

**THE WASHINGTON - ROCHAMBEAU REVOLUTIONARY ROUTE
IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK, 1781-1782**

An Historical And Architectural Survey

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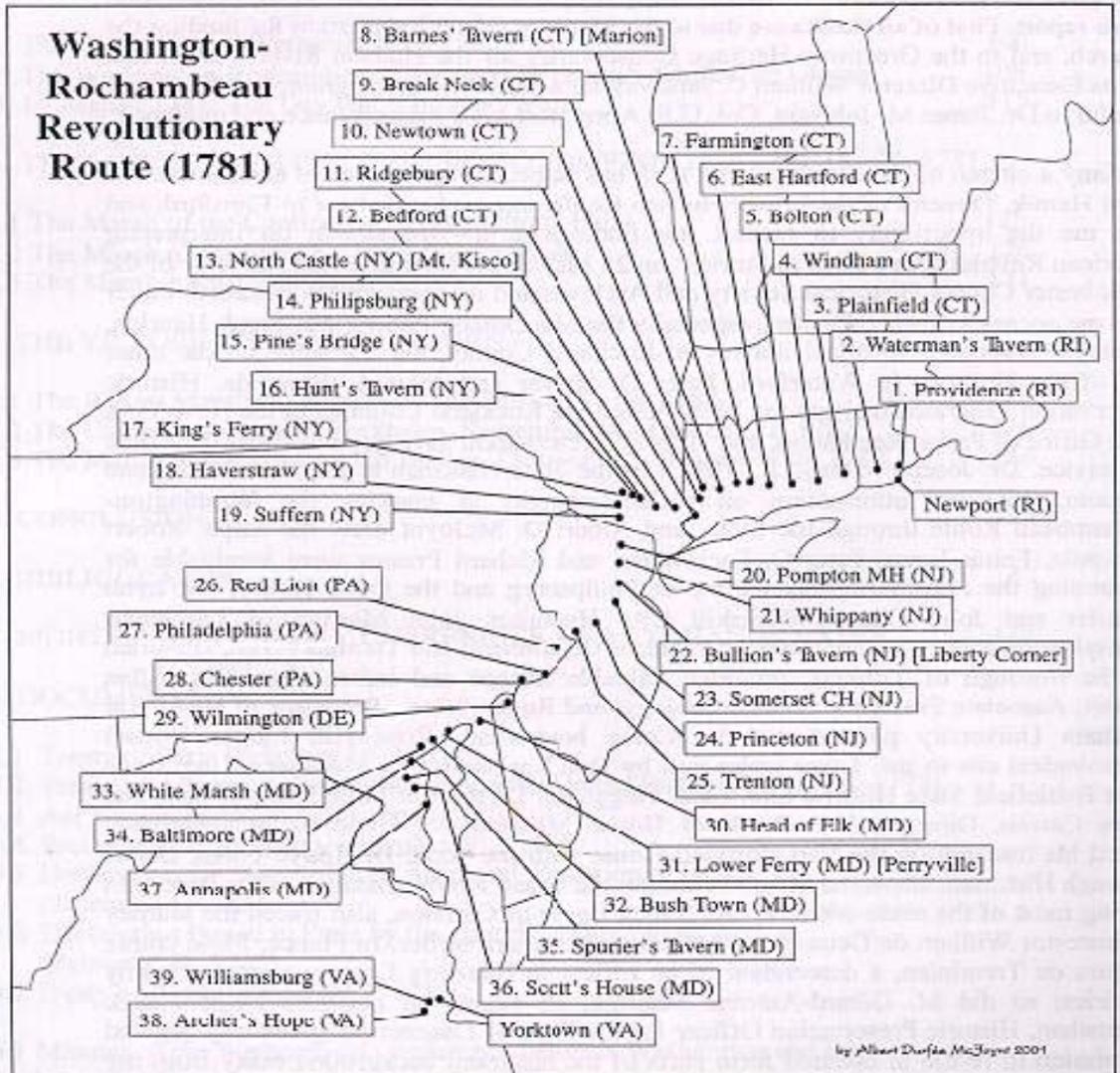
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Last but by far not least I would like to thank my wife Barbara and my children Mary, Sebastian, and Hannah for doing without me for three long weeks in the fall of 2000, and for their patience during the time I spent in front of the computer. Thank you all.

INTRODUCTION



Camp numbers and locations are based upon *The American Campaigns of Rochambeau's Army*, Anne S.K. Brown and Howard C. Rice, 1972.
Map provided by:
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2.1 Purpose of the Project

In a 1999, interview with the historical magazine *American Heritage*, renowned author David McCullough claimed that "When you're working on the Revolutionary War, as I'm doing now, you realize what the French did for us. We wouldn't have a country if it weren't

for them."¹ Few historians of the war on either side of the Atlantic would dispute that there is at least a grain of truth in McCullough's statement. Still, the notion of Frenchmen fighting side by side with Continental soldiers for American independence comes as a surprise to most Americans: 220 years after Yorktown few Americans are aware of the critical importance of America's French allies during the Revolutionary War.

The support provided by French King Louis XVI toward the success of that war has been largely obliterated in the collective memory of the American people. As the Revolutionary generation passed away in the 1820s and 1830s, and canals and railroads altered modes and patterns of transportation in the 1840s and 1850s, the memory of the "gallant" Frenchmen under General comte de Rochambeau, of their crucial contribution to American Independence, and of the bond forged in the crucible of war, was covered by the mantle of Revolutionary War iconography. A prime example of this development is given by Benson J. Lossing, who could write as early as 1852, that "a balance-sheet of favors connected with the alliance will show not the least preponderance of service in favor of the French, unless the result of the more vigorous action of the Americans, caused by the hopes of success from the alliance, shall be taken into the account."²

The tragedy of the Civil War and the turmoil of the (Second) Industrial Revolution brought massive economic and demographic dislocation in the 1860s and 1870s. As millions of immigrants from southern and east-central Europe settled mid-western and western America in the 1880s and 1890s, interest in the French alliance was increasingly confined to professional historians and Americans living in France. The celebrations of the centennials of the American and French Revolutions in 1876 and 1889 saw the publication of Thomas Balch's *Les Français en Amérique pendant la Guerre de l'Indépendance des États-Unis, 1777-1783*, published in Paris and Philadelphia in 1872.³ In 1881, Henry P. Johnston published the still useful *The Yorktown Campaign and the Surrender of Cornwallis*, and Edwin M. Stone followed suit with *Our French Allies ... in the Great War of the American Independence*, published in Providence, R.I., in 1884.

In Paris, Henri Doniol published between 1886 and 1892 his ambitious *Histoire de la participation de la France à l'établissement des États-Unis d'Amérique. Correspondance diplomatique et documents* in five volumes.⁴ In 1903, Amblard Marie Vicomte de Noailles' *Marins et Soldats Français en Amérique Pendant la Guerre de l'Indépendance des États-Unis, 1778-1783* ran off the presses in Paris. Finally, with the strong support of the *Society in France, Sons of the American Revolution*, founded in Paris in September 1897, the French Foreign Ministry in 1903 published the names of thousands of Frenchmen who had fought in the Revolutionary War in *Les Combattants Français de la Guerre Américaine 1778-1783*.⁵

¹ "There Isn't Any Such Thing As The Past" *American Heritage* Vol. 50. No. 1, (February/March 1999), pp. 114-125, p. 124.

² Benson J. Lossing, *Pictorial Field Book of the Revolution* 2 vols. (New York, 1852), Vol. 2, p. 83, note 4.

³ An English translation appeared in two volumes in Philadelphia in 1891/95.

⁴ A supplement volume bringing the history of events to the signing of the Peace Treaty of 1783 (the original volume 5 ends with the signing of the preliminaries of peace) was added in 1899.

⁵ Published in the United States as United States. Congress. Senate. Miscellaneous Publications. 58th Congress, 2nd Session. Document No. 77. (Washington, D.C., 1903/4). Was it a sign of the times that neither the names of the German soldiers in the Royal Deux-Ponts nor of those in the Irish regiments Walsh and Dillon were printed? In both cases the document lists "officiers seulement."

A few years later, the First World War brought the renewal of an alliance that had flourished some 140 years earlier. "Lafayette, we are here!" an American officer is said to have pronounced over the tomb of the marquis in Paris in 1917. With Armistice Day 1918, the "debt to Lafayette" was paid. But the war "over there" also brought renewed interest in the earlier military cooperation against a common foe during the Revolutionary War. When Boston banker Allan Forbes retraced the route taken by Rochambeau and his forces in the early 1920s, he concentrated on the New England states of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut.⁶ His research ended at the New York State line; the mid-Atlantic states were covered in but a single article.⁷ Not just "Out West" where no French soldier ever set foot, but in the original thirteen colonies as well it has until recently been left to town historians and private organizations such as the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Sons of the American Revolution, the Society of the Cincinnati or the *Souvenir Français*, to keep the memory of the Franco-American alliance alive. In the State of New York, where Rochambeau's men had marched and camped primarily in Westchester and Rockland counties, this usually meant an occasional article in the *Westchester Historian* or in *South of the Mountain*, the quarterly of the Rockland County Historical Society, often in connection with an anniversary, i.e., 1931, 1976, or 1981.

All this changed in the fall of 1999. The Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route (W3R) of the 225th Anniversary of the American Revolution in the State of New York will contribute to a nine-state National Historic Trail to be completed by 2006. The long-range goal of the project is to develop a plan to interpret the route that Washington's and Rochambeau's armies took through Westchester and Rockland counties in 1781 and 1782, in time for the 2006 anniversary, when the W3R will form an integral component of the greater Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area (HRVNHA).

2.2 Scope of the Project

The current report completes the first part of the HRVNHA project for 2000/01, i.e., an historic and architectural survey of the W3R in Rockland and Westchester counties. It forms the basis of the archeological survey of the campsites, routes, and other features of the American and French armies in their march to Yorktown. Concurrently, Impact LLC, designed, using the Geographic Information System, a map of the complete nine-state W3R and a detailed map of its course through Westchester and Rockland counties. This dual approach will adhere to the template developed and followed by Connecticut.⁸ By 2002, New York will have the basis for joining the W3R National Historic Trail and nominating sites to the National Register of Historic Places.⁹

⁶ Forbes, Allan and Paul F. Cadman, *France and New England* 3 vols., (Boston, 1925-1929).

⁷ Allan Forbes, "Marches and Camp Sites of the French Army beyond New England during the Revolutionary War" *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* Vol. 67 (1945), pp. 152-167. The research notes collected by Forbes seem to be lost; they are not among his papers in the Massachusetts Historical Society.

⁸ See my *Rochambeau in Connecticut: Tracing his Journey. Historic and Architectural Survey* Connecticut Historical Commission (Hartford: State of Connecticut, 1999) and *Rochambeau's Cavalry: Lauzun's Legion in Connecticut 1780-1781. The Winter Quarters of Lauzun's Legion in Lebanon and its March Through the State in 1781. Rochambeau's Conferences in Hartford and Wethersfield. Historic and Architectural Survey* Connecticut Historical Commission (Hartford: State of Connecticut, 2000).

⁹ For a history of efforts leading up to the W3R see below.

2.3 Goals of the Project

The project sets itself three goals. 1) to collect, interpret, and evaluate American, French, British, and German primary and secondary sources for information concerning Franco-American cooperation in the American Revolutionary War with a view toward explaining the reasons, goals, and results for and of that involvement. 2) to review these same sources for information about the presence of French and American troops in the State of New York in the summer of 1781 and the fall of 1782 and their interaction with the inhabitants of the state, and 3) to identify historic buildings and sites such as campsites as well as modern monuments and markers associated with the march of American and French forces under the command of Generals Washington and Rochambeau from Newburgh and Ridgefield resp. in July of 1781 to Philipsburg on their way to Yorktown, and of the French return march and the second meeting of the two armies in the fall of 1782. This identification of above-ground resources and especially of the campsites (as archeological sites) is to result (where possible or feasible) in the nomination of these resources for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

Goals 1) and 2) were achieved by in-depth research in American and European libraries and archives. Local historical research was done in the libraries of the Westchester County and Rockland County Historical Societies and other public libraries during fieldwork in the fall of 2000. As work progressed it became obvious that a number of sub-goals would have to be met within the general framework of the study. In the context of goal 1) the need for an in-depth analysis of Franco-American strategy in the months of July and August 1781 became obvious. It showed that Washington and Rochambeau did not always think and plan along the same lines and that the relationship between the two was more complex than it has heretofore been portrayed in the literature.

Within the context of goal 2), the *McDonald Papers* held by the Westchester County Historical Society turned out to contain a wealth of largely untapped, though not always laudatory, information about Rochambeau's troops. For goal 3), the pre-requisite tracing and identification of the routes taken by the two armies in 1781 and 1782 across Rockland and Westchester counties, turned out a challenging but rewarding assignment. The reader is cautioned to remember that the routes described here are determined by aboveground sites and resources and by the current road system, which often follows that of 225 years ago only in approximation.

2.4 Sources

A few published and manuscript sources were particularly helpful in the preparation of this report. Among the published materials, Otto Hufeland's *Westchester County during the American Revolution 1775-1783* (Westchester County Historical Society, 1926) proved particularly helpful for the general context in which the war was fought. Of equal value was once again, despite its primary focus on New England, the three-volume set by Forbes and Cadman, *France and New England* esp. volume 1.

But wherever possible I have based my report on primary source material, in particular unpublished materials from European archives relating to the French involvement in the American Revolutionary War. Among primary source materials for local history, the McDonald Papers located in the Westchester County Historical Society in Elmsford take first place. John McLeod McDonald (1790-1863) had been trained as a lawyer. After a stroke in 1835, he could no longer practice law and became interested in the history of the Revolutionary War. Accompanied by Andrew Corsa, Washington's and Rochambeau's guide during the Grand Reconnaissance of July 21-23, 1781, he traveled through Westchester County in the 1840s interviewing eyewitnesses and veterans in preparation for a history of the Revolutionary War. His interviews with 241 men and women, white and black, free and slave, fill more than 1,100 pages. McDonald never wrote his history, but these interviews form a unique oral history resource for events in the "neutral ground" between British and American lines.¹⁰

The other indispensable collection of primary source materials is the compilation of maps, routes, and journals published by Howard C. Rice, Jr. and Anne S. K. Brown, *The American Campaigns of Rochambeau's Army 1780, 1781, 1782, 1782*, 2 volumes, (Providence and New Haven, 1972). Volume 2 contains orders and arrangements for the march as well as maps of routes and campsites that are indispensable for anyone interested in the march of Rochambeau and his troops across the State of New York.

In an appendix to Volume 1, Rice and Brown provide a list of journals available at the time of publication of their book.¹¹ Since then, more than a dozen unknown primary sources have appeared in European and American archives. To the 45 primary sources, i.e., accounts of events in America written by officers in Rochambeau's army listed by Rice and Brown, can now be added a letter by Jean-François de Thuillière, a captain in the Royal Deux-Ponts preserved in the Archives Nationales.¹² Also added must be two letters by Louis Eberhard von Esebeck, lieutenant-colonel in the Royal Deux-Ponts, dated Jamestown Island, December 12, and 16, 1781.¹³ Among the new sources are also the correspondence of Captain Charles Malo François comte de Lameth, aide-de-camp to Rochambeau (March 1781) and *aide-maréchal général des logis* (also in May 1781), and of his brother Captain Alexandre Théodor Victor chevalier de Lameth, who replaced Charles Malo François in the summer of 1782.¹⁴ For Lauzun's Legion a manuscript kept by its Lieutenant Colonel Etienne Hugau entitled *Détails intéressants sur les événements arrivés dans la guerre d'Amérique. Hyver 1781 à 1782. Hampton, Charlotte et suite* located in Bibliothèque municipale in Evreux, France, has come to light.¹⁵ Other new sources (that I have not yet seen) are the journal kept by Dupleix de Cadignan of the Agenois,¹⁶ and the journal kept by

¹⁰ See William S. Haddaway, "The Author of the McDonald Papers" *The Quarterly Bulletin of the Westchester County Historical Society* Vol. 5, No. 1 (January 1929), pp. 5-7.

¹¹ The list is printed in Rice and Brown, eds., *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, pp. 285-348.

¹² The letter is catalogued under B4 172, Marine.

¹³ John M. Lenhart, "Letter of an Officer of the Zweibrücken Regiment," *Central-Blatt and Social Justice*, Vol. 28, (January 1936), pp. 321-322, and Vol. 28, (February 1936), pp. 350-360.

¹⁴ The letters are in the Archives du Département Val d'Oise in Cergy-Pontoise, No. 1J 191 and 1J 337/338.

¹⁵ It has been published in a superb edition by Gérard-Antoine Massoni, *Détails intéressants sur les événements arrivés dans la guerre d'Amérique. Hyver 1781 à 1782. Hampton, Charlotte et suite. Manuscrit de Claude Hugau, lieutenant-colonel de la Légion des Volontaires Etrangers de Lauzun* (Besançon: Université de Franche-Comté, 1996).

¹⁶ The last known owner of this ms was Bernard Zublena, domaine de lagarde, 32 250 Montreal, Canada.

