday during a thunder gill,
when the men were obliged to take shelter in a small
house; the sentries gave an alarm, that the enemy were
preparing to land, they, so far from exhibiting any
symptoms or signs of fear, were on the contrary, in our
opinion, too warm and impetuous, by springing out of
the house without waiting for orders, and running to-
wards the shore in an irregular manner—the alarm
proved groundless; and their too eager behaviour drew
from the colonel a gentle reprimand. The other in-
stance happened on the Tuesday morning, when the
alarm was given that the enemy were manning their
boats and preparing to land, and the general opinion
was, and every man expected, that they would attempt
a landing at sandy-Point; on which col. Harrison or-
dered the men to stand to their arms, and in a very
short time after ordered captain Maitin's company to
the head of a valley, which led down to the shore where
it was expected the enemy would land. On this trial
(and we do not believe men can be put to a greater or
severer one) the men behaved with the most undaunted
courage and cool intrepidity. Upon the whole, not
only in the above particularized instances, but in the
whole of their conduct they appeared spirited, brave,
and ready to engage.

HENRY FENDALL,
WARREN DENT.

(COPY.)

Were it necessary, Mr. Printer, a variety of othe-
evidence could be procured to invalidate these id-
tals; but I firmly trust, that the testimony now offered
will fully satisfy every impartial and well disposed per-
son. I would observe, that the gentlemen who depo-
and certify are not of the battalion—three of them re-
siding in Alexandria, Virginia—and can have no far-
ther interest in its character, than as good members o-
community. What motive induced capt. Conway and
his officers thus to assert, and thus solemnly to depose,
I am at a loss to say, unless it was to divert their con-
stituents from an enquiry into their own conduct—for,
be it known to the public, that Patowmack river, at
sandy-Point, is near four miles wide; and they, like
perions wanting sense, landed their boats, within a
distance of the enemy's ships, on the Maryland shore,
when they might have evaded them at least three miles,
by passing along the Virginia side—and in case they had
been noticed and pursued by the enemy, could at any
rate have gone ashore and sued for protection from the
opposite militia of Virginia. Had capt. Conway and
his officers reported facts as they happened, they must
have given the public a favourable opinion of the mil-
itia in general at sandy-Point. A single company, arm-
ed and equipped as our militia too generally are, was
drawn up, in their presence, ready to advance down to
the beach, there to receive the attack of ten rowboats,
two tenders, and a gondola, filled with men. On the
commanding officer's admonishing this company, and
begging that if any of them felt confused or afraid, to
candidly inform him;—one of the company, out of a
about forty-eight persons, said he did not like to march
down the hill, and turned out of the ranks. Whether
this be an instance of general cowardice, or not, the im-
partial public will say. For my part, his refusal by no
means surpris'd me, as the expedition appeared very
dangerous, and was really so, though I thought it ne-
cessary. We were agreeable to every one's idea, to
oppose the landing of at least four times our number,
and could we not have repulsed them, must have re-
treated up the hill, exposed to a near fire from the Roe-
buck, two tenders and a gondola. The retreat of the
detachment in the afternoon, which went down to pre-
vent the enemy's taking off capt. Conway's boats, was
by my orders. If it was wrong, I am chargeable with
it and not the men. However, I thought it prudent,
and, in a similar situation, should act again in the same
manner. I shall not, to humour capt. Conway or his
crew, expose men to the fire of a gondola, when the
chance of killing is only on the side of the enemy; but
hope ever to be found ready and willing, with those
whom I have the honour to command, to risque life
whenever any valuable end can be answered.

Before I conclude, I must declare, that, from the
trial of the men at sandy-Point, I entertain the highest
opinion of their bravery in general, and were they
equipped, as men going into battle should be, would
risk my life with them, as soon as with any men in
the world. And, as Mr. lieutenant Thomas has, in
the course of his deposition, given his opinion of me,
I must in return give mine of him—which is, in the sin-
cerity of my heart, this—that he would, at any time,
to oblige a person on whom he was the least dependent,
swear, that black is white, or white black. I am,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

WILLIAM HARRISON.