

About the Battle continued

Around 6 a.m. elements of Col. Daniel Morgan's riflemen encountered the troops of Lord Cornwallis on what is now Green St. in Woodbridge. Cornwallis continued to move west on Oak Tree Rd. and engaged General Thomas Conway's Brigade which retreated toward the Short Hills.

Cornwallis then marched to the corner of Oak Tree and New Dover Roads, where he attacked Ottendorf's Corp. At this point of the Battle of the Short Hills American General Lord Stirling advanced with "Scotch Willie" Maxwell's NJ Brigade, and the main action began. For the next hour and a half the soldiers maneuvered, fought, and died in the area between Oak Tree Rd. Woodland Ave. Tingley Lane, extending up into Scotch Plains.



During the battle, the Americans lost, recaptured, and lost again 3 French cannons. British Captain, John Finch was mortally wounded after shouting at Lord Stirling "Come here you damned rebel and I will do for you". At the end of the Battle some American units withdrew toward Quibbletown, and others toward Scotch Plains and Westfield. The British left column under Vaughan marched from Metuchen Meeting House, and reached Oak Tree Rd. too late to be part of the battle. Knowing that the delay at the Short Hills had alerted Washington, the British realized they could not achieve their objective, of defeating the main American Army. The British marched, burned and looted along the way to Westfield where they spent the night. 4 days later the British left New Jersey.

Short Hills Facts

- The Short Hills are named for the hilly area of the terminal moraine of the Wisconsin glacier, these hills extend from Woodbridge to Plainfield.
- The battle was the first use of French cannon by the Americans during the war.
- Congress adopted the "Stars & Stripes" as the American flag on June 14th, the battle was on the 26th, making this the first defense of the American flag.
- A tactical field victory by the British, they did not accomplish their goal of surrounding and destroying the American Army.
- American casualties were around 200 men, while the British losses ranged between 70 to 130 men.
- Washington observed the battle from the Watchung Mountains, at what is now known as Washington Rock.
- Notable American Soldiers included Major Richard Howell, future 2nd Governor of NJ. Two sons of signers of the Declaration of Independence, Capt. Thomas Clark, & Brigade Major James Witherspoon. Future youngest signer of the Constitution, Captain Jonathan Dayton.

More Information

The Short Hills Battlefield is comprised of 5 parks in Edison Township. Oak Tree Pond Historic Park, Petti Farm Park, Woodland Ave. Park (Smith Farm) Samek Parcel and the Edith Stevens Preserve.

There are no restroom facilities in these parks.

Go to the Township website for Edison Parks information: www.edisonnj.org

For Emergencies Call:
911

For more information about the battle contact:
Metuchen Edison Historical Society
PO Box 61, Metuchen, NJ 08840
www.metuchen-edisonhistsoc.org

Battle Photographs: MEHS 2002 Battle of the Short Hills Reenactment, with the Brigade of the American Revolution
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The Short Hills Battlefield



**"...where the Musket Balls
flew Like a shower of hail
stones"**

The Battle of the Short Hills took place on June 26, 1777 in the rolling hills of what is now Edison NJ.