Xavier de Bertrand, a lieutenant in the Royal Deux-Ponts.¹⁷ Papers and letter by Christian de Deux Ponts have been in part deposited in and in part acquired by German archives,¹⁸ and through the good offices of Ms Nancy Bayer I have also gained access to four letters written by her ancestor Wilhelm de Deux-Ponts from America.¹⁹ Also unavailable to Rice and Brown was the *Journal de l'Armée aux ordres de Monsieur de Comte de Rochambeau pendant les campagnes de 1780, 1781, 1782, 1783 dans l'Amérique septentrionale* kept by Rochambeau's 21-year-old nephew Louis François Bertrand Dupont d'Aubevoye, comte de Lauberdière, a captain in the Saintonge infantry and one of his aides-de-camp.²⁰ A different source not available to me for the Connecticut reports is the *Livre d'ordre*, the "Book of Orders" of Rochambeau's little army in America which allows a minute reconstruction of daily life of the soldiers in America.²¹ The potentially most valuable new source are the papers of Antoine Charles Baron du Houx baron de Vioménil, Rochambeau's second in command. Some 300 items and almost 1,000 pages long, they promise to shed new light on the war in America.²²

Equally surprising is the fact that three journals/diaries/memoirs of enlisted men have also come to light since 1972. The most important of these three is the journal of Georg Daniel Flohr, an enlisted man in the Royal Deux-Ponts, preserved in the Bibliothèque Municipale of Strasbourg, France.²³ Among the Milton S. Latham Papers in the Library of Congress was found the *Journal Militaire* kept by an anonymous grenadier in the Bourbonnais regiment.²⁴ Finally there is the *Histoire des campagnes de l'Armée de Rochambaud (sic) en Amérique* written by André Amblard of the Soissonnais infantry.²⁵

These discoveries bring the total of known French sources to about 60, but their value for our project varies greatly. For one, the location of the journals by Ollonne, Saint-Cyr,

¹⁷ The journal is quoted in Régis d'Oléon, "L'Esprit de Corps dans l'Ancienne Armée" *Carnet de la Sabretache* 5th series (1958), pp. 488-496. Régis d'Oléon is a descendant of Bertrand. I am very grateful to Lieutenant-Colonel Gilbert Bodinier of the Service Historique de l'Armée de Terre in Vincennes, France, for bringing these sources as well as the journal of Amblard listed in note 25, to my attention.

¹⁸ The papers of Christian von Zweibrücken deposited in the Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv - Geheimes Hausarchiv - in Munich are owned by Marian Freiherr von Gravenreuth; those deposited in the Pfälzische Landesbibliothek in Speyer were acquired at auction and are owned by the library.

¹⁹ The letters are owned by Anton Freiherr von Cetto in Oberlauterbach, Germany.

²⁰ Lauberdière's *Journal* is in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, France. See my "America the Ungrateful: The Not-So-Fond Remembrances of Louis François Dupont d'Aubevoye, Comte de Lauberdière" *American Heritage* Vol. 48, No. 1, (February 1997), pp. 101-106, and "Lauberdière's Journal. The Revolutionary War Journal of Louis François Bertrand d'Aubevoye, Comte de Lauberdière" *Colonial Williamsburg. The Journal of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation* Vol. 18, No. 1, (Autumn 1995), pp. 33-37.

²¹ The *Livre d'ordre* is preserved in the Archives Générales du Département de Meurthe-et-Moselle in Nancy, France, under the call number E 235. Unfortunately it ends on 17 August 1781 just as the troops got ready to break camp and set out for the march to Yorktown.

²² I am currently trying to gain access to these papers owned by a private foundation in France.

²³ *Reisen Beschreibung von America welche das Hochlöbliche Regiment von Zweybrücken hat gemacht zu Wasser und zu Land vom Jahr 1780 bis 84*. I am currently preparing an English translation and edition.

²⁴ Milton Latham Papers MMC 1907.

²⁵ Amblard, who enlisted at 19 in 1773, was discharged as a captain in 1793. His manuscript is located in the Archives Départementales de l'Ardèche in Privas, France. At this point I am at a loss to explain why numerous passages from his journal can be found verbatim in a journal (which contains a complete set of maps of the campsites of the French army from Newport to Yorktown and back) kept by an unidentified officer of the grenadiers or chasseurs in the Soissonnais. See my "A New View of Old Williamsburg. A Huntington Library Manuscript provides another glimpse of the city in 1781." *Colonial Williamsburg. The Journal of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation* Vol. 22 No. 1, (Spring 2000), pp. 30-34.

Menonville or Rosel listed in Rice and Brown is unknown. Three items are collections of maps drawn by engineers for the march and/or for the siege of Yorktown. Other primary sources are but collections of letters written during different stages of the campaign, i.e. those of Axel von Fersen, Esebeck, Graf Schwerin, Montesquieu, du Plessis, Charlus, or Crublier d'Opterre and contain little or no information on the march through New York. Berthier's extremely valuable account ends on 26 August 1781, many more end with the siege of Yorktown, e.g., the accounts by Cromot du Bourg or William de Deux-Ponts. Others, i.e., those of Ségur or Broglie begin only in 1782 when their authors arrived in America. Of those who participated in the marches, some, such as Blanchard, either marched ahead of the main army to check on campsites or, as in the case of Lauberdière, followed behind the main army. Others again, such as Brisout de Barneville simply give a list of miles (his journal also ends December 5, 1781), just like the grenadier from the Bourbonnais. The marquis de Chastellux did not write a word about the march; the duc de Lauzun's *Mémoires* say precious little about the weeks outside New York, while the *Détails intéressants* of Hugau do not begin until after the siege of Yorktown. Desandrouins had the misfortune of losing his journal in the wreck of the *Duc de Bourgogne* in the spring of 1783, and his surviving description of the march to Yorktown consists of 10 lines; those of the return march are somewhat longer at four printed pages.

The usefulness of the majority of journals is further reduced by the fact that virtually all officers who made the march to Yorktown kept their comments on the return march very short: Clermont-Crèvecœur's journal for example, an excellent source for 1781, devotes all of 20 lines to the return march a year later. Fortunately Verger, who had sailed with the siege artillery to Yorktown in August 1780, fills some of that void.

Finally, a word of caution. While letters and diaries written from or in America reflect the state of knowledge and interpretation of events at the time and are usually reliable, many journals were written decades later and are in some cases heavily colored by the (usually negative) experiences of the authors during the French Revolution. This is even more true for memoirs, which are always written from hindsight and often with a goal (no one wants to look bad in his own memoirs) or purpose (a last chance to grind an axe), and frequently (though not always intentionally) with a selective memory. This makes them as much a source for the life and times of the author as a reflection of the personality and of the time in the life of the author when they were written. The reader needs to be wary -- even if these memoirs were written by Rochambeau himself!

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Criteria for Selection: How Sites Were Chosen for Inclusion

Within the parameters set in goal 3) it was decided to include only structures and sites connected directly with the march proper of Rochambeau's little army, and of the Continental Army, for which primary source evidence exists. Movements of French forces and/or of French and American officers prior to the summer of 1781, e.g., the naval actions in the summer of 1778 or Chastellux many travels, or travels after the departure of Rochambeau's troops from New York, e.g., Lauzun's farewell journey in 1783 to Newport

and New Windsor or Washington's stay at the DeWindt House prior to the evacuation of New York in 1783, were excluded. So were sites connected with actions of the French navy and those of Frenchmen in American service, especially the marquis de Lafayette, even though he spent much time in New York in his capacity as major general in the Continental Army. Also excluded were sites connected with the American troops under General William Heath after August 18, 1781, while Washington and Rochambeau were on their march to Virginia.

Also excluded were sites that could not be located with precision, esp. the bivouacs of the French army on its way to King's Ferry in August 1781 or the advance bivouac of the New Jersey line and Moses Hazen's Canadian Regiment near Kakiat for three days from August 22-25, 1781. For the same reason were also not included the Lauzun Legion Camp near Wampus Pond in July 1781, and the Chatterton Hill Camp of Lauzun's Legion in July 1781. Also excluded were the Continental Army Winter Camp of 1780/81 in Newburgh/New Windsor, the Continental Army Winter Camp of 1781/82, and the march of Lauzun's Legion from the Crompond encampment to Wilmington in October 1782

Within these parameters, not one, but numerous routes, or better: road segments taken by various components of the two armies in New York, emerged:

- 1) The route taken by the French infantry forces to Philipsburg in July 1781
- 2) The route taken by Lauzun's Legion to Philipsburg in July 1781
- 3) The route taken by the American forces to Philipsburg in July 1781
- 4) The route taken by the French forces to Suffern in August 1781
- 5) The route taken by the American forces to Suffern in August 1781
- 6) The route taken by the New Jersey line and Moses Hazen's Canadian Regiment from Sneedens Landing to Chatham, New Jersey, in July 1781
- 7) The route taken by the American forces to Peekskill in September 1782
- 8) The route taken by French forces to Peekskill and on to Danbury in September 1782
- 9) The route taken by Lauzun's Legion from Peekskill to Wilmington in October 1782

Routes/road segments in this report are listed *chronologically* -- as much as possible, since some routes were traveled concurrently -- as they were visited by Washington's and Rochambeau's armies. Geographically they are organized as a modern traveler following the route(s) would encounter them in the field when traveling from the Connecticut State Line to the New Jersey State Line for the year 1781, and from the New Jersey State Line to the Connecticut State Line for the year 1782.

Fieldwork and photography were undertaken in October 2000. Copies of the final report, photographs and supporting materials are deposited at the Greenway Heritage Conservancy for the Hudson River Valley, Inc. French and German words are in italics unless they are included as English words in *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, tenth edition. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are mine.

The historical and architectural survey was conducted in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Identification and Evaluation (National Park Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, 1983). A discussion of the general methodology that was utilized may be found in *Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning*.

National Register Bulletin 24 (Derry, Jandl, Shull, and Thorman, National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, 1977; Parker, revised 1985).

The criteria used for the evaluation of properties were based on those of the National Register of Historic Places, administered by the National Park Service under the supervision of the Secretary of the Interior. Properties listed in the National Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture. Recognition of these resources is intended to contribute to an understanding of the historical and cultural foundations of the nation.

The National Register's criteria for evaluating the significance of properties, which were developed to recognize the accomplishments of all peoples who made a contribution to the country's history and heritage, state the following:

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity in location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, association and:

- a) that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- b) that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- c) that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- d) that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Using these criteria, I inspected and inventoried all sites listed in this report. The sites listed here are of six different types:

- 1) Campsites and bivouacs
- 2) Buildings and building sites
- 3) Plaques, tablets, and markers placed by the State of New York, by organizations such as the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Sons of the American Revolution, the Society of the Cincinnati as well as by individual communities and/or historical societies to commemorate campsites, buildings, and events connected with the W3R
- 4) Tombstones/grave markers and other emblems

- 5) Archeological Sites
- 6) Natural landscape features

Applying the criteria as outlined above, I identified 45 separate sites which meet these requirements. These sites consist of:

- 12 Campsites and bivouacs
- 16 Buildings and building sites
- 12 Plaques, tablets, and markers
- 2 Tombstones/grave markers
- 2 Archeological sites
- 1 Natural landscape feature

3.2 The Form

Inventory Number. Each inventoried property is assigned an inventory number, which appears on the form and the slides. Site profiles and inventoried properties are arranged chronologically according to the marching sequence. Street names and street numbers are recorded as they appear in town records.

Historic Name. The historic name serves as a shorthand for indicating the site's significance. In the case of commercial buildings, churches, and public buildings, the historic name is straightforward and represents the buildings earliest known use. With houses, the historic name is usually the name of the family that built it or who lived there for many years. In some cases the name of the earliest owner could not be determined.

Date. Dates of construction are based on architectural evidence, information from primary and secondary sources (see bibliography), research files maintained by the Connecticut Historical Commission, original research in primary sources, and other historical documentation. The forms generally indicated the reason for ascribing a particular date to a building or site.

Materials. In cases where cement or other types of facing were applied to underpinnings it was not possible to determine, without access to cellars or scraping away the cement from the foundation of a monument, what the actual foundation materials were. "Asbestos siding" was checked off for houses with any type of rigid composition shingles; however, many of these are wood-pulp products containing no asbestos.

Dimensions. Building and monument dimensions are either taken from Tax Assessor's street cards or were determined by measuring the object itself in the field. The dimension of the elevation facing the street is given first.

Condition. Without extensive analysis, it was not possible to assess professionally the structural condition of any building. The judgement on the form is based simply on the external condition of the building, and the form's box denoting "good" was checked for any structure lacking obvious problems such as sagging walls. "Good" means that everything about the exterior appeared in order; "Fair" means that there were some problems (badly peeled paint, cracked siding, missing roof shingles, rust stains, deep scratches on plaques, missing fastening bolts etc.) which, if left unchecked, could lead to damage. "Deteriorated" was used for sites with severe exterior problems.

Threats to Buildings and Sites. Unless the survey personnel had direct knowledge of a specific threat, "None known" was checked.

Wherever possible National Register of Historic Places or National Historic Landmark registration forms addressing these issues were attached to the site form.

3.3 Other Parts of the Survey Report

In addition to the inventory forms and site profiles, which form the core of the survey, the project report includes an overview of the French army of the *ancien régime*, and of French forces in America before their march with the Continental Army through New York in July/August 1781 and again in October/November 1782. It also includes a discussion of primary resources still standing in the field as well as mention of resources listed in earlier sources that have since disappeared. A set of color slides for all sites surveyed is attached as well. Indices to the forms and the slides are included in the report.

3.4 Recommendations

Almost four dozen sites have been identified in this report as connected with the W3R in New York, and while all deserving buildings are all already listed on the NRH or the NHL, the campsites are not. Wherever possible an attempt should be made to work toward their protection and preservation by integrating them into the New York State Preservation Program files in the Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation with a view toward their nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

Such protective measures are advocated in view of the second recommendation. Only a few of the sites are identified in the field as part of the W3R; most are not. This goes for well-established historic sites such as the Van Cortlandt House or Stony Point as well as for lesser known sites, which (especially the campsites) may prove tempting targets to relic hunters. Protection of sites and acquisition of open space stood at the beginning of the

W3R efforts in Connecticut and it applies to New York as well. The restoration and maintenance of neglected historic sites has begun, e.g., the Odell House, and needs to be accelerated to meet the 2006 deadline. A concurrent step in the W3R project should be the compilation of a list of sites to be marked, once funds are available, as components of the W3R. Concurrently, site managers should make an effort to integrate the W3R into the interpretation of their sites. Identification (and possibly excavation and interpretation during Phase II of this project) of known sites such as the Gilbert Ward House, site of a French hospital in Philipsburg, or the Falconer House, Lauzun's headquarters, should be a goal of local historical societies. By 2006, all of these sites should form a string of fixed points along which an interconnected bicycle or automobile route or a heritage trail. Such a trail needs to be advertised and described in a guide/travel book to enable historically interested tourists as well as New Yorkers to trace the route taken by America and her allies in 1781 and 1782.

Lastly, I should point out that Chapters 5 and 6 were written and published in slightly different form as part of my reports for the State of Connecticut. I am very grateful to Jack Shannahan, SHPO of the State of Connecticut, for permission to integrate them into this report. Though the basic facts of history have not changed during these past three years, historical research and writing is always "work in progress." As new sources come to light, details will change and so will the interpretation of events. The reader is therefore encouraged to contact me -- to criticize, to suggest, and to add whatever he or she can to contribute to the success of the task of making the WASHINGTON - ROCHAMBEAU REVOLUTIONARY ROUTE a reality. The advancement of historical knowledge, like all progress, depends as much on sharing of information as it does on individual research.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY OF THE WASHINGTON-ROCHAMBEAU REVOLUTIONARY ROUTE

When Allan Forbes and Paul F. Cadman published their *France and New England* in 1925, they indicated that an "effort has been made to get the State Park Commission of Connecticut to mark all the nineteen camp sites in that State and it is hoped that some time this will be done."²⁶ Thirty years later, the sites were still not marked and it was only in response to the establishment of the Interstate Rochambeau Commission that the General Assembly took up the issue again in the mid-1950s.

²⁶ Allan Forbes and Paul F. Cadman, *France and New England* 3 vols., (Boston, 1925) Vol. 1, p. 131.

That commission was the brainchild of Charles Parmer (1898-1958), a Virginia radio commentator who took it upon himself to resurrect the memory of French participation and to identify the route taken by Rochambeau and his troops in 1781/82. In the spring of 1951, Parmer, a descendant of a French soldier, began prodding state governments and patriotic societies for funds.²⁷ In 1952, the Colonial Dames of Virginia endorsed his proposal for a uniform marking of Washington's and Rochambeau's route and on 16 January 1953, Virginia Governor John S. Battle appointed Parmer to head a *Rochambeau Commission*. Its purpose was "to arrange with other States for the uniform marking of the route taken in 1781 by General Rochambeau and his French forces (... and) to arrange for a joint celebration of the anniversary of the Rochambeau Victory March."²⁸

On April 16, 1953, Parmer called for a meeting of interested parties at Mount Vernon. The event was widely reported in the press; even President Dwight D. Eisenhower and French Foreign minister Georges Bidault sent congratulatory telegrams. Parmer was elected *General Chairman of the Interstate Rochambeau Commission of the United States* and by the fall of 1953, "Rhode Island, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut had appointed Commissions or Representatives to work with Virginia." New York, New Jersey, and Maryland had "leaders of patriotic groups making plans to do the marking with State permission."²⁹ But interest in the project seems to have waned as fast as it had arisen. Parmer's Commission was continued until 1958, but only Connecticut seems to have carried out the task of identifying and marking the route. In its January 1957 session, the General Assembly passed House Bill No. 2005, "An Act concerning erecting Markers to designate the Sites of Camps occupied by the French troops under Rochambeau." Approved on June 4, 1957, it appropriated \$ 1,500 to cover expenses and instructed the State Highway Commissioner to "erect roadside signs" in cooperation with Parmer's "Interstate Rochambeau Commission" and "local historical societies or fraternal community groups." Pursuant to this legislation, the State Highway Commission placed a total of 27 signs at or near known campsites of Rochambeau's army across the state.³⁰

Parmer was less successful in New York. Correspondence between New York State Historian Albert Corey and Parmer between March and September 1953 shows that Parmer tried hard to get New York involved in his commission, but for lack of money the initiative never got off the ground. By 11 February, Parmer had contacted Governor Thomas E. Dewey, who forwarded the letter to Corey, who in turn wrote to Stephen P. Thomas, Director of the Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences on 2 September 1953, that he had taken "the matter up with the appropriate authorities here. While the project was recognized as being an excellent one and worthy of encouragement, we could find no money available

²⁷ I am grateful to Albert D. McJoynt of Mt. Vernon, Virginia, for providing me copies of correspondence and newspaper clippings he had acquired from Parmer's widow.

