

Springdale History Project Cadwalader Spy Map

On December 31, 1776 three days before the Battle of Princeton, General John Cadwalader had provided Washington with a “spy map,” a roughly drawn sketch of the town of Princeton, revealing the British fortifications and a back road leading into town. In the letter accompanying the map, Cadwalader did not identify his source, but wrote that it was based upon information from “a very intelligent young Gentleman . . . returned, just now, from PrinceTown.” While speculation and disagreement continue about the identity of that “young Gentleman,” no one disputes the map’s value to the American cause. Washington decided to move on to Princeton.

Historians believe the map provided critical information to Washington allowing him to develop a successful strategy for the Battle of Princeton. The original map is in the collection of the Library of Congress.