Edison NJ

Visiting the Battlefield

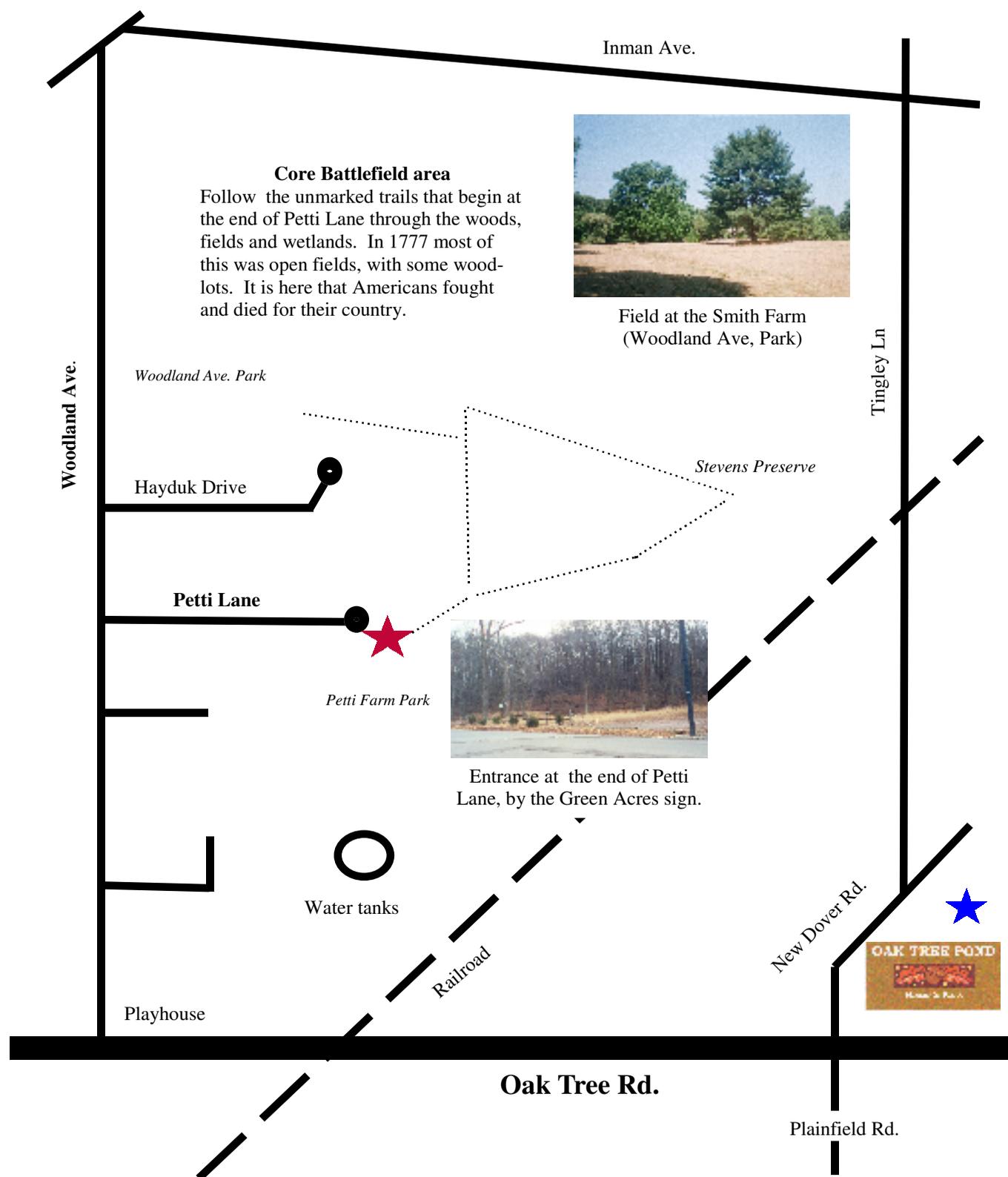


Oak Tree Pond Historic Park Entrance

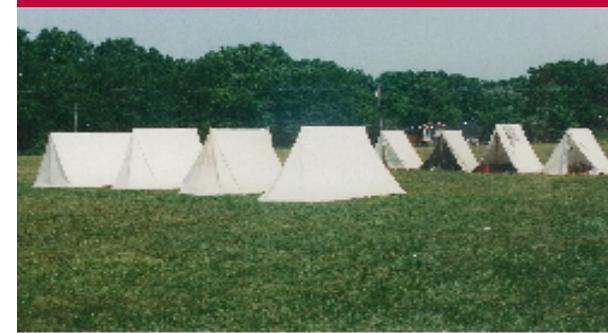
★ Begin your visit at Oak Tree Pond Historic Park (See Map) where there are historic markers, and a flagpole that commemorates the battle. View the Short Hills in the distance. Parking is available in the parking lot for the Bank (which has a mural of the Jersey Brigade in the lobby) The park was the site of the Reuben Ayres farm, which had it's barn burned during the battle. Just up New Dover Rd. on the adjoining Mundy Farm, during the battle, a cannonball crashed through a barn full of women and children.

★ To visit the rest of the battlefield exit the parking lot and turn right onto Oak Tree Rd. Drive .6 miles turn right onto Woodland Ave. Then go to the third street on the right, Petti Lane, turn right. The Park entrance is at the end of the cul-de-sac. Parking is on the street. Unmarked trails begin to the right of the Green Acres sign.

Reuben Ayers House 1933



About the Battle



On the night of June 25, 1777, 2,000 Americans soldiers under the command of Lord Stirling were camped in the Short Hills from the Ash Swamp to Metuchen Meeting House, unaware that the British Army was getting ready to march toward them.

By dawn on the 26th, 18,000 British/Hessian troops marched in two columns from Perth Amboy with the goal of surrounding George Washington, and the American Army at Quibbletown, in Piscataway.

One column under the command of Lord Cornwallis moved through Woodbridge to what is now Oak Tree Rd. The other column under the command of General Vaughan, with General Howe, moved toward Metuchen Meeting House.

The only thing standing in their way were the 2,000 Americans under the command of General Stirling astride the Short Hills.

(Continued on back)

