

Battle of the Kegs. [July 1778].

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BATTLE OF THE KEGS.

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Gallants attend, and hear a friend, Trill forth harmonious dirty: Strange things I'll tell which late befel
In Philadelphia city.

'Twas early day, as poets say, Just when the sun was rising, A soldier stood, on a log of wood, And
saw a sight surprising.

As in amaze, he stood to gaze, The truth can't be denied, Sir, He spy'd a score of kegs or more,
Come floating down the tide sir.

A sailor too, in jerkin blue, The strange appearance viewing, First damn'd his eyes, in great surprise,
Then said....some mischief's brewing.

These Kegs now hold the rebels bold, Pack'd up like pickled herring: And they're come down to attack
the town, In this new way of ferrying.

The soldier flew, the sailor too, And, scare'd almost to death, sir. Wore out their shoes, to spread the
news, And ran till out of breath, sir.

Now up and down, throughout the town, Most frantic scenes were acted; And some ran here, and
some ran there Like men almost distracted.

Some fire cry'd, which some deny'd But said the earth had quaked: And girls and boys, with hideous
noise, Ran through the town half naked.

*1 Sir William he, snug as a flea, Lay all this time a snoring, Nor dreamt of harm, as he lay warm, In
bed with Mrs. L—g.

*1 Sir Wm. Howe.

Now in a fright, he starts upright, Awak'd by such a clatter: He rubs both eyes, and boldly cries, 'For
God's sake what's the matter?'

At his bed side, he then espy'd Sir Erskine[†] at command, sir, Upon one foot, he had one boot, And t'other in his hand, sir.

† Sir W. Erskine.

Arise! Arise! Sir Erskine cries: The rebels....more's the pity.... Without a boat, are all on float, And rang'd before the city.

The motly crew, in vessels new, With Satan for their guide, sir, Pack'd up in bags, or wooden kegs
Come driving down the tide, sir.

Therefore prepare for bloody war; These kegs must all be routed; Or surely we despis'd shall be; And
British courage doubted.

The royal band now ready stand, All rang'd in dread array, sir, With stomach stout, to see it out, And
make a bloody day sir.

The cannon roar, from shore to shore: The small arms make a rattle, Since wars began, I'm sure no
man E'er saw so strange a battle.

The rebel^{*2} vales, the rebel dales, With rebel trees surrounded, The distant woods, the hills, and
floods, With rebel echoes sounded.

*2 The British officers so fond of the word rebel, that they often applied it most absurdly.

The fish below, swam to and fro, Attack'd from ev'ry quarter: Why sure, thought they, the devil's to
pay 'Mongst folks above the water.

The kegs, 'tis said, tho' strongly made, Of rebel staves and hoops, sir, Could not oppose their pow'rful
foes, The conqu'ring British troops, sir.

From morn to night, these men of might Display'd amazing courage; And when the sun was fairly
down, Retir'd to sup their porridge.

An hundred men with each a pen, Or more upon my word, sir, It is most true, would be too few,
Their valour to record, sir.



Such feats did they perform that day Upon these wicked kegs, sir, That years to come, if they get home, They'll make their boasts and brags, sir.

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