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**Summary**

This excerpt from the diary of Elizabeth Sandwith Drinker recounts the capture of Philadelphia by the British between September 25th and October 6th in the year 1777. The reading begins on September 25th; one day before the English occupy the city. She describes multiple murmurings between her and others about the coming army including their location from the city. She records that there were many people who had met to organize a city watch in preparation. The city is taken the next day with the arrival of Cornwallis and his troops. In the next couple days she describes seeing the capture of the Delaware and hearing many accounts of the battles that happened around the city. On September 29th she lists men who were captured and imprisoned and her entry on October 4th begins with her saying she heard cannon fire from Washington’s army on Chestnut Hill. She describes the reports she’s heard of the dead, prefacing it by saying “This has been a sorrowful day in Philadelphia,” and continues by stating the whereabouts of the divisions of the American army. The excerpt ends on October 6th. She writes on this day of hearing the heaviest fire she ever heard coming from a battle between the English and the Mud Island battery. The last thing that Drinker tells us about the state of Philadelphia in this excerpt is that two churches have been made into hospitals for the many wounded soldiers as somber reflection of what the war had wrought.

**Evaluation**

This reading gives an interesting perspective compared to many from this historical event as a Quaker, a woman, and a native to the city. Drinker writes in a way that doesn’t romanticize war as modern Americans can tend to do, but relays her experience in plain language of the time. She writes about the capture of the city on September 26th with an exasperated “Well! here are the English in earnest!” (Drinker) where many historians and writers today would say something unbiased and factual about why the British may be targeting the city. She makes it personal when she describes a skirmish on September 27th and ends the entry by writing; “Part of this scene we witnessed from the little window in our loft.” (Drinker). And she makes it intimate when writes on September 29th of the citizens imprisoned, “among them are John Hall, Jacob Bright, Tom Leech, Jacob Douche and William Moulder.” (Drinker.)

Over the course of this excerpt she describes much information provided to her by who are presumed to be neighbors and friends including the false rumor that Washington was wounded in the thigh. She was also informed before and after the occupation about the whereabouts of the armies which implies their state of security. This gives a sense of community in the city overtaken by their enemies. As Philadelphians are taken prisoner and as she reports on all the dead seen on the streets, this reading gives a clear impression of what was happening across the city. Modern readers can get an idea for what she dislikes as a pacifist when describing the state of the city and surrounding area overspread by battles and the dead they bring. It can be observed today that modern Americans have many of the same attitudes that have been carried down from our rebellious ancestors and history. The “Pull yourself up by your bootstraps” attitude and our continued focus on freedom, independence, and bold abandon is everywhere among our population now 250 years later. This small snapshot of The American Revolution can bring that down as Drinker creates the mental image of 18 American soldiers lying dead in a friend and neighbor’s lane.

Elizabeth Drinker, though, is as independent and as much a patriot as her neighbors. On October 6th when an officer asked for lodging for a wounded captain she tells him that as her husband is away, in prison for his pacifist stance, she’d like them to seek shelter elsewhere. This is a small act of defiance and a simple gesture, but turning away a British officer, despite their occupation of the city, gives the impression of her character; this can be read as her own way of rebellion in a time when her home is held by the enemies and the outcome seems grim.