



## Remembering the Revolution

On November 28, 1778, the residents of Fishkill witnessed the military fruits of the American victory at Saratoga, which had occurred more than a year earlier. On that day, the prisoners of Lieutenant General John Burgoyne's Convention Army began marching through the village en route to the Hudson River and points south. They had journeyed from Cambridge, Massachusetts, through Connecticut and the Dutchess County villages of Amenia and Hopewell. What a sight the observers beheld as more than 4,000 prisoners marched past in six divisions (three British and three German) over the next three days.

The Articles of Convention signed by Burgoyne and Major General Horatio Gates provided for the "free passage" of the 4,991 soldiers from Saratoga to Boston, where they were to sail away "on condition of never serving again...during the present contest." Negotiations to fulfill the conditions of the Convention broke down between the Continental Congress and the British, relegating the army to captivity in Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania for the remainder of the war. By the time the Revolution ended, more than half of the army would be gone due to death, desertion, parole, and exchange.

George Washington observed the passage of his vanquished foes from the house of Colonel Derick Brinckerhoff (at the corner of today's Routes 52 and 82), where he was visiting the Marquis de Lafayette, who was recuperating there from a fever. Lieutenant Friedrich Cleve, aide-de-camp of German Major General Friedrich von Riedesel, described Washington: "Nov. 28.

The troops arrived at Fish Kill today, where General Washington had his headquarters. He saw all our divisions and showed our officers much politeness. All that can be said in regard to this man is what a pity that a man of his character and talents is a rebel to his king... Besides his manly physical beauty he is in possession of all the politeness of a Frenchman of high birth, but he exceeds his compatriots in modesty and thus signalizes his birth the more."

An unidentified orderly to Staff Captain Friedrich Wilhelm von Geismar of the Hessen-Hanau Regiment Erbprinz described the march to, and the crossing of, the Hudson: "28 Nov: About 9 AM we departed here, at around noon we crossed the Fishkill, or North River, which is three English miles wide here; we received provisions on the other side and new wagons for the baggage, and arrived at 3 PM about 3 miles from the river to quarters at a mill, which lies all alone in the woods. The area is called Newburgh."

The army then moved across Orange County, passing through Little Britain, Goshen, Florida, and Warwick. From there, the soldiers journeyed to Sussex Courthouse in New Jersey, and to their fate. In October 1781, the soldiers of another army — that of Charles Lord Cornwallis — would share their plight.

To keep track of events related to the 225th anniversary of the American Revolution, see the Hudson River Valley Institute's digital library at [www.hudsonrivervalley.net](http://www.hudsonrivervalley.net). — JIM JOHNSON

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