²⁸ The origins of Parmer's activities are outlined in his *Report of the Rochambeau Commission to the Governor and the general Assembly of Virginia* Senate Document No. 19 (Richmond, 1953).

²⁹ Parmer apparently never contacted Massachusetts for cooperation. The list of states involved is taken from his *Report of the Rochambeau Commission*, p. 10.

³⁰ The legislative history of this bill can be followed via *Stenographer's Notes of Public Hearings before the Joint Standing Committee on Roads and Bridges* (1957), p. 165, (February 26, 1957); Connecticut General Assembly, House, *Proceedings 1957* Vol. 7, Part 3, p. 1436, (April 23, 1957), Part 5, pp. 2819/20, (May 27, 1957); Connecticut General Assembly, Senate, *Proceedings 1957* (May 28, 1957), p. 3557, and Secretary of State, *Special Acts passed by the General Assembly of the State of Connecticut at the January Session, 1957* (Hartford, 1957), No. 552, (June 4, 1957).

for that purpose." Corey indicated that he "would certainly be willing to serve on a state committee" for the Interstate Rochambeau Commission "if one were organized." There the matter rested.³¹ The committee never constituted itself, New York never appointed a Rochambeau Route Commissioner, and no signs were put up. Parmer died in the fall of 1958 shortly after the dedication of the Fourteenth Street Bridge (I-395 between the Jefferson Memorial and the Pentagon) over the Potomac in Washington, DC, as Rochambeau Memorial Bridge in October 1958.³² The project died with him as well and his efforts were soon forgotten.³³

Fifteen years later, in 1972, Anne S. K. Brown and Howard C. Rice, Jr., published the authoritative and groundbreaking study *The American Campaigns of Rochambeau's Army, 1780, 1781, 1782, 1783*. Volume 2 of the work contains 204 pages of itineraries and texts followed by 177 contemporary maps, charts, and views of the routes taken by Rochambeau's army on the American mainland as well as in the Caribbean. These maps identified and definitely established the route of the main body of the French forces.

During preparations for the Bicentennial of the American Revolution, Representative Hamilton Fish of New York introduced on April 16, 1975, House of Representatives Concurrent Resolution 225. It called upon federal, state, county, and local governments to recognize the route taken by Rochambeau's forces as identified in the Brown and Rice work as "The Washington-Rochambeau National Historic Route." On November 14, 1975, the United States Department of the Interior as the supervisory body of the National Park Service (NPS) informed Representative James A. Haley, Chair of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, that the department had no objections to the resolution. It recommended, however, that the word "National" not be used since the route was neither part of the NPS nor met the criteria of integrity required by the NPS.

The Sub-Committee on National Parks and Recreation held hearings on the resolution and the correspondence from the Department of the Interior dated November 17, 1975, and sent a favorable report to Haley, whose committee took up the resolution on January 27, 1976. In its report to the full House, Haley's committee recommended passage of the resolution creating the "Washington-Rochambeau Historic Route" albeit outside the National Park System. On February 17, 1976, the resolution declaring the recognition of the route "as one of the more useful and enduring educational patriotic accomplishments to come from the bicentennial of the American War for Independence" passed without objection as amended and was referred to the United States Senate the following day.

More than five months later, on July 21, 1976, the Department of the Interior informed Senator Henry M. Jackson, chair of the Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, that it had no objection to House Concurrent Resolution 225. Following a hearing by the Senate's Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation on August 2, 1976, Jackson's committee

³¹ I am grateful to Dr. Joseph Meany for providing me copies of this correspondence from his files in the New York State Historian's Office.

³² United States 85th Congress, 1st Session, House Resolution H.R. 572, January 3, 1957, and Senate Bill S. 768, January 22 (legislative day, January 3), 1957.

³³ In September 1973, Mrs. Parmer was still asking French government officials to forward her the insignia of *Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur* which her husband had been awarded posthumously in May 1959.

recommended on August 5, that the Senate pass the resolution as well.³⁴ The resolution was passed by the Senate on August 25, 1976.

Joint House-Senate Resolution 225 had asked that the states "through appropriate signing, call attention to the route," but failed to appropriate funds to pay for signs outside Colonial National Historical Park in Yorktown, Virginia. Because of this lack of federal funds, a private "Washington-Rochambeau National Historic Route Committee" established itself in Yorktown, New York, and set up its own signs. But few of them seem to have survived.³⁵ But even without federal funds or markers, hundreds of re-enactors traced the route from Newport to Yorktown from October 9-16, 1981, to commemorate the bicentennial of the siege.³⁶

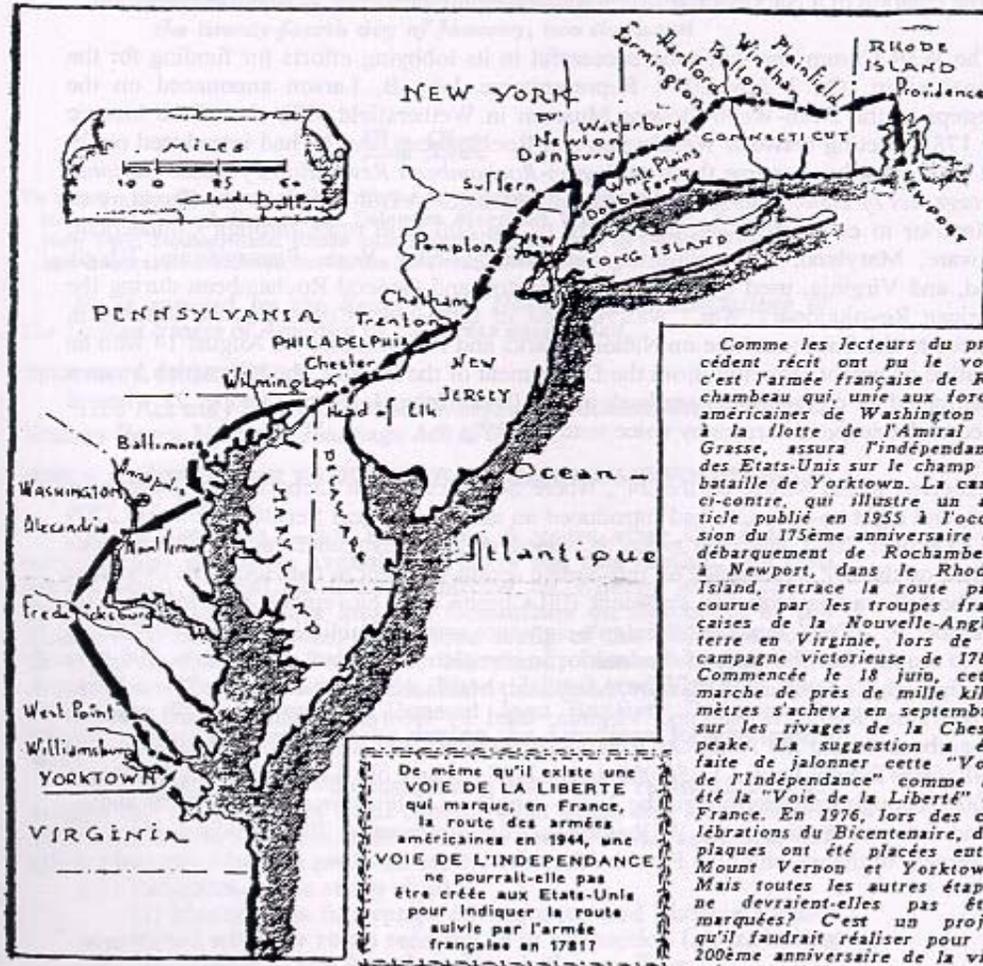
Almost twenty years passed before another effort to identify, mark, and protect the route began in Connecticut. In 1995, the Inter Community Historic Resources Committee began its work of identifying and classifying known campsites according to their state of preservation and the danger of potentially destructive development. The Committee set itself the goal in October 1995 of having Rochambeau's route, already recognized as the "Washington-Rochambeau Historic Route" by the United States Congress, listed in the National Register of Historic Places as the "Revolutionary Road." Concurrently it asked State Representative Pamela Z. Sawyer to introduce legislation in the General Assembly to allocate the funds for the historical, archeological, and architectural research required for that registration. After three years, and with the help of 26 co-signers, the state legislature in the spring of 1998 appropriated \$ 30,000 for the first of three annual phases to document the route through Connecticut as the first step toward having the entire route from Newport to Yorktown listed in the National Register.

³⁴ See United States. Congress. House. Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. 94th Congress, 2nd Session, Report No. 94-799, *Recognizing the Washington-Rochambeau National Historic Route*, and United States. Congress. Senate. Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, 94th Congress, 2nd Session, Report No. 94-1145, *The Washington-Rochambeau Historic Route* (Washington, DC, 1976).

³⁵ I have been unable to identify or make contact with any member of that committee, which seems to have disbanded at an unknown date though its markers in Connecticut are still maintained.

³⁶ The "Rochambeau. A Reenactment of His Historic March from Newport to Yorktown" project was sponsored by the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantation and directed by the Office of the Adjutant General of the state. I am grateful to Roy P. Najecki for sharing his folder of press releases and marching orders relative to that march with me. There also seems to have been some support in France for such a project: see the attached page from the *Revue economique française* Vol. 104, No. 2, (1982).

Une "Voie de la Liberté" en France Une "Voie de l'Indépendance" aux USA



Concurrently in June 1998, a commemorative initiative of the National Park Service began as an effort of Revolutionary War-related parks in its Northeast and Southeast regions to use the 225th anniversary of the American Revolution to enhance public understanding of events from 1775 to 1783. In collaboration with, but organizationally separate from this initiative, almost 50 local and regional historians and historically interested individuals from New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut met at Washington's Headquarters in Newburgh, New York, on 16 December 1999, to organize a Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route committee. Chaired by Dr. Jacques Bossiere, the W3R functions as a working committee that is part of a broader initiative to commemorate the

225th Anniversary of the American Revolution. Its goals were, and are, the identification and preservation of the route itself and of historic sites along the route on a state level, and the creation of a National Historic Trail to promote inter-state heritage preservation.

The W3R Committee was soon successful in its lobbying efforts for funding for the national effort. On 3 July 2000, Representative John B. Larson announced on the doorsteps of the Dean-Webb-Stevens Museum in Wethersfield, CT, site of the historic May 1781 meeting between Washington and Rochambeau, that he had introduced on 29 June 2000 what has become the *Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Heritage Act of 2000*. That same day, his bill, entitled "A Bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to complete a resource study of the 600 mile route through Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Virginia, used by George Washington and General Rochambeau during the American Revolutionary War," was referred to the House Committee on Resources. Referred to the Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands on August 14 with an executive comment requested from the Department of the Interior, the bill, which by now had attracted 42 co-sponsors, was back on the floor of the House on October 23 where it passed under suspended rules by voice vote at 3:17 p.m.

Received in the Senate on the 24th, where Senators Joseph Lieberman, Christopher Dodd, and eight co-sponsors had introduced an almost identical Senate Resolution 3209 on 17 October 2000, and read twice, it passed without amendment and by Unanimous Consent on the 27th. A message on this Senate action was sent to the House the following day; the bill was presented to President Bill Clinton on 2 November, who signed it on November 9, 2000.³⁷ President Clinton's signature created Public Law No. 106-473, an "Act to require the Secretary of the Interior to complete a resource study of the 600-mile route through Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Virginia, used by George Washington and General Rochambeau during the American Revolutionary War." Unlike previous legislation, this bill allocates federal funds, \$ 250,000, to the NPS to carry out a feasibility study to begin in 2002. Though much remains to be done -- only two states have completed their above-ground resource studies -- the W3R is on schedule to meet its 2006 deadline, the 225th anniversary of the march of the Franco-American armies to victory in Yorktown.

³⁷ Concurrently First Lady and Senator-elect Hilary Rodham Clinton designated the W3R a *Millennium Trail*, making properties along the route eligible for federal TEA 21 funds through each state's Department of Transportation.

H. R. 4794

One Hundred Sixth Congress
of the
United States of America

AT THE SECOND SESSION

*Begun and held at the City of Washington on Monday,
the twenty-fourth day of January, two thousand*

An Act

To require the Secretary of the Interior to complete a resource study of the 600 mile route through Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Virginia, used by George Washington and General Rochambeau during the American Revolutionary War.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of
the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Heritage Act of 2000".

SEC. 2. STUDY OF THE WASHINGTON-ROCHAMBEAU REVOLUTIONARY ROUTE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date on which funds are made available to carry out this section, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives, a resource study of the 600 mile route through Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Virginia, used by George Washington and General Jean Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, comte de Rochambeau during the American Revolutionary War.

(b) CONSULTATION.—In conducting the study required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall consult with State and local historic associations and societies, State historic preservation agencies, and other appropriate organizations.

(c) CONTENTS.—The study shall—

- (1) identify the full range of resources and historic themes associated with the route referred to in subsection (a), including its relationship to the American Revolutionary War;
- (2) identify alternatives for National Park Service involvement with preservation and interpretation of the route referred to in subsection (a); and

1/24/01 9:15 AM

(3) include cost estimates for any necessary acquisition, development, interpretation, operation, and maintenance associated with the alternatives identified pursuant to paragraph (2).

John Boehner
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Strom Thurmond

Vice President of the United States and
President of the Senate *pro Tempore*

APPROVED
NOV - 9 2000

William Jefferson

From Yorktown's ruins, ranked and still,
Two lines stretch far o'er vale and hill:
Who curbs his steed at head of one?
Hark! The low murmur: WASHINGTON!
Who bends his keen approving glance
Where down the gorgeous line of France
Shine knightly star and plume of snow?
Thou too art victor, ROCHAMBEAU!

John Greenleaf Whittier

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

5.1 France and Great Britain on the Eve of American Independence

On February 6, 1778, His Most Christian Majesty Louis XVI, By the Grace of God, King of France and Navarre, absolutist ruler *par excellence*, whose right to rule rested on his position as representative of God on earth, whose theory of government knew but subjects without rights, a man who could and did proudly proclaim: *l'état, c'est moi!* - I am the state! - entered into an alliance with a government that was in a state of rebellion against fellow monarch George III, By the Grace of God, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland. Absolutist France backed and bankrolled a government that justified its existence by claiming to "derive[d] its just powers from the consent of the governed," which proclaimed the seditious idea that "all men are created equal" and turned subjects into citizens by endowing them with "certain unalienable rights" such as "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

In retrospect it is hard to imagine two allies more diverse than France and the United States in 1778. What formed the basis of this alliance and what held it together were not shared ideologies and ideals, nor common territorial or financial interests. France bankrolled a bankrupt, reluctant ally, and in the very treaty creating the alliance renounced all territorial gain in the New World. The one and only reason why the France of Louis XVI would so generously share her resources with American rebels was a passion to defeat and to humiliate a common enemy, the desire for revenge, the urge to destroy the British *tyrannie des mers*, which threatened to swallow the final remnants of France's once powerful colonial empire that had survived the humiliation of 1763.³⁸ It was for this goal that France spent nearly 1 billion livres between 1775 and 1783, it was for this goal that the *fleurs-de-lis* flew on the ramparts of Yorktown, and it was for this goal that His Most Christian Majesty threw all ideological considerations overboard and provided the United States with the military, financial, and economic support she needed to win her independence.

³⁸A book published by the *Association des Amis du Musée de la Marine* on the occasion of the Bicentennial of the American Revolution even carries that aspect in its title. See Jacques Vichot, *La guerre pour la liberté des mers, 1778-1783* (Paris, 1976).

The American Revolutionary War was both the last traditional war of cabinets as well as the first modern popular conflict in a century characterized by almost continuous warfare. From the outbreak of the War of the Spanish Succession in 1701, to the French Revolutionary Wars in the 1790s, Europe witnessed barely a dozen years of peace. In all of these wars, Great Britain and France fought on opposite sides. During the first half of the century, the Bourbon kings in Versailles were able to hold their ground against the Hanoverians in London, but the Seven Year's War from 1756 to 1763, appropriately known as the *French and Indian War* on this side of the Atlantic, ended in disaster. In the (First) Peace of Paris, France lost virtually all her possessions in India and in the New World, where Canada became British and Louisiana was given to Spain. All that was left of France's erstwhile globe-circling empire were the sugar islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe and the fever-infested swamps of Cayenne and French Guyana.

But there was some posturing behind France's ostentatious anger at this humiliation as well. Much as it hurt French pride, Étienne François, duc de Choiseul-Stainville, her chief minister during negotiations in 1762, had insisted that Britain was to retain Canada. Despite the misgivings of many of his colleagues and popular opinion at home, which clamored for the retention of Canada, Choiseul realized that giving up the colony would free his foreign policy in the New World. His adversary Lord Bedford, the chief British negotiator, seems to have anticipated Choiseul's fondest dreams when he saw an alarming mirage emerge across the Atlantic. He wondered "whether the neighborhood of the French to our North American colonies was not the greatest security for their dependence on the mother country, which I feel will be slighted by them when their apprehension of the French is removed."³⁹ Bedford's worst fears soon became reality.

