British plan was for Howe's light infantry to break through along the shore and get behind the Americans. Howe's main force was then to seize rail-fence position, turn left, and attack Breed's Hill in rear. Meanwhile Pigot, without attacking, was to threaten forces on Breed's Hill to hold them in position. The attempts at breakthrough of rail fence failed, and the battle developed into a series of costly frontal attacks.

About 3,200 men on the peninsula. Probably no more than 1,500 engaged in the battle at any one time.

400 reinforcements received toward the end of the battle.