The ink was barely dry on the peace treaty when France began her preparations for the war of revenge Louis XV and his ministers considered necessary to restore *la gloire* to the crown of Louis XIV. If revenge in America and India was one goal of French foreign policy after 1763, the restoration of French prestige and political influence on the European continent was another. How little she mattered in European affairs was driven home to France in 1764, when Catherine the Great had her protegee Stanislas Poniatowski elected King of Poland by the *Sejm* over France's opposition. Eight years later, France was forced to watch helplessly as Austria, Russia, and Prussia carved large chunks of territory out of France's traditional ally in Eastern Europe. The annexation of Corsica in 1769 was but a small plaster on the festering sore of French pride.

But the eastward orientation of three of Europe's five major powers also held advantages for France. Choiseul knew that France could not count on much help from other European powers in her quest for revenge. Unable to gain allies of her own, her foreign policy after 1763, set itself three goals. First she had to try and isolate Great Britain on the continent. This task was made easier by Russia's war with the Sultan in Constantinople from 1768 to 1774, by Austria's continued attempts throughout the 1770s to trade Bavaria from the Wittelsbachs for the Netherlands, and by Prussia's considerable animosity with Britain for abandoning her continental ally in 1761, once her overseas war aims had been achieved. The second task had to be the strengthening of King Carlos III

³⁹ In W. J. Eccles, "The French Alliance and the American Victory" in: *The World Turned Upside Down. The American Victory in the War of Independence* John Ferling, ed., (Westport, 1976), pp. 147-163, p. 148.

on the throne of Spain and of the Bourbon Family Compact of 1761, between the ruling houses in Paris and Madrid. As collateral, Paris needed to keep colonial tensions between Madrid and London, especially over Florida, given to Great Britain in 1763, simmering. Lastly she had to avoid all continental entanglements which could infringe upon her ability to wage war against England whenever and wherever the opportunity arose.

In February 1762, a full year before the Treaty of Paris was signed, Choiseul declared that after the end of that war, he would pursue "only one foreign policy, a fraternal union with Spain; only one policy for war, and that is England."⁴⁰ In his policy of revenge, the possibility of a war in the New World loomed large in the mind of Choiseul. The French minister worked from the assumption that England had to be attacked where she was weakest, and that was in her American Empire. Versailles was convinced that the most effective way to hurt England and her trade, which was the foundation of her wealth, was through the separation of her American colonies. This would severely weaken British trade and sea power and since France would take over transatlantic trade from Britain, lead to a corresponding increase in the relative strength of France. British policy versus her colonies, combined with the free hand France had gained with the cession of Canada, would give her the opportunity to achieve her goals.⁴¹

The Seven Years' War had not only brought huge territorial gains for Great Britain, it had also resulted in some £ 137 million of debt. Interest on the debt amounted to £ 5 million annually, more than half the governmental revenues of some £ 8 million. Parliament in London wanted the colonies to help pay for these debts and asked them to defray one third of the cost of maintaining 10,000 Redcoats in the New World. In 1764, Prime Minister Sir George Grenville received the House of Common's approval to place import duties on lumber, foodstuffs, molasses, and rum in the colonies. The Sugar Act of 1764 was immensely unpopular in the New World and hostility increased even more when the Quartering Act of 1765 required colonists to provide food and quarters for British troops. Hard on its heels came the 1765 Stamp Act, probably the most infamous law concerning the colonies ever passed by a British Parliament. Vehement opposition forced the Commons to repeal the act in March 1766. To make up for the lost revenue, the Townshend Acts of 1767 levied new taxes on glass, painter's lead, paper and tea.

Relations with the motherland had barely been smoothed over when long-standing military-civilian tensions in Boston erupted on March 5, 1770, when British troops fired into a mob.⁴² The infamous *Boston Massacre* killed five people, including Crispus Attucks, a black man reportedly the group's leader. In the fall of 1773, tensions flared up again in Boston and all along the coast when East India Company tea ships were turned back at Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. A cargo ship was burned at Annapolis on October 14; another ship had its cargo thrown overboard, once again, in Boston at the *Boston Tea Party* on December 16, 1773, to protest the new tax on tea. Parliament responded with what the colonists called the "Intolerable Acts" of 1774, which curtailed Massachusetts' self-rule and barred the use of Boston harbor until the tea was paid for.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ The best introduction into this issue can be found in W.J. Eccles, *France in America* (New York, 1972).

⁴² See Douglas Edward Leach, *Roots of Conflict: British Armed Forces and Colonial Americans, 1677-1763* (Chapel Hill, 1986). For the period following see John Shy, *Toward Lexington: The Role of the British Army in the Coming of the American Revolution* (Princeton, 1965).

Of equal, if not greater importance for the rapid deterioration of British-Colonial relations was the Quebec Act of 1774. This act not only granted Roman Catholics in Canada the freedom to practice their religion, more importantly it placed all lands between the Great Lakes and the Ohio River under the administration of the governor of formerly French Quebec. With that decision, the House of Commons seemed to have closed off forever all chances of continued westward expansion. Until ten years earlier, the French had stood in the way of land-hungry colonists, now Parliament in London had assumed that role. When the First Continental Congress convened, after ten years of conflict with the crown, in Carpenters' Hall in Philadelphia on September 5, 1774, Great Britain had become the antagonist for expansion-minded colonists who in ever larger numbers saw independence as a potentially viable option.

5.2 French Aid Prior to the Alliance of 1778

The war Choiseul had foreseen was about to break out. France was prepared militarily and politically. Ever since the Peace of Paris, Choiseul and his successor Charles Gravier, the comte de Vergennes, who replaced Choiseul as foreign minister in 1774, had embarked on an ambitious naval build-up. It called for a fleet of 80 ships of the line and 47 frigates, almost twice the 47 ships of the line in French service in 1763. Helped by an enthusiastic response from provincial estates and the generosity of municipalities such as Paris, the French navy grew to 64 ships of the line, mostly of 74 guns, plus 50 frigates in 1770. In 1765, Choiseul issued the first major new navy regulations since 1689, retired numerous incompetent officers, emphasized training, and the following year re-established the navy as an independent service within France's armed forces. Gabriel de Sartines, Choiseul's successor as navy minister (1774-1780), continued these programs: when France entered the war in 1778, her order of battle listed 52 ships of the line of at least 50 guns (plus 60 frigates) with a crew of about 1,250 officers and 75,000 men. They were arrayed against Britain's 66, and there was hope that Spain would join in the fight, adding another 58. Parity with Great Britain had been achieved; since she had to keep some 20 ships of the line close to home to counter the threat of French raids, naval superiority in select theatres of war such as the Caribbean had become a possibility.⁴³

The defeats of the Seven Years' War, particularly at Rossbach in 1757, had also laid painfully bare the inefficiency of the French army, which was "still basically functioning as in the days of Louis XIV."⁴⁴ Beginning in 1762, Choiseul's ministry carried out long-overdue reforms. At last all infantry regiments were organized in the same way -- equipment and training were standardized throughout the army and recruiting was centralized. The *Maréchal* de Saxe's dream of the 1740s that some day the French army

⁴³ By far the best account of the French navy is Jonathan R. Dull, *The French Navy and American Independence: A Study of Arms and Diplomacy, 1774-1787* (Princeton, 1975); annual lists of capital ships on pp. 351-378. At Yorktown in 1781, France enjoyed that temporary superiority that Choiseul had hoped for long enough to decide the outcome of the war.

⁴⁴ A good introduction with superb illustrations can be found in René Chartrand and Francis Back, *The French Army in the American War of Independence* (London, 1991), pp. 6-14; the quote is taken from page 6, the regimental organization from p. 9. Additional information can be found in Samuel F. Scott, *The Response of the Royal Army to the French Revolution. The Role and Development of the Line Army 1787-93* (Oxford, 1978).

would march in step was finally coming true. The artillery was re-organized along the ideas of General Jean Baptiste de Gribeauval, and the cavalry got its first riding school.

Reforms were pushed further in 1774, when Louis XVI succeeded to the throne of France. The comte de Saint-Germain, Louis XVI's Minister of War, forbade the sale of officers' commissions, retired some 865 of over 900 colonels in the army and eventually abolished the King's Guards, including the Horse Grenadiers and the famous Musketeers, as too expensive. In March/April of 1776, all regiments (except the Guards and the *Régiment du Roi*) were reduced to two battalions only; regiments with four battalions saw their 2nd and 4th battalions transformed into new regiments. The most famous of these newly created units is undoubtedly the *Gâtinais*, created from the *Auvergne*, whose grenadiers and chasseurs stormed Redoubt No. 9 before Yorktown in 1781. Concurrently St. Germain also reduced the number of companies per battalion from nine to six and used the savings in officers' salaries to add personnel to each company.

The concept of a two-battalion regiment of five companies each as set up in the *ordonnance* of March 25, 1776, was further clarified on June 1, 1776. It set the strength of an infantry regiment at two battalions of five companies each and an auxiliary company of variable strength. Each regiment had one Grenadier company consisting of 6 officers, 14 non-commissioned officers, 1 *cadet gentilhomme*, 1 surgeon's assistant, 84 grenadiers and 2 drummers for a total of 6 officers and 102 men. Besides the Grenadiers stood one of the newly created *chasseur* or light infantry companies and four companies of fusiliers. The authorized strength of those companies stood at 6 officers, 17 NCOs, 1 *cadet gentilhomme*, 1 surgeon's assistant, 116 *chasseurs* (or fusiliers) and 2 drummers for a total of 6 officers and 137 men. A regimental staff of twelve, i.e. the Colonel, the Second Colonel, 1 Lieutenant Colonel, 1 Major, 1 Quarter-Master Treasurer, 2 Ensigns, 1 Adjutant, 1 Surgeon-Major, 1 Chaplain, 1 Drum-Major, and 1 Armourer. By the spring of 1780, subsequent ordinances had set the authorized strength of a regiment at 67 officers⁴⁵ and 1,148 men (excluding the auxiliary company), which for bookkeeping purposes was fixed at 1,003 men for French, and 1,004 men for foreign, infantry.

When France decided to provide aid to the American colonies in 1775, the paper strength of her land forces amounted to some 140,000 men, though the actual strength was probably 8,000-10,000 men below that number.⁴⁶ Of these, some 77,500 served in one of the 79 French line regiments, about 12,000 in one of the eight German, three Irish, the *Royal Corse* and the *Royal Italien* regiments, and 12,000 served in one of the eleven regiments of Swiss infantry.⁴⁷ The royal household troops, including one regiment each of French and Swiss Guards, were authorized at almost 9,000 men. Almost 6,000 served in the artillery; the cavalry added about 22,000 men and the Light Troops about 3,500.

⁴⁵ Including the two *portes-drapeaux* (flag-bearers) and the *quartier-maître trésorier* (pay/quarter master). The strength of a regiment is that given by Kennett, *French forces*, p. 22.

⁴⁶ Scott, *Response*, pp. 217-222. That British army worldwide numbered 45,000 officers and men in 1775, 8,500 of whom were stationed in North America. But the Royal Navy was larger than the French navy, which numbered about 1,250 officers and 75,000 men with a budget of 58.5 million livres in December 1777. Dull, *French navy*, p. 346.

⁴⁷ Michel Pétard, "Les Étrangers au service de la France (1786)" *Tradition* Vol. 32, (September 1989), pp. 21-29.

During these same years, the army budget increased only modestly from 91.9 million livres in 1766, to 93.5 million in 1775. The relatively small increase in expenditures hides the real significance of the changes that took place within the French army during those years. The armed forces of 1775, had been thoroughly streamlined and funds available were spent much more efficiently. Through the reduction in strength of unreliable but costly elements such as the militia, detached companies, and separate recruit units, the paper strength of the armed forces had declined from roughly 290,000 to 240,000 men. Within the regular army, the guards had remained virtually unchanged and the foot contingent declined by 5,000 through the abolition of units such as the *Grenadiers de France* in 1771. A decrease in the number of foreign infantry, which cost the French taxpayer 368 livres per year as opposed to 230 livres for a French soldier, freed additional funds which were used, e.g., to increase the number of French infantry, of mounted units (from 25,000 to nearly 46,000) and of light troops.⁴⁸ At the end of these reforms stood the introduction of the new Model 1777 *Charleville* musket, a .69 caliber weapon that was lighter, stronger and more reliable than the .75 caliber "Brown Bess" used by the British.

The same holds true for the artillery. After 1765 it consisted of seven regiments named after the community in which they were stationed. In November 1776, each regiment was divided into two battalions of ten companies each: fourteen of gunners, four bombardiers, and two sappers. Each company consisted of four officers and 71 other ranks. Unattached were nine companies of sappers and six companies of miners for a total of 909 officers and 11,805 men authorized strength in the Royal Artillery. This was well above its actual strength of almost 6,000 men, and the artillery, the most technically advanced branch, always had problems keeping its ranks filled. But what it lacked in numbers it made up in quality: contemporaries considered the French artillery second to none, a well-deserved reputation as Lord Cornwallis would find out much to his dismay at Yorktown.

These reforms, necessary as they were, brought St. Germain numerous and powerful enemies in the officer corps, but it was the introduction of a new and universally hated Prussian-style uniform in 1776, that caused his downfall in 1777, and replacement by the Prince de Montbarey (minister until 1780).⁴⁹ By then, the French navy, infantry, cavalry, and artillery had been transformed into well-trained, efficient, and well-equipped organizations ready to take on the British foe once again. The fleet that Admiral de Grasse arrayed at the mouth of the York River in September 1781, and the troops that General Rochambeau would take to America and to victory at Yorktown, had little in common with the French army that had suffered defeat after defeat at the hands of Frederick the Great and the British between 1756 and 1763.

While politicians and administrators in Versailles were preparing for the impending war, they also kept a close watch on American developments. As early as 1767, Choiseul had dispatched the German-born (and self-styled Baron) Major-General Johann von Kalb

⁴⁸ Claude C. Sturgill, "Money for the Bourbon Army in the Eighteenth Century: The State within the State" *War and Society* Vol. 4, No. 2, (September 1986), pp. 17-30. In the 1740s a French soldier had cost 122 livres per year to maintain, a soldier in one of the foreign regiments between 160 and 170 livres.

⁴⁹ The unpopular uniform of 1776, was not officially replaced until February 1779. Since uniforms were replaced in three-years cycles with one third of a regiment receiving new uniforms each year, and since many units ignored the changes and kept using non-regulation equipment, Rochambeau's troops, even within individual regiments, wore a mix of at least two, if not three, different uniform patterns.

on a secret fact-finding mission to the British colonies and again his successor Vergennes followed this policy. Throughout the late 1760s and early 1770s, the French crown repeatedly sent agents to British America in order to keep informed of developments in the lower thirteen colonies.⁵⁰

Vergennes was well aware of the tense situation along America's eastern seashore when the First Continental Congress adjourned in October 1774, with an appeal to King George III to help restore harmony between Britain and the colonies. They also knew that the Congress had called on the colonies to boycott trade with Britain. As the tense winter months of 1774/75, turned to spring, it became only a question of time until civil disobedience would erupt into open violence. That moment arrived in mid-April 1775, when patriots alerted by Paul Revere, William Dawes, and Samuel Prescott attacked British troops at Lexington and Concord on April 19. On May 10, the day the Second Continental Congress opened its debates, Colonels Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold captured Fort Ticonderoga in upstate New York. Next colonials headed for Bunker Hill near Boston, where they repulsed British Redcoats under General William Howe twice before retreating on June 17, 1775. Two days earlier Congress had appointed General George Washington Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army.

The colonies were at war, and France stepped in as the natural ally of the rebellious colonies against the British motherland. America reached out, and France responded. From mid-March to early April 1775, a secret plan to aid the Americans was drawn up in Versailles. When news of Lexington and Concord reached Paris, the government of His Most Christian Majesty, despite all ideological differences, became the first foreign power to provide aid and support to the fledgling United States.⁵¹ In September, Vergennes' emissary Julien-Alexandre Achard de Bonvouloir arrived in Philadelphia to establish relations and to encourage the Americans in their rebellion. Concurrently Silas Deane arrived in Paris as Congress' commercial agent and covert representative. Deane had been instructed to buy clothes, arms and ammunition for 25,000 men, and to negotiate treaties of alliance and commerce with the French.

To supplement Deane's efforts, Vergennes co-opted the playwright Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais, author of *The Barber of Seville*, into his service. As early as the fall of 1775, Beaumarchais had approached Vergennes with a plan to support the American rebels. In January 1776, Vergennes submitted the proposal to King Louis XVI, informing him that the plan was "not so much to terminate the war between America and England, as to sustain and keep it alive to the detriment of the English, our natural and pronounce enemies."⁵² After some hesitation - in March Louis XVI told Vergennes that he "disliked the precedent of one monarchy giving support to a republican insurrection against a legitimate monarchy" -- the king eventually agreed to let Beaumarchais act as the secret agent of the crown.⁵³ In April 1776, substantial military supplies were made

⁵⁰ See Jonathan R. Dull, *A Diplomatic History of the American Revolution* (New Haven, 1985), pp. 63.

⁵¹ Claude Van Tyne, "French Aid before the Alliance of 1778" *American Historical Review* Vol. 31, (1925), pp. 20-40.

⁵² Quoted in "Beaumarchais, Pierre-Augustin Caron de (1732-1799)" in: *The American Revolution 1775-1783. An Encyclopedia* Richard L. Blanco, ed., 2 vols., (New York, 1993), Vol. 1, p. 107.

⁵³ Quoted in General Fonteneau, "La période française de la guerre d'Indépendance (1776-1780)" *Revue historique des armées* Vol. 3, No. 4, (1976), pp. 47-77, p. 48.

available to Beaumarchais, who set up the trading company of Roderigue Hortalez & Co. as a front to channel aid to the Americans. In June, Louis XVI granted Beaumarchais, i.e. the American rebels, a loan of 1 million livres.⁵⁴ Spain added another million in August.⁵⁵

When news of the disaster at Long Island and the occupation of New York by troops under Sir William Howe in September reached Europe in late 1776, Versailles feared that Britain might succeed in snuffing out the rebellion. France and Spain stepped up their support. A royal order forwarded by Jose de Galvez, Minister of the Indies, to Luis de Unzaga, Spanish Governor of Louisiana, of December 24, 1776,⁵⁶ informed Unzaga that he would soon "be receiving through the Havana and other means that may be possible, the weapons, munitions, clothes and quinine which the English colonists (i.e., Americans) ask and the most sagacious and secretive means will be established by you in order that you may supply these secretly with the appearance of selling them to private merchants." Concurrently Galvez informed Diego Jose Navarro, governor of Cuba, that he would soon "receive various items, weapons and other supplies" which he was to forward to Unzaga together with "the surplus powder available" in Havana and "whatever muskets might be in that same Plaza in the certainty that they will be quickly replaced."

With the covert backing and financial support of the Spanish and French governments, Beaumarchais' ships carried much-needed supplies to the Americans, frequently via the tiny Dutch island of St. Eustatius in the Caribbean.⁵⁷ By September of 1777, France had dispatched clothing for 30,000 men, 4,000 tents, 30,000 muskets with bayonets, over 100 tons of gunpowder, 216 (mostly 4-pound) cannons and gun carriages, 27 mortars, almost 13,000 shells and 50,000+ round shot. Most of this equipment was still on the high seas when Congress compiled its instructions to Arthur Lee and Benjamin Franklin in September 1776. They were about to join Deane in France, and Congress re-stated its needs in quite unusual candor. "As the Scarcity of Arms, Artillery and other military Stores is so considerable in the United States, you will solicit the Court of France for an immediate Supply of twenty or thirty thousand Muskets and Bayonets, and a large Supply of Ammunition and brass Field Pieces, to be sent under Convoy by France. The United States will engage for the Payment of the Arms, Artillery and Ammunition, and to indemnify France for the Expense of the Convoy." If possible, they were to "Engage a few good Engineers in the Service of the United States."

The last sentence points to another deficiency in the American military establishment: the Continental Army was desperately short of experts to work some of the sophisticated material provided by France, though there was no lack of applicants from all over Europe! As soon as Benjamin Franklin arrived in Paris in late December 1776, he soon

⁵⁴ On French expenditures see Robert D. Harris, "French Finances and the American War, 1777-1783" *Journal of Modern History* Vol. 48, (June 1976), pp. 233-258, and Claude C. Sturgill, "Observations of the French War Budget 1781-1790" *Military Affairs* Vol. 48, (October 1984), pp. 180-187.

⁵⁵ The best book on the subject is still Buchanan Parker Thomson, *Spain: Forgotten Ally of the American Revolution* (North Quincy, 1976). An overview of the immense Spanish expenditures in support of the American rebels during the war on pp. 241-248.

⁵⁶ Archivo Historico Nacional, Madrid, Estado Legajo 4224.

⁵⁷ See J. Franklin Jameson, "St. Eustatius in the American Revolution" *American Historical Review* Vol. 8, No. 3, (July 1903), pp. 683-708. For the most recent literature see Robert A. Selig, "The French Capture of St. Eustatius, 26 November 1781" *The Journal of Caribbean History* Vol. 27, No. 2, (1993), pp. 129-143.

found himself flooded with requests for employment in the Continental Army.⁵⁸ Deane had already entered into contracts with some twenty-seven (mostly French) officers, among them the marquis de LaFayette and fourteen additional officers, including the Baron de Kalb, who accompanied LaFayette to America on the *Victoire*. But he had also granted to Philippe Jean-Baptiste Tronson du Coudray, a gifted but exceedingly vain artillery major, permission to recruit forty more officers on his own. The pressing need for experts, inexperience, and difficulties of communication led to numerous embarrassments. Deane had promised Coudray a commission as major general and command of artillery and engineers in the Continental Army: Henry Knox' and Presle du Portail's positions! Coudray's death by drowning at the Schuylkill Ferry in September 1777, saved Congress from this embarrassment and caused Lafayette to comment cynically that "the loss of this quarrelsome spirit was probably a fortunate accident."⁵⁹

One of the officers recruited by Deane in the autumn of 1776 was Denis Jean Florimont de Langlois, marquis du Bouchet, the brother-in-law of Irishman Thomas Conway. Du Bouchet's *Journal d'un émigré; ou cahier d'un étudiant en philosophie*, the *Journal of an Emigrant; or Memorial of a Student of Philosophy*, almost 900 pages in three volumes completed in late 1822 or early 1823, provides a singular and enlightening insight into this semi-official and semi-legal phase of French aid. Observations such as those recorded by Du Bouchet shed a unique light the personalities and motivations of some of the volunteers for the Continental Army in 1775/76 as well as on the confusion that reigned in these early days of Franco-American cooperation.⁶⁰

In late November 1776, Conway and du Bouchet set out for Le Havre. There the *l'Amphitrite*, a merchant ship of some 410 tons armed with 16 cannon, was waiting to take them to the New World. Loaded with 50 four-pound cannons, 10,000 muskets, 100,000 flints, and an assortment of war-related materials, she was under the command of one-legged Captain Nicolas Fautrel. Her cargo had been provided by Beaumarchais and was to be smuggled to Philadelphia.

But the *Amphitrite* carried an even more valuable human cargo: 21 French officers and ten NCOs who had volunteered their services to the nascent Continental Army.⁶¹ The *Amphitrite's* passenger list is a veritable *Who's Who* of French volunteers. Among du

⁵⁸Before the war was over, Franklin received 415 applications for employment in the Continental Army; 312 applicants were French, the remainder came from all across Europe. See Catherine M. Prelinger, "Less Lucky than LaFayette: A Note on the French Applicants to Benjamin Franklin for Commissions in the American Army, 1776-1785" *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Western Society for French History* Vol. 4, (1976), pp. 263-270, p. 263. Deane's tendency to mix personal and public business for personal gain while serving as Congress' agent only added to the confusion and led to his recall in 1778.

⁵⁹ Gilbert Bodinier, *Dictionnaire des officiers de l'armée royale qui ont combattu aux Etats-Unis pendant la guerre d'Indépendance* (Château de Vincennes, 1982); the Lafayette quote on p. 464 (my translation). Biographies can also be found in Blanco, *Encyclopedia*, passim; Coudray here in Vol. 1, pp. 405/6.

⁶⁰ Du Bouchet's manuscript is located in the Rare Books and Manuscripts Division of Cornell University Library. I am grateful to Lorna Knight, Curator of Manuscripts, for permission to quote the manuscript here and in my "A French Volunteer who lived to rue America's revolution: Denis Jean Florimond de Langlois, marquis Du Bouchet." *Colonial Williamsburg. The Journal of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation*. Vol. 21 No.3, (June/July 1999), pp. 16-25.

⁶¹ There were also three domestics on board. A list of officers and NCOs on the *Amphitrite* is enclosed in a letter of May 30, 1777, by the Committee of Foreign Affairs to Washington in the Washington Papers in the Library of Congress.

Bouchet's travel companions there was indeed many an honest and professional officer who knew his trade and who would return to America with the troops of Rochambeau in 1780. Captain François Louis Teissedre de Fleury is as good an example of these men as can be found. Promoted to lieutenant colonel as a reward for his valiant defense of Fort Mifflin in November 1778, he was the only foreigner to receive one of the eight medals Congress had struck to celebrate American victories. He returned to France in September 1779, joined Rochambeau's expeditionary corps in 1780, and was among the conquerors of Redoubt No. 9 before Yorktown on October 14, 1781.

Other volunteers of note were Jean Joseph de Gimat de Soubadère, future aide-de-camp to Lafayette and a lieutenant-colonel in the Continental Army by 1778, and Jean-Baptiste de Gouivon, who served throughout the Revolutionary War, eventually as a colonel, as well as Louis François de Pommereul de Martigny, who served faithfully as a lieutenant in the artillery. There was Thomas Antoine de Mauduit du Plessis, another lieutenant in the artillery with a commission as captain from Deane in his pocket, who distinguished himself at Brandywine, Germantown and later at Monmouth. In 1779 he accompanied Lafayette to France but returned with Rochambeau in 1780.

All of the NCOs had served their way up during 10, 15, even 20 years of service, were thoroughly professional soldiers who had been promised ranks in the Continental Army well beyond reach at home. These were men like François Parison, commissioned a captain by Deane, who returned to France in 1778 only to cross the ocean again in 1780 with Rochambeau. Du Bouchet's favorite traveling companion, Thomas Mullens, an Irishman, had worked his way up from common soldier in 1756 to sub-lieutenant in 1770 and would return to the New World with Rochambeau as his *chef des guides*.

But there were others as well. Young Monsieur Désépiniers had no military experience whatsoever but was made a major in the Continental Army as a courtesy to his uncle Beaumarchais. Sixty-year-old Philippe Hubert de Preudhomme de Borre, formerly a lieutenant colonel of the Regiment *Liègeois d'Orion* was clearly past his prime. Rewarded with a commission as brigadier for his troubles involved in crossing the Atlantic Ocean, he returned it less than five months later after the defeat at Brandywine in September to preserve his honor as a soldier which he saw threatened by having to command "such bad troops."⁶²

Some, like 26-year-old artillery officer Anne Philippe Dieudonné de Loyauté, commissioned a captain by Deane in November 1776, were doubtful assets at best. The future inspector general of artillery of Virginia had just been released from the prison in Pierre-en-Cize where his father had him incarcerated for 16 months to cure him of excessive gambling and womanizing. On the eve of departure, a distraught comtesse de Linanges appeared, pleading with de Loyauté to return to her. His "caprice ... kept the idle public occupied," not to mention the ever-present British spies. Eventually it was only through the complicity of a harbor official, who as an old family friend chose to ignore an arrest order, that de Loyauté managed to escape "his mistresses as well as his creditors" and to "throw between them and himself the immensity of the oceans."

⁶² Borre's letter of resignation as quoted in Bodinier, *Dictionnaire*, p. 389. He did not leave the United States from Charleston until January 1779.

On December 14, 1776, the *Amphitrite* with 12 artillery and engineer officers as well as eight infantry officers departed for the New World. Two days out, Coudray, who thought that Deane had undermined his mission, forced Fautrel to return to L'Orient where they arrived on January 1, 1777. There Coudray ordered Preudhomme de Borre off the ship in a most offensive manner and proceeded to Paris -- where he received yet another recommendation from Benjamin Franklin. In late January 1777, a total of 27 officers and 12 non-commissioned officers, including Coudray and Borre, sailed from Nantes for Boston, where they arrived on April 20, 1777.

Meanwhile in L'Orient, the *Amphitrite* too had once again set sail for America on January 25, 1777, this time with 25 officers on board. Loyauté had used the three-week layover in L'Orient to form yet another "tendre liaison." According to du Bouchet he once again gave a disgusting "spéctacle au public" and had to be forced to re-embark for America. On the night before departure, Armand Charles Tuffin, marquis de la Rouërie, better known as Colonel Armand after the legion he would raise in the American colonies,⁶³ appeared on board and informed his fellow officers that he "absolument" had to get out of France. Du Bouchet assumed another "affaire d'honneur," i.e., a duel, as the cause for this sudden appearance, since Rouërie had recently wounded the comte de Bourbon-Busset, a cousin of King Louis XVI, in a duel over the love of a belle of the Paris Opera. Rouërie's "trust" in the actress "had been extreme," but apparently there had been some physical contact as well since of late a child had "unexpectedly ... appeared on the scene." The marquis vehemently denied paternity, and in his "desperation" over this betrayal had wavered between suicide and "embracing the monastic life." A closer look showed the "rigors" of monastic life not to his liking, and he decided to "throw between his unfaithful" actress and himself "the immensity of the ocean" and to fight for American independence instead. Colonel Armand returned to France in 1784, but he never again wore the white uniform of the *ancien régime*. He did, however, acknowledge the son "unexpectedly" born in late 1776.

The arrival of dozens of foreigners, French and otherwise, with claims, if not proof, of high commissions in the Continental Army, combined with sometimes arrogant if not contemptuous behavior displayed by some of them, soon caused considerable friction with their American comrades-in-arms.⁶⁴ Increasingly Americans refused to receive into their ranks some of the more quarrelsome "summer soldiers and sunshine patriots," as Thomas Paine called them, sent by Deane, Franklin and Lee. Du Bouchet found that out when he arrived at Stillwater in late August 1777. Gates was not pleased to see another Frenchman walk into camp: "'What do you want from me?' he said to me very brusquely." In his "very bad English" du Bouchet replied: "'Opportunities to gain your esteem, general. ... Would you have the goodness to allow me to join, as a volunteer, your front-line detachments?'" Growling under his breath how it "'would be very nice if all Frenchmen were that reasonable and moderate in their pretensions,'" Gates allowed him into camp. But when the newcomer dared to ask for a tent, he was immediately put into his place: "'They are only for the soldiers,' the general answered me very brusquely."

⁶³ On Colonel Armand and his legion see Blanco, *Encyclopedia* Vol. 1, pp. 40-44.

⁶⁴ French agents in America were well aware of the damage done by such adventurers who did nothing but "deshonorer la nation dans le nouveau monde," as one of them informed Vergennes. Quoted in Kennett, "L'expédition Rochambeau-Ternay," p. 91.

Du Bouchet made himself a crude shelter from pine branches where he lived "like Robin Crusoe upon arrival on his island."

Even on pine branches Du Bouchet was more fortunate than men such as French Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Louis vicomte de Mauroy, hired by Deane as major general. Mauroy arrived on June 13, 1777, was not employed and was sent back to France. Major Ludwig Baron von Holtzendorff, whom Deane had commissioned a lieutenant colonel, served as a common soldier before his return to France in 1778.⁶⁵ No one in Coudray's company received a commission until after the "fortunate" death of Coudray in September 1777, when Congress promoted Coudray posthumously to major general and granted him the position it could not possibly give him while he was alive. Concurrently it passed legislation providing funds for the return of those officers in Coudray's entourage that it could not, or would not, employ to Europe.

Congress had a lot to learn, but it learned quickly. Once those start-up problems were overcome, Franco-American relations proceeded considerably more smoothly. Of the ten ships dispatched by Beaumarchais and which reached American shores between March and November 1777, only one ran into trouble with the British and had to be blown up with its thousands of pounds of gunpowder by the captain. The vast majority of the almost 100 foreign volunteers either hired by Deane, Lee, or Franklin with the tacit consent of the French crown for the express purpose of serving in America, whether they traveled on ships owned by Beaumarchais or whether they came on their own, whether they were French like the Marquis de Lafayette, Presle du Portail or Pierre l'Enfant, Polish like Tadesz Kosciuszko or Casimir Pulaski or German like Baron von Steuben and Baron von Kalb: they all brought much-needed expertise to the Continental Army, served faithfully and occasionally even laid down their lives for America's freedom.

The Continental Army put Beaumarchais' supplies to good use. The defeat of General Johnny Burgoyne and his army on October 17, 1777, to Horatio Gates at Saratoga, was a major turning point in the American Revolutionary War. It was won by American soldiers, even if 90% of the gunpowder used had been supplied by and paid for by France, and was used in French M 1763-66 pattern (*Charleville*) muskets, which by then had become standard in the Continental Army. The victory at Saratoga proved to the French that the American rebellion could be sustained with a possibility of success. News of Burgoyne's capitulation reached Paris in the evening of December 4, 1777; on the 17th Vergennes promised to recognize the independence of the Thirteen Colonies, with or without Spanish support. On January 30, the king authorized the *Secrétaire du Conseil d'Etat* Conrad Alexandre Gérard to sign the Treaty of Amity and Commerce and a secret Treaty of Alliance on his behalf. On February 6, 1778, Gérard carried out the order and Deane, Franklin, and Lee signed for the United States. By these treaties, France offered "to maintain ... the liberty, sovereignty, and independence" of the United States in case of war between her and Great Britain. France promised to fight on until the independence of the United States was guaranteed in a peace treaty. All the United States had to do in exchange was not "conclude either truce or peace with Great Britain without the formal consent of the other first obtained."⁶⁶

⁶⁵ See the Baron de Holtzendorff Papers, South Caroliniana Library at the University of South Carolina.

⁶⁶ For a complete text of the treaties see the *Documents* section.

On March 13, 1778, His Most Christian Majesty officially informed the Court of St. James of this decision.⁶⁷ A week later, the three Americans were introduced to the king as *Ambassadors of the Thirteen United Provinces* while Gérard in turn was appointed French resident at Congress in Philadelphia. Copies of the treaties reached Congress in early May, which ratified it unanimously and without debate and ordered them published without waiting for the French government to ratify the treaties as well.⁶⁸

A treaty of military alliance is not a declaration of war: but the causes for war between France and Great Britain were present even before the treaty was signed and ratified, and both sides understood it as a declaration of war. Upon hearing the news, the Court of St. James recalled its ambassador from France; in early June British ships chased the French frigate *Belle Poule* off the coast of Normandy. The *Belle Poule* held her ground and limped, badly damaged and with half of her crew dead or wounded, into Brest. Louis XVI responded by ordering his navy on July 10 to give chase to Royal Navy vessels. The war France had planned for since 1763 was on at last.⁶⁹

5.3 The Failed Invasion of 1779 and the Decision to send Troops to America

Choiseul had always wanted to fight the war overseas, and Vergennes continued this policy. Even before the *Belle-Poule* affair, Vergennes had sent Admiral d'Estaing with 17 ships of the line, 6,200 naval personnel and 4,000 infantry to the Caribbean, where they arrived in July 1778. But the first two years of military cooperation did not go well. The siege of Newport in August 1778 ended in failure. So did the siege of Savannah, taken by British troops under Henry Clinton in December 1778, in September and October 1779. Once d'Estaing had raised the siege, British troops began the invasion of South Carolina where Charleston fell in May 1780.

The apparent inability of French forces "to make a difference" in the war severely strained the alliance. But the criticism was quite undeserved: without massive French aid the Continental Army would probably not have existed any more. France had been active in Europe as well: in February 1778, already, she had begun to concentrate troops on the Channel coast for a possible invasion of the British Isles. By June 30, 28 battalions of infantry, some 14,000 officers and men, 10 escadrons of cavalry and 25 companies of artillery were concentrated in the Le Havre, Cherbourg, Brest coastal area. By the end of

⁶⁷Ruth Strong Hudson, "The French Treaty of Alliance, Signed on February 6, 1778" *The American Society Legion of Honor Magazine* Vol. 49, No. 2, (1978), pp. 121-136.

On November 16, 1776, Governor Johannes de Graaf ordered the 13-gun-salute due independent nations be accorded to the American flag flown on the *Andrea Doria* as she entered the harbor of the Dutch island of St. Eustatius. But the Dutch government never followed this act by an official recognition of the independence of the United States, leaving that honor to France in her treaties of February 1778 with the United States. See Barbara W. Tuchman, *The First Salute. A View of the American Revolution* (New York, 1988), pp. 5-22.

⁶⁸Alexander DeConde, "The French Alliance in Historical Speculation" in: *Diplomacy and Revolution. The Franco-American Alliance of 1778* Ronald Hoffman and Peter J. Albert, eds., (Charlottesville, 1981), pp. 1-38, and William C. Stinchcombe, "Americans Celebrate the Birth of the Dauphin" *ibid.*, pp. 39-72. Accompanied by Deane, who had been recalled to explain some of his business dealings, Gerard reached Philadelphia in July 1778.

⁶⁹Spain hesitated until April 1779 to enter the war against Great Britain in the Convention of Aranjuez, while Great Britain herself declared war on the Netherlands in November 1780.

the year, the numbers had almost tripled to 71 battalions, and more troops were arriving daily. By late spring 1779, 2,608 officers, 31,963 men, 4,918 *domestiques*, 1,818 horses plus large amounts of artillery, almost 1/4 of France's armed might, was waiting around le Havre and Honfleur to board almost 500 transports to take them to the Isle of Wight.⁷⁰

This policy had largely been dictated by the interests of Spain, which had entered the war in April 1779 and whose interests lay in fighting Britain in Europe, in Gibraltar, Minorca, and Portugal -- not overseas. But Spain was nowhere near ready for war against Great Britain. French naval forces under 69-year-old Admiral d'Orvilliers spent valuable weeks in June and July cruising at the southern entrance of the British Channel, waiting for the Spanish fleet to arrive. The rendezvous for the two fleets had been set for May 15. When the French and Spanish fleets finally joined up in the last days of July, smallpox was sweeping through the French fleet. 140 of d'Orvilliers sailors had already died, some 600 were in Spanish hospitals, another 1,800 sick were on board his ships. On August 15 the combined fleets turned into the Channel only to be driven out by a violent storm. The next day d'Orvilliers received instructions that the place of attack of French land forces had been changed to the coast of Cornwall. First, however, he had to find and defeat the Royal Navy to gain control of the channel. On the 25th his lookouts report the British fleet: 34 ships of the line, 8 frigates, and 20 smaller vessels carrying 26,000 sailors and 3,260 cannon commanded by Admiral Sir Thomas Hardy. The combined Franco-Spanish fleet consists of 66 ships of the line, 12 frigates, and 16 smaller vessels. D'Orvilliers wanted to give battle out on the Atlantic, but Hardy refused to swallow the bait and stayed close to his homeports. Dangerously low on supplies, d'Orvilliers in the first days of September received with relief the order to return to Brest where he disembarked some 8,000 sick sailors. The campaign of 1779 was over. It had cost France the lives of hundreds of sailors and millions of livres without achieving anything. Montbarey called the campaign off in October; in November the army moved into winter quarters.⁷¹

Neither Louis XVI nor Vergennes had placed high hopes on the success of an invasion of Britain. The project went against decades of planning which had always assumed that the war would be fought in America. Now that the project had failed, the voices in favor of fighting England in her colonies grew stronger again. The first suggestions of such an operation had surfaced in late 1777 as France was contemplating the recognition of the United States. That proposal had not been pursued, but now a most important voice was clamoring for just such an expedition: that of the Marquis de Lafayette, who had returned to France in the spring of 1779. It may well have been at Lafayette's urging that Franklin addressed his memorandum to Vergennes in February 1779, suggesting the dispatch of a corps of 4,000 soldiers to America.⁷² In July, Vergennes asked Lafayette for a detailed memorandum on the feasibility of such an expedition, and ordered an internal study. When Admiral d'Estaing limped into Brest with his battered flagship the *Languedoc* in early December, the matter took on additional urgency. Louis XVI and his chief ministers feared that unless the new year would bring at least one instance of successful Franco-American cooperation, the colonists might be forced to make peace with Great Britain, leaving France to continue the war by herself.

⁷⁰ See also Marcus de la Poer Beresford, "Ireland in French Strategy during the American War of Independence 1776-1783" *The Irish Sword* Vol. 12, (1976), pp. 285-297 and Vol. 13, (1977), pp. 20-29.

⁷¹ All numbers from Fonteneau, "La période française," pp. 79-85.

⁷² See Lee Kennett, *The French Forces in America, 1780-1783* (Westport, 1977), pp. 3-17.

5.4 The Comte de Rochambeau and the Troops of the *expédition particulière*

The decisive shift in favor of sending troops to America came in late January 1780. On February 2, the king approved the plan code-named *expédition particulière*, the transportation across the ocean of a force large enough to decide the outcome of the rebellion in America. Naval forces in the Caribbean would be strengthened and put in a position to support the expeditionary force. In Europe, military action would be confined to diversionary actions such as the siege of Gibraltar aimed at binding British forces.

Once the decision to send troops was made, the next questions were 1) who would go, and 2) who would command? Vergennes and his colleagues agreed that the command did not call for brilliance but for level-headedness, ability to compromise, and willingness to cooperate. Harmonious relations with the American ally as well as within the French force was of paramount importance. If the former pointed toward the appointment of the 23-year-old Lafayette, the latter all but ruled it out.⁷³ Lafayette's recent promotion to colonel in the French army had already ruffled quite a few feathers, and numerous officers made it very clear that they would not serve under the young marquis. In early February, the cabinet appointed the chevalier de Ternay, a *chef d'escadre* with 40 years experience, to command the naval forces. For the land forces the choice fell on 55-year-old Jean Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, comte de Rochambeau, a professional soldier with 37 years of experience, an officer who was more comfortable in an army camp than in the ballrooms of Versailles, and who had already been selected to command the advance guard in the cancelled invasion of Britain. On March 1, 1780, Louis XVI promoted Rochambeau to lieutenant general and placed him at the head of the expedition.

Both men wasted little time to get ready for the expedition. Ternay had been ordered to find shipping for 6,000 men. Rochambeau spent much of March at Versailles trying to have his force increased, but only succeeded in adding the 2nd battalion of the Auxonne artillery (some 500 men), a few dozen engineers and mineurs,⁷⁴ and 600 men from the *Légion de Lauzun* as a light force to the four regiments of infantry, some 4,000 men, he would be able to take. Quartermaster staff under Pierre François de Beville, a medical department of about 100 under Jean-François Coste,⁷⁵ a commissary department under Claude Blanchard,⁷⁶ a provost department headed by Pierre Barthélémy Revoux de

⁷³ It should be mentioned that Lafayette never actively sought the command, though he dropped numerous hints. Lafayette returned to the United States shortly after the appointment of Rochambeau in March; with him came Commissary Dominique Louis Ethis de Corny who was charged with preparations for the arrival of Rochambeau's troops. Congress made him a lieutenant colonel on June 5, 1780.

⁷⁴ The engineers stood under the command of Colonel Jean Nicolas Desandrouins. Fragments of his diary which survived the wreck of the *Duc de Bourgogne* in February 1783 are published in Charles Nicholas, *Le Maréchal de Camp Desandrouins* (Verdun, 1887), pp. 341-368. The *mineurs* were commanded by Joseph Dieudonné de Chazelles. See Ambassade de France, *French Engineers and the American War of Independence* (New York, 1975).

⁷⁵ See Louis Trenard, "Un défenseur des hôpitaux militaires: Jean-François Coste" *Revue du Nord* Vol. 75, Nr. 299, (January 1993), pp. 149-180, and Raymond Bolzinger, "A propos du bicentenaire de la guerre de l'Indépendance des États-Unis 1775-1783: Le service de santé de l'armée Rochambeau et ses participants messins" *Mémoires de l'Académie Nationale de Metz* Vol. 4/5, (1979), pp. 259-284.

⁷⁶ See *The Journal of Claude Blanchard, Commissary of the French Auxiliary Army sent to the United States during the American Revolution* Thomas Balch, ed., (Albany, 1876). See also Jean des Cilleuls, "Le service de l'intendance à l'armée de Rochambeau" *Revue historique de l'Armée* No. 2, (1957), pp. 43-61.

Ronchamp with a hangman and two *schlagueurs*, i.e., corporals who were experts with the cat-o'-nine-tails,⁷⁷ not to mention the dozens of *domestiques*, brought what was supposed to be the first division of the *expédition particulière* to about 6,000 officers and men. Everyone else would have to form part of a second division that Rochambeau hoped would join him in 1781.⁷⁸ But as Rochambeau's "wish-list" grew, so did Ternay's anger: the admiral saw no reason to take 140 horses across the ocean to please some members at court who insisted on taking their favorite chargers. Each horse would take the space of ten men, not to mention the vast amounts of forage and the roughly 45,000 gallons of water it would take to transport the animals across the ocean! The horses stayed behind.

5.4.1 The Officer Corps

These were only some of Rochambeau's problems. Once the numbers had been agreed upon, the decision as to which units to take was to be Rochambeau's. He chose them from among the forces quartered along the coast for the aborted invasion of England. Lee Kennett's description of Rochambeau's decision-making process, i.e., that the regiments selected "were neither the oldest nor the most prestigious regiments, in the army, but (Rochambeau) judged them to be well-officered and disciplined ... and at full strength,"⁷⁹ is only part of the story. A look at the units suggests that outside considerations may have played a role in their selection as well. The upper echelons of the officer corps belonged to the top of aristocratic society whom Rochambeau could not afford to alienate. For the members of the *noblesse de race*, the wealthy and influential court nobility, promotion to high rank and participation in prestigious enterprises at an early age was a birthright. They alone had the influence and the money, 25,000 to 75,000 livres, that it took to purchase a line regiment. Nobles such as François Jean chevalier de Beauvoir marquis de Chastellux, a member of the *Académie Française* since 1775, were simply too famous or influential to be ignored once they expressed interest in the expedition.⁸⁰ Others like the duc de Lauzun were "too much in fashion not to be employed in some brilliant manner"⁸¹

From among the French regiments Rochambeau picked the Bourbonnais, commanded by Anne Alexandre marquis de Montmorency-Laval, who had become colonel of the Toraine regiment at 23. He was all of 28 when he took over the Bourbonnais in 1775. The fact that Rochambeau's son, 25-year-old Donatien Marie was *mestre-de-camp-en-second*, i.e., second in command of the regiment, may well have influenced this decision. When Donatien became colonel of the Saintonge in November 1782, his place was taken by Charles Louis de Secondat baron de Montesquieu, a grandson of the famous philosopher. Soissonnais' *mestre de camp* Jean-Baptiste Félix d'Ollière comte de Saint Maisme was all of 19 1/2 when he took over that unit in June 1775. St. Maisme's second

⁷⁷ Unlike in the Prussian army, corporal punishment was not the norm in the French military: the term used in the original documents, *schlagueurs*, is derived from the German word *schlagen*, to hit someone!

⁷⁸ In June 1781, some 660 men reinforcements joined Rochambeau's forces just as he was about to set out for New York. The regiments Anhalt and Neustrie and additional artillery in the Second Division never came to America. On the remainder of Lauzun's Legion, which did come to the New World, see below.

⁷⁹ Kennett, *French forces*, p. 22.

⁸⁰ His *Travels in North America in the years 1780, 1781, and 1782* 2 vols., (Paris, 1786; English: London, 1787) form an invaluable source on revolutionary America but provide little information on the campaigns. A modern edition was published by Howard C. Rice, Jr., *Travels in North America in the Years 1780, 1781*

⁸¹ *Mémoires de Armand-Louis de Gontaut, duc de Lauzun*, Edmond Pilon, ed., (Paris, 1928), p. 242.

in command, 24-year-old Louis Marie vicomte de Noailles, a son of the duc de Mouchy, was not only a member of the highest nobility, but also Lafayette's brother-in-law. He received his new position on March 8, 1780. When Noailles became colonel of the *Roi-Dragons* in January 1782, he was replaced by Louis Philippe comte de Ségur, the 29-year-old son of the minister of war. Though he had started his military career at the age of 5 (!) and become colonel of the Custine Dragoons at age 22, Adam Philippe, comte de Custine, the 38-year-old colonel of the Saintonge, was by far the oldest (and most difficult) of these regimental commanders. Since his second in command, 24-year-old Armand de la Croix comte de Charlus, appointed to the position in March 1780, was the son of the Navy minister, the decision of whether to take the regiment or not may not have been Rochambeau's alone.⁸²

One stipulation imposed upon Rochambeau by the marquis de Jaucourt, who was in charge of the operational planning of the *expédition*, was that 1/3 of the force consist of Germans. Jaucourt argued, overly optimistic as it turned out, that losses in such units could be made up by recruiting deserters from Britain's German auxiliaries.⁸³ Politics may very well have decided the selection of the Royal Deux-Ponts. The German Royal Deux-Ponts was 'suggested' to Rochambeau by Marie Camasse, Countess Forbach, a former dancer andmorganatic wife of its founder and first *colonel propriétaire* Duke Christian IV of Zweibrücken.⁸⁴ Their eldest son Christian de Deux-Ponts, who had been two months short of his 20th birthday when he was given the Royal Deux-Ponts in 1772, had income from estates in Germany and France amounting to over 7,200 livres annually. To this needs to be added another annuity of 14,400 livres, 9,000 livres pay as colonel of his regiment, doubled to 18,000 livres for the American campaign, plus additional financial support from his mother, which brought his annual income for the American campaign to well over 40,000 livres!⁸⁵ Second in command was Christian's younger brother William, who distinguished himself during the storming of Redoubt # 9 before Yorktown and received his own regiment, the Deux-Ponts Dragoons, in January 1782.

The ships that left Brest in May 1780 were not necessarily carrying the "flower of the French nobility," but Rochambeau's staff was certainly rather heavily laced with court nobility. Competition for these positions was fierce. The slow pace of peacetime advancement in an army where promotion was strictly based on seniority left many

⁸² A scathing analysis by an anonymous subordinate of some these officers in Bernard Faÿ, "L'Armée de Rochambeau jugée par un Français" *Franco-American Review* Vol. 2, (Fall 1937), pp. 114-120.

⁸³ Few "Hessian" deserters ever took French services; if at all, they enlisted with the Americans. If the numbers reported by Hessian Adjutant General Baurmeister can be generalized, only 16 of the 67 soldiers recruited by the Royal Deux-Ponts in America were German deserters, replenishing less than 20% of the 104 men the regiment lost to desertion. Bernhard A. Uhlendorf, ed., *Revolution in America. Confidential Letters and Journals of Adjutant General Major Baurmeister of the Hessian Forces* (New Brunswick, 1957), p. 406: "On the 8th of this month, (January 1781) a French recruiting command left Philadelphia with twenty-eight recruits, among whom were five Hessians and two Anspachers."

⁸⁴ Christian was succeeded to the throne by his brother Charles II August in 1776. Yet the regiment was qualified to participate for the campaign. On March 27, 1780, Rochambeau characterized it "comme aussi solide par sa composition qu'aucun régiment français et dans le meilleur état." J. Henry Doniol, *Histoire de la participation de la France a l'Établissement des États-Unis d'Amérique* 5 vols. (Paris, 1886-1892), Vol. 1, # 3733. Camasse presented Franklin a walking cane upon his departure from France; Franklin in turn willed the cane to George Washington; today it can be seen in the Smithsonian Institution.

⁸⁵ These figures are based on the *Nachlass Christian Graf von Forbach, Freiherr von Zweibrücken* (Signatur N 73) in the Pfälzische Landesbibliothek Speyer, Germany.

officers hoping for an opportunity to "make a name for themselves" as the only way for faster advancement. War alone gave that opportunity. With Europe at peace (and the fever-infested Caribbean an undesirable destination), the American campaign alone seemed to hold out hope for distinction and survival. Rochambeau had been given blank commissions to fill these positions and subsequently spend much of his time trying to refuse sons, nephews, and favorites pressed upon him by members of the court.

The most famous among these is probably 26-year-old Axel von Fersen, son of the former Swedish ambassador to France and favorite of Queen Marie Antoinette. Men such as Fersen belonged to a group just below the very rich. In a letter to his father of January 1780, Fersen stated his fixed monthly expenses for, among others, room and board, three domestics, three horses, and a dog at 1,102 livres, though he promised he would try and economize in the future.⁸⁶ Fersen became an aide-de-camp to Rochambeau. Antoine Charles du Houx baron de Vioménil, Rochambeau's second in command, not only secured appointments for about a dozen of his army buddies from the Polish campaigns, he also brought along his brother, a cousin, a son-in-law, and two nephews, as well as his eldest son, 13-year-old Charles Gabriel, who served as aide-de-camp to his father. Rochambeau took his son, *mestre de camp en second* of the Bourbonnais Regiment, as his *aide-major général de logis*. Custine's kinsman Jean Robert Gaspar de Custine became a *sous-lieutenant* in the Royal Deux-Ponts on April 4, 1780, three days after his 16th birthday. Quarter-Master General de Beville took his two sons as members of his staff as well. It was not just Frenchmen who wanted to see America with Rochambeau. Friedrich Reinhard Burkard Graf von Rechteren, a Dutch nobleman with 15 years service in the Dutch military, used his descent from Charlotte de Bourbon, his great-great-great-great-grandmother who had married William of Orange in 1574, to get himself appointed *cadet-gentilhomme* in the Royal Deux-Ponts on March 11, 1780.⁸⁷ One of Rochambeau's nephews, the comte de Lauberdière, served as one of six aides-de-camp, another, George Henry Collot, as aide for quartermaster-general affairs.⁸⁸ When Claude Gabriel marquis de Choisy appeared in Brest on April 17, 1780, with five officers who wanted to sail to America, Rochambeau refused to take them. Choisy and his entourage of now ten officers found passage for St. Domingo on the *Sybillie*. They left Brest on June 25, and arrived via Santo Domingo on *La Gentille* in Newport on September 29, 1780.

Rochambeau was also under siege by numerous French volunteers who had returned to Europe upon news of the treaties of 1778. They assumed, correctly, that it was better

⁸⁶ *Lettres d'Axel de Fersen a son père pendant la guerre de l'Indépendance d'amérique* F. U. Wrangel, ed., (Paris, 1929), p. 46. English translations of some letters were published in "Letters of Axel de Fersen, Aide-de-Camp to Rochambeau written to his Father in Sweden 1780-1782" *Magazine of American History* Vol. 3, No. 5, (May 1879), pp. 300-309, No. 6, (June 1879), pp. 369-376, and No. 7, (July 1879), pp. 437-448. Eight letters from America to his sister were published in *The Letters of Marie Antoinette, Fersen and Barnave* O.-G. de Heidenstam, ed., (New York, 1929), pp. 6-13.

⁸⁷ Rochambeau made Rechteren a captain *à la suite*, lending credence to Ternay's claim that the army contained "too many useless mouths." Kennett, *French forces*, p. 21. By August 14, 1780, Rechteren had a pass to go sightseeing in Philadelphia; he returned to Europe as soon as Yorktown had fallen. His personnel file is in Service Historique de l'Armée de Terre, Vincennes, France, Yb 346.

⁸⁸ Kennett, *French forces*, p. 21. See also my "America the Ungrateful: The Not-So-Fond Remembrances of Louis François Dupont d'Aubevoye, Comte de Lauberdière" *American Heritage* Vol. 48, No. 1, (February 1997), pp. 101-106, and "Lauberdière's Journal. The Revolutionary War Journal of Louis François Bertrand d'Aubevoye, Comte de Lauberdière" *Colonial Williamsburg. The Journal of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation* Vol. 18, No. 1, (Autumn 1995), pp. 33-37.

for their careers to serve out the war in the French rather than the American Army. Rochambeau realized that he needed not only their expertise, but, since neither he nor many of his officers spoke English, their language skills as well. These appointments caused much jealousy and resentment: when Rochambeau chose Du Bouchet as an aide, Charlus wrote scathingly in his diary that du Bouchet was but "a brave man who has been to America, [and] who has no other talent than to get himself killed with more grace than most other people."⁸⁹ Another beneficiary of Rochambeau's need for "American" experts was much-decorated de Fleury, who volunteered to serve as a common soldier when he could not find a position as an officer. Rochambeau made him a major in Saintonge, which too caused considerable grumbling among Fleury's new comrades.⁹⁰ Officers such as Fleury belonged to the lower nobility who provided about 90% of the company-grade officers. They could hardly aspire to retiring as more than a major and formed the vast majority of the 492 officers who eventually served in Rochambeau's little army.⁹¹ Though well-paid in comparison to common soldiers -- a *capitaine en seconde* in the French infantry still earned 2,400 livres per year in America -- they were caught between their limited financial resources and the obligations rank and status required of them.⁹²

A look at the Royal Deux-Ponts, Rochambeau's German regiment, its history and its officer corps, provides a representative sample of the troops of the *expédition particulière* in America as well as of the nature of the army of the *ancien régime*. The Royal Deux-Ponts was the result of a business agreement between Louis XV of France and Duke Christian IV of Zweibrücken (=Deux-Ponts), ruler of a duchy of 2,477 km² in southwestern Germany (incl. 495 km² in Alsace), inhabited by some 80,000 subjects. Trying to win favor with his powerful neighbor to the west, Christian, on May 30, 1751, entered into an agreement with Louis XV in which he promised to raise a battalion of infantry for France when and if needed. In return he was to receive an annual subsidy of 40,000 Rhenish Guilders (fl.) The need came with the outbreak of the Seven Year's War, and on November 23, 1755, Christian offered a "Regiment de deux Bataillons"⁹³ for

⁸⁹ Quoted in Vicomte de Noailles, *Marins et Soldats Français en Amérique pendant la guerre de l'Indépendance des États-Unis* (Paris, 1903), p. 161.

⁹⁰ Gilbert Bodinier, "Les officiers du corps expéditionnaire de Rochambeau et la Revolution française" *Revue historique des armées* Vol. 3, No. 4, (1976) pp. 139-164, p. 140.

⁹¹ 459 officers accompanied Rochambeau from Brest, 20 joined him between July 1780 and November 1783. Samuel F. Scott, "The Army of the Comte de Rochambeau between the American and French Revolutions" *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Western Society for French History* Vol. 15, (1988), pp. 143-153, p. 144. Twelve non-commissioned officers were promoted to officer rank during the campaign. Samuel F. Scott, "Rochambeau's Veterans: A Case Study in the Transformation of the French Army." *Proceedings, the Consortium on Revolutionary Europe 1750-1850* (Athens, 1979), pp. 155-163, p. 157. Captain Jean François de Thuillière of the Royal Deux-Ponts joined his regiment in Newport in October 1780. Thuillière, recommended to Franklin by Camasse left Europe in early 1777. Captured twice by the British, he arrived in America just as his leave was about to expire. He returned to France only to find out that there was no place for him Ternay's ships and he had to sail with Choisy's group to Newport.

⁹² All pay information is taken from *Ordonnance du Roi, Pour régler le traitement des Troupes destinées à une expédition particulière. Du 20 Mars 1780* (Paris, 1780).

⁹³ Quoted in Wilhelm Weber, *Die Beteiligung des Regiment Royal-Deux-Ponts am amerikanischen Unabhängigkeitskrieg* Katalog der Ausstellung der Pfalzgalerie Kaiserslautern (Kaiserslautern, 1976). See also my "George Washington's German Allies: Das Deutsche Königlich-Französische Infanterie Regiment von Zweibrücken Or *Royal Deux-Ponts*. Part 1: 1756-1780." *Journal of the Johannes Schwalm Historical Association* Vol. 6 No.4, (2000), pp. 52-59, and Part 2: March 1780-June 1781, forthcoming in 2001.

service with France. Louis XV accepted the offer and in April 1756 signed the contract that raised "deux mille hommes d'Infanterie" in exchange for 80,000 fl. annually.

There were extra-military reasons for the creation of the Royal Deux-Ponts: Christian Graf von Forbach, Freiherr von Zweibrücken and his siblings.⁹⁴ Born on July 20, 1752, Christian was the eldest of seven children born to the Duke and Marie Anne Camasse. In June 1754, his brother Wilhelm was born; by 1771 two more sons and three daughters had completed the family created by the union of duke and dancer. Though excluded from the line of succession, Christian had every intention of providing for his children, and the Royal Deux-Ponts was raised and leased to the French crown as a means of support for his eldest sons. On February 19, 1757, the regiment was officially established with Duke Christian as *colonel propriétaire*; on April 1, 1757, it entered French pay.⁹⁵

The French army reforms of 1776 effected the Royal Deux-Ponts as well. A treaty of March 31 specified that 3/4 of all officer positions of the regiment be reserved for the German nobility, the remainder to noblemen from Alsace or Lorraine. The duke retained the right to recall the regiment when and if needed, provided it was not against the King of France or his allies.⁹⁶ This treaty determined the ethnic background and of its officer corps. In French units, well over 90% of the officer positions were filled by native Frenchmen, the Royal Deux-Ponts, on the other hand, had a multi-ethnic officer corps drawn from all across Europe. More than half of the 69 officers who served with the regiment in America came from the Duchy of Zweibrücken, the Palatinate, from Alsace and from Lorraine; others came from as far away as Lithuania, Denmark, and the Tyrol.

Zweibrücken:	9
Alsace:	17
Lorraine:	4
Palatinate:	6
Switzerland:	6
Empire:	16
France:	4
Denmark:	1
Belgium:	1
Netherlands:	1
Luxemburg:	1
Sweden:	1
Tyrol:	1
Lithuania:	1

⁹⁴ Duke Christian used his connections with Madame de Pompadour to improve the social status of his morganatic wife. In 1757, Louis XV of France provided letters of nobility, King Stanislas of Poland in his position as Duke of Lorraine elevated Maria Anne Camasse and her descendants to the title of Counts and Countesses Forbach after the Seigneurie Forbach in Lorraine, which Christian had bought for her in late 1756. One of the requirements for this ennoblement was a marriage under French law: on September 3, 1757, Christian once again tied the knot with Camasse, legitimizing his offspring. The story is told in Adalbert Prinz von Bayern, *Der Herzog und die Tänzerin. Die merkwürdige Geschichte Christians IV. von Pfalz-Zweibrücken und seiner Familie* (Neustadt/Weinstrasse, 1966).

⁹⁵ The treaty of February 19, 1757, in Rudolf Karl Tröss, "Die Gründung des Regiments Royal Deux-Ponts" in: Rudolf Karl Tröss, *Das Regiment Royal-Deux-Ponts* (typescript, Zweibrücken, 1983), pp. 9-17.

⁹⁶ The agreement is printed in Rudolf Karl Tröss, "Die Konvention vom 31. März 1776," in Tröss, *Royal-Deux-Ponts*, pp. 18-28.

A look at the age structure of the corps shows that fifteen officers were under 20 years old, another eighteen were under 25. Eleven more officers were under 30, and 25 of the officers or 36 % were between 31 and 50 years old. Most of them had received their commissions at a young age, around their 14th or 15th birthdays, though it is doubtful these "child-officers" performed many of the duties required of their rank. The youngest recipients ever of commissions in the Royal Deux-Ponts were Friedrich Baron von Schwengsfeld, who was 26 days short of his 9th birthday when he became *sous-lieutenant* in September 1769 and Christian Friedrich Baron von Glaubitz from Strasbourg, who became a *sous-lieutenant* on October 9, 1770, four days before his 11th birthday.⁹⁷

born before 1740:	13
1740-1744:	9
1745-1749:	3
1750-1754:	11
1755-1759:	18
1760-1764:	15

In America the two youngest *sous-lieutenants* of the regiment were born in 1764, i.e., 16 years old in 1780. The oldest officer, Louis Aimable de Prez de Crassier, born in Switzerland in 1730, was already 50 years old. He had entered French service in 1747 as a *sous-lieutenant* and after 33 years made major in April of 1780 when retirements and transfers brought some movement into the ranks. But he was still not married: he received permission to do so only as a 58-year-old in 1788.⁹⁸

Not much younger were the five or six regimental *officiers de fortune*, soldiers who had risen through the ranks to reach *sous-lieutenant* after decades of service. The most common stepping-stone toward the coveted commission was the position as one of the two *portes-drapeau* (color-bearers or ensigns) or *quartier-maître trésorier* (paymaster or quartermaster) of the regiment. Of the 12 officers commissioned at age 26 or older in the Royal Deux-Ponts, five were current or former *portes-drapeau*, three were or had been *quartier-maîtres trésorier*.⁹⁹ During the American campaign, both *portes-drapeau* were promoted to *sous-lieutenant* and replaced by men promoted from the ranks.

One of them was Jean Mathieu Michel Bayerfalck, born 1739, who had joined the regiment as a sergeant in 1766 with already eight years service in the Regiment de Berry. Promoted to *porte-drapeau* in 1772, he became a *sous-lieutenant* on 28 October 1781

⁹⁷ Joseph Louis César Charles comte de Damas, an *aide-de-camp* to Rochambeau, was all of 2 years and 9 months old when he became a *sous-lieutenant* albeit in the regiment Du Roi and thus outside the regular line infantry establishment, in August 1761. By April 1781 he was a *mestre-de-camp*, or colonel. Bodinier, *Dictionnaire*, p. 121.

⁹⁸ Officer data are based on the information given in Bodinier, *Dictionnaire*, passim. The number includes von Fersen and *quartier-maître trésorier* Charles Anton Baronheydt, who were transferred to the regiment in 1782, three promotions from the ranks to *porte-drapeau*, and Rechteren. Four officers -- two captains and two lieutenants -- stayed with an auxiliary company in Schlettstadt.

⁹⁹ The other four, Axel von Fersen (13 years), Louis Aimable de Prez de Crassier (10 years when he joined on 1 April 1757), Rechteren (15 years) and Joseph Chevalier de Stack (14 years) all have long years of service in other regiments before joining the Royal Deux-Ponts.

after 23 years of military service. His place as *porte-drapeau* was taken over by J. Georg Hanck, who had joined the regiment at age 19 in 1758. By the time he became a *sous-lieutenant* in 1787, he had 29 years of service. The second *porte-drapeau* of the regiment, Jean Frederic Schleyder, had enlisted as a 17-year-old in 1759. He became *porte-drapeau* in 1777 and *sous-lieutenant* after 21 years on 15 April 1780. His place was taken by Philipp Wilhelm Sonntag, who had signed up at age 17 in 1774. When Sonntag decided to stay in the United States and resigned in May 1782, Jean Pierre Guillaume Mittmann became his successor. Born in 1739, Mittmann had joined the regiment in November 1756; he had almost 26 years of service in the summer of 1782. It took him another eight years to make *sous-lieutenant* in February 1790.

Besides the *portes-drapeaux* the regiment had one true *officier de fortune*, an enlisted man who had risen from the ranks through long years of service via the *quartier-maître trésorier*. Born in Meissenheim in 1732, Henry Schanck joined the Regiment de Bergh in November 1749 as a common soldier. On 30 November 1756 he transferred to the Royal Deux-Ponts where he was promoted to *sous-lieutenant* in August 1770. Ten years later, on April 4, 1780, he was made a captain.

Helpful as these statistics may be, they do not tell us much about the lives of these men. A series of ten letters written by Count Wilhelm von Schwerin, a twenty-six-year-old sub-lieutenant of grenadiers of the Royal Deux-Ponts, partly in German, partly in French, between August 1780 and December 1781, to his uncle Graf Reingard zu Wied, fills some of this void. They provide a rare glimpse into the life -- and the precarious finances -- of a company-grade officer in America.¹⁰⁰ In a letter of March 16, 1780, Schwerin laid bare his financial situation. His base salary was 60 livres per month. Stoppages included 8 livres for his uniform and 2 livres to help pay the debts of a retired officer. His monthly share to pay the salary of Georg Friedrich Dentzel, the Lutheran minister of the regiment, amounted to 9 sous.¹⁰¹ That left him 49 livres 11 sous per month or 594 livres 12 sous annually. Anticipating the high cost of living and the need to pay for everything in the New World, officer's salaries were doubled in March of 1780, raising Schwerin's net annual income to 1,309 livres 4 sous. His uncle added 48 livres per month or 576 livres per year for a total of 1,885 livres 4 sous or 157 livres 2 sous per month.

In preparation for the expedition, the king had ordered that the officers be paid three months in advance plus 50 livres to buy tents, hammocks, shirts etc. For Schwerin that

¹⁰⁰ Schwerin's original correspondence was sold to an American collector in the early 1960s, its current whereabouts are unknown; all quotes are from copies made for the Library of Congress in 1930. See my "'Mon très cher oncle': Count William de Schwerin reports from Virginia." in the *Colonial Williamsburg. The Journal of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation* Vol. 22 No. 2 (Summer 2000), pp. 48- 54.

¹⁰¹ The minister had a remarkable career made possible by the French Revolution. Georg Friedrich Dentzel was born on July 16, 1755, in Bad Dürkheim as the son of a baker. From 1774 to 1786 he served as the Lutheran preacher in Royal Deux-Ponts. As senior of the Protestant clergy in Landau from 1786-94 he was the founder and first president of the local Jacobin Club. In 1792, he was elected a member of *Assemblée Nationale* in Paris and commanded the defense of Landau in the fall of 1793. Arrested and imprisoned in Paris he was released after the fall of Robespierre. By 1813 he was a brigadier in Napoleon's army and *Baron de l'Empire*. Retired as full general in 1824, he died in Versailles in 1828. He is the grandfather of Prefect Hausmann the architect responsible for the reconstruction of Paris in the 1850s and 1860s. Paul de St. Pierre, the Catholic priest of the Royal Deux-Ponts, lived an exciting life as well. Born Michael Joseph Plattner in 1746 in Dettelbach near Würzburg, he was back in the United States by late 1784 and living in Baltimore. St. Pierre became a missionary to the Indians and died in Iberville, Louisiana.

meant an additional 200 livres, but not much of it was spent on travel preparations. Some older officers retired rather than accompany the regiment to the New World. That meant that Schwerin had to pay the expenses arising from the *concordat* among the officers of the Royal Deux-Ponts. The *concordat* was an agreement stipulating that every time an officer left the regiment, each officer below him in rank, who would thereby advance in seniority, if not in rank, was to pay that officer the equivalent of two months of his own wages if that officer retired without pension, one month if he retired with a pension. Count Wilhelm's *concordat* in the spring of 1780 amounted to at least 288 livres, the equivalent of 6 months wages. To make up for the four officers who could not pay their share of the *concordat* since they "already sit in prison because of other debts," each lieutenant of the regiment had to pay an additional 24 livres 11 sous 6 deniers.¹⁰²

Upon arrival in America, Schwerin had additional expenses that put a severe drain on his budget as well. The servant, whom he was required to keep, cost him 15 livres in cash wages and 35 livres for food each month plus 3 livres clothing allowance. His lunch alone cost him 80 livres per month in Newport, which left him with maybe 24 livres per month from his 157 livres income. In the evenings he ate "but a piece of bread" and lots of potatoes, as he ruefully informed his uncle, but at 22 sous for a pound of bread or 4-6 sous for a pound of potatoes even that was an expensive meal. Shoemakers in Newport charged 40 livres for a pair of boots, and just the material for a shirt was 9 florin or 18 livres 15 sous. A good horse, estimated by Fersen to cost about 50 louis d'or or 1,200 livres in Newport, was simply out of reach for 2/3 of the officers in Rochambeau's army. Schwerin was constantly borrowing money; in the spring of 1781 alone, he borrowed 1,200 livres from his colonel to equip himself for the campaign, which meant, among others, hiring a second servant and purchasing a horse for 300 livres.¹⁰³ No wonder he concluded one of his letters by telling his uncle that those who had remained in Europe "would not believe how everyone is fed up with waging war in this country here. The reason is quite simple in that one is obliged to buy one's forage with one's own money, and no one gives you your ration that is your due in times of war." After Schwerin had returned to France, a compilation of his debts on 25 September 1783 showed them to be at 5,571 *livres* -- the equivalent of nine (!) annual peace-time incomes!¹⁰⁴

A final question to be asked here is: How much did the French officers reflect upon the reasons for fighting in this war? Did they know, or care, about the causes, and consequences, of their involvement in the American Revolution? To put it briefly: very few of them knew or cared. Among those who put their thoughts on paper, the opinion of the young comte de Lauberdière is representative for that expressed in the vast majority of diaries and journals. The war, so Lauberdière, had been caused by the "violent means employed by the ministry in England" to raise taxes "in violation of the natural and civil rights of her colonies." France came to the aid of the colonies, but one looks in vain for

¹⁰² Schwerin's actual expenses may have been over 500 livres. The concordat of 23 July 1784 is printed in Régis d'Oléon, "L'Esprit de Corps dans l'Ancienne Armée" *Carnet de la Sabretache* 5th series (1958), pp. 488-496, pp. 493-495.

¹⁰³ Nicolas François Denis Brisout de Barneville, a *sous-lieutenant* and aide to Baron Vioménil, largely confirms Schwerin's prices. See the "Journal de Guerre de Brissout de Barneville. Mai 1780-October 1781" *The French-American Review* Vol. 3, No. 4, (October 1950), pp. 217-278, p. 245/46.

¹⁰⁴ I am grateful to Dr. Hans-Jürgen Krüger of the Fürstlich Wiedische Rentkammer for this information taken from an entry in the *Korrespondenz Findbuch* of the archives in Neuwied.

an explanation as to what these "rights" consisted of. Glory, honor, the opportunity to make a name for oneself, a chance to escape boredom, creditors, girlfriends: these are the recurrent themes found in the journals of participants. France entered the war not because she believed in the ideals of the revolution, and not because she wanted to fight FOR America. She entered the war because of the enemy she could fight AGAINST: Great Britain. By 1780, a whole generation of Frenchmen had grown up in the shadow cast upon the crown of the Sun King by the humiliation suffered in the Peace of Paris. This common enemy provided much, if not most, of the impetus for Franco-American cooperation. The comte de Laubardière expressed the feelings of his age group as well as anyone when he wrote that France "was looking to take revenge for the peace of 1763."

5.4.2 The Rank and File

Unlike their officers, the rank and file of the *expédition particulière*, the non-commissioned officers and enlisted men, have remained largely a faceless mass of people. Thanks to the meticulous research of Samuel F. Scott, we know at least how many there were: Rochambeau took with him almost 5,300 soldiers. In June 1781, 660 re-enforcements were sent from France, 160 men were recruited in the US (all but one European-born) for a total of 6,038 men who served with Rochambeau's forces.

Non-commissioned officers promoted to their ranks after long years of service formed the backbone of the French army. Following the army reforms of 1776, a fusilier or chasseur company had 15 NCOs, five sergeants and ten corporals, while the smaller grenadier company had four sergeants and eight corporals. The sergeants formed the elite of a company's non-commissioned officers. Based on an analysis of the careers of over 20,000 men, Samuel F. Scott found that in 1789 more than half of all sergeants were under 35 years of age despite the often ten or more years of service it took to reach that rank. Every one of the eight to ten corporals too had reached his rank based on seniority after long years of service. According to Scott, "[c]orporals fell into three general categories: a minority of apparently talented soldiers who were promoted after four to six years' service, soldiers who followed a more common career pattern and were promoted around the time of their completion of their first eight-year-enlistment (sometimes as an inducement to re-enlist); and soldiers with long service, over ten years, who were promoted on this basis." More than 3/4 of these men were under 35 years old.¹⁰⁵

Below them was the rank and file, and, unlike the Prussian military at the time, where Frederick the Great preferred older soldiers, the French army was a *young* army. In 1789, almost exactly 50% of all enlisted men were between 18 and 25 years old, another 5% were even younger. About 12% had less than one year of service, but 60% had been with the colors between four and ten years, another 20% had served for over ten years. These data are confirmed in the troops of the *expédition particulière*. In the Royal Deux-Ponts we find that the regiment sailed from Brest in April 1780, with a supplement of 1,013 men.¹⁰⁶ 113 reinforcements selected from the German regiments of LaMarck and Anhalt

¹⁰⁵ Scott, *Response*, p. 8.

¹⁰⁶ Six women and three children accompanied their husbands and fathers in the Royal Deux-Ponts.

joined in June 1781, another 67 men were recruited in America between August 1780 and November 1782, for a total of 1,193 men who served with the Regiment.¹⁰⁷

If well over 90% of all soldiers in the French regiments were native Frenchmen,¹⁰⁸ the treaty of March 1776 between Duke Charles and Louis XVI had stipulated that of the 150 recruits needed each year to maintain the strength of the unit, 112 were to come from the Duchy of Deux-Ponts and surrounding areas. The remainder was to be drafted from the German-speaking territories of the King of France since the language of command in the regiment would remain German. An analysis of the hometowns of the soldiers of the regiment in America reflects that recruitment largely followed these stipulations:

Zweibrücken:	330	27.7%
Remainder of the Empire:	343	28.8%
Alsace:	357	29.9%
Lorraine:	108	9.0%
France:	7	0.6%
Switzerland, Low Countries, Savoy (3), Ireland (2), Sweden (1)	48	4.0%

	1,193	100.0%

A look at the age of the soldiers shows that 584 men or 48.9% of the rank and file had been born between 1753 and 1759: almost half of the men were between 21 and 27 years old by the time the regiment left for the United States. Some 736 soldiers or 61.7% of the rank and file had signed up between 1773 and 1779, i.e., had up to eight years of service. Enlisted men could join at a very young age: the *enfants de troupe*, sons of soldiers or officers, were usually admitted at half pay at the age of six and served as drummers until the age of 16, when they could enlist as regular soldiers. The youngest drummer-boys in the regiment were but nine years old. Comparative data for the Bourbonnais confirm these findings. Most of its men were in their early 20s, the average age being 27. But in the Bourbonnais, the youngest *enfant de troupe* was but 4 (!), the oldest soldier was 64.¹⁰⁹

The biggest difference between the Royal Deux-Ponts and French units was in the religious affiliation of the soldiers.¹¹⁰ If the French regiments were almost 100% Catholic, while the Royal Deux-Ponts was almost 40% Protestant:

Catholic:	732	62.0%
Lutheran:	269	22.8%
Reformed:	180	15.2%

		100.0%

¹⁰⁷ For much of the information on the rank and file of Rochambeau's army I am grateful to my friend and colleague Professor Samuel F. Scott, who generously shared his research with me.

¹⁰⁸ Rochambeau's corps had at least one black soldier in its ranks: Jean Pandua, "un fils d'amour" according to his enlistment record, who had joined the Bourbonnais regiment as a musician in 1777; after five years of service he deserted in October 1782 near Breakneck in Connecticut.

¹⁰⁹ Kennett, *French forces*, p. 23. The Touraine regiment which Admiral de Grasse brought to Yorktown kept an 80-year-old on its pay-list.

¹¹⁰ Of twelve soldiers the religion is unknown.

Their ethnic German background and religious affiliation with various Protestant strands of the Christian faith greatly influenced the experiences of the soldiers in the regiment, especially in traditionally anti-French and anti-Catholic New England.

There is a general conception that the soldiers in the armies of the eighteenth century were the dregs of society, released from prison if not from the gallows in exchange for military service. In the case of the French army and the troops of Rochambeau, research has shown that this is clearly not the case. As a rule, these men did not come from well established, "middle-class" families, but rather what we might call the "working poor." The emphasis here should be on *working*: of over 17,000 beggars registered in the city limits of Paris between 1764 and 1773, only 88 (!) entered the army!¹¹¹ The most detailed report on any regiment, that on the Royal Deux-Ponts compiled on October 1, 1788, a few years after its return from America, shows, not surprisingly for a pre-industrial society, that 76.4%, or 875 of its 1,146 men were peasants and "autres travailleurs de la campagne." The next largest group, 59 men or 5% were tailors, 48 gave shoemaker as their profession, and 46 were masons. The rest were carpenters (24), butchers (22), wheelwrights (21) and an assortment of other trades.

What bound these men together irrespective of their trade, language, or religion, was a precarious financial situation. To say that the armies of the *ancien régime* were paid poorly is an understatement, but the French army ranked at the very bottom of the pay-scale. When the salaries of French and Foreign infantry, i.e., the Royal Deux-Ponts, were increased by 50% for the *expédition particulière*, it meant that a fusilier would be paid 9 sous 6 deniers per day or 14 livres 5 sous per month (= 171 livres a year) in America. The better-paid grenadier made 11 sous for a total of 16 1/2 livres per month or 198 livres per year, as much as a hussar. A sergeant-major of grenadiers or hussars, the highest-paid NCO of the line, had 486 livres per year. Before departure, the rank and file received one month pay plus 18 livres from the *masse générale* to equip themselves; another 18 livres from this *masse* were distributed upon arrival in Newport.¹¹² But they had to pay stoppages from their pay as well. The *ordonnance* of March 20, 1780, set food costs at 2 sous for bread, 1 sous 6 d for beef per day. This meant a monthly food bill for every non-commissioned officer and enlisted man of

3 livres	for bread
2 livres 2 sous	for beef
1 sous 6 deniers	for 1 pound of salt per month

5 livres 3 sous 6 deniers	

¹¹¹ Quoted in Scott, *Response*, p. 19. As yet there are no comparative data on recruitment from jails for the French army, but I agree with Scott that, at least for the French army, such claims are often based on contemporary and modern prejudice rather than hard evidence.

¹¹² The various regimental *masses* were the purses from which expenses of a regiment were met; stoppages were made from a soldier's pay to these accounts. To some *masses* such as the *masse de propriété* only some soldiers contributed, in this case only those with permission to work in their trades in town. All contributions to the *masse générale*, increased from 36 livres for the French infantry and 72 livres for the Foreign infantry to 48 and 84 livres for the American campaign, were covered by the crown.

Also increased were the deductions for the *masse de linge et chaussure*, the regimental fund to pay for a soldier's linen, i.e., his uniform, and his shoes. NCOs contributed 16 denier per day to this *masse*, corporals and enlisted men half as much. That meant additional monthly stoppages of 1 livre 12 sous per month for a sergeant and 16 sous for each hussar, fusilier, grenadier, or *chasseur*, leaving a fusilier or *chasseur* with 8 livres 5 sous 9 deniers, a grenadier or hussar with 10 livres 10 sous 9 deniers, a sergeant with 23 livres 4 sous 9 deniers.¹¹³ To put this figure into the proper perspective it may be worth mentioning that Axel von Fersen estimated that it cost him 20 livres a month to keep his dog! But since a French soldier was paid in specie rather than in paper, even 8, 9, or 10 livres was more than what a Continental Soldier received -- if he was ever paid. A look across the battlefield, however, shows that his British and German enemies were considerable better off. A common soldier in the British army received 8 pence a day or £ 1 pound per month, almost exactly 23 livres, though stoppages reduced his wages to some 19 livres. A soldier in a Brunswick regiment in British service had 16 shillings 1 penny 1 farthing for 4 weeks of service. That left him with 14 shillings after stoppages for food and clothing had been taken out; a *Gefreiter* had 16 s 4 p.¹¹⁴ Those 16 s are just about 19 livres or almost 2 1/2 times the pay of a fusilier in the Bourbonnais!

If officers in Rochambeau's corps did not necessarily reflect upon the causes of the war and the reasons for France's involvement, our knowledge of how enlisted men felt is even sketchier. It was only a few years ago, that three journals kept by enlisted men came to light. One is the *Journal militaire* of an anonymous grenadier in the Bourbonnais, which focuses almost exclusively on military events and contains little for the purposes of this study.¹¹⁵ Neither does the journal of André Amblard of the Soissonnais, even though it does contain more observations about America and the Americans he met with than the grenadier *journal*. Only Georg Daniel Flohr, a fusilier in the Royal Deux-Ponts, expresses his views, unreflective as they are, about the war in America.

The only child of Johann Paul Flohr, a butcher and small farmer, and his second wife, Susanne, Georg Daniel was born on August 27, 1756, and baptized on August 31, 1756, in Sarnstall, a community of some twenty families, and a suburb of Annweiler in the duchy of Pfalz-Zweibrücken. Orphaned at the age of five by the death of his father, Georg Daniel and the five children from his father's first marriage were raised in the German Reformed Church by their mother. Nothing is known about his schooling or the trade he learned, but he presumably attended both the Calvinist school in Sarnstall and the German Reformed school in Annweiler. On June 7, 1776, shortly before his twentieth birthday, Flohr volunteered for an eight-year-term in the Company von Bode, of the Royal Deux-Ponts. Regimental records describe him as 1.71 meter (5 feet 8 inches) tall, with black hair, black eyes, a long face, regularly shaped mouth, and a small nose.

What sets Flohr apart is his keen mind and interest in the New World around him as he describes it in his *Account of the travels in America undertaken by the praiseworthy*

¹¹³ This compilation of a soldier's income is based on figures given in Charles Victor Thiroux, *Manuel pour le corps de l'infanterie: extrait des principales ordonnances relatives à l'infanterie française & le plus journellement en usagë*. (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1781), pp. 178-190.

¹¹⁴ Otto Elster, *Geschichte der Stehenden Truppen im Herzogtum Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel* 2 vols., (1899-1901; reprint Bad Honnef, 1982), Vol. 2, p. 388.

¹¹⁵ Library of Congress, Milton S. Latham Journal-Miscellaneous Manuscripts Collection # 1902.

*regiment von Zweibrücken on water and on land from the year 1780 until 1784.*¹¹⁶ In a brief explanation following the title page, Flohr informs us of his goal, which is to describe the "towns, villages, hamlets and plantations," as well as the habits and customs of the inhabitants, "in North- as well as in West-America" as he had "daily and most meticulously" recorded them. He illustrated his narrative with 30 colored drawings of communities he passed through on his way to and from Yorktown and in the Caribbean.

Flohr's journal is largely descriptive: he says very little about the American cause or the reasons for his being in America. If he heard about the ideas of Independence, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, he neither mentions them nor does he apply them to himself, at least not during this phase of his life. Flohr and the French troops had come to America to put an end to the British "wreaking havoc on this beautiful country."

¹¹⁶ Flohr's *Reisen Beschreibung von America welche das Hochlöbliche Regiment von Zweibrücken hat gemacht zu Wasser und zu Land vom Jahr 1780 bis 84* is located in the Bibliothèque Municipale, Strasbourg, France. It was first shown to the public in 1976. I am currently preparing an English language edition of the journal. See my "Private Flohr's America. From Newport to Yorktown and the Battle that won the War: A German Foot Soldier who fought for American Independence tells all about it in a newly discovered Memoir" *American Heritage* Vol. 43, No. 8, (December 1992), pp. 64-71; "A German Soldier in New England During the Revolutionary War: The Account of Georg Daniel Flohr" *Newport History* Vol. 65, Part 2, No. 223, (Fall 1993), pp. 48-65; "A German Soldier in America, 1780-1783: The Journal of Georg Daniel Flohr" *William and Mary Quarterly* Vol. 50, No. 3, (July 1993), pp. 575-590, "Georg Daniel Flohr's Journal: A New Perspective" *Colonial Williamsburg. The Journal of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation* Vol. 15, No. 4, (Summer 1993), pp. 47-53. Flohr returned to the United States in circa 1798 and ended his days as a Lutheran minister in Wytheville, VA, in 1826. See my "Private Flohr's Other Life: The young German fought for American Independence, went home, and returned as a man of peace" *American Heritage* Vol. 45, No. 6, (October 1994), pp. 94-95.

THE *EXPÉDITION PARTICULIÈRE* IN RHODE ISLAND

6.1 The Transatlantic Journey

To put an end to the British "wreaking havoc on this beautiful country" was indeed the goal of the *expédition particulière* assembled in Brest in March 1780. By April 6, the troops were embarked; Rochambeau boarded the *Duc de Bourgogne*, one of only five 80-gun vessels in the French navy, on April 17. Everything was ready, but for days the fleet had to wait in the rain for the wind to change. The first attempt to clear the coast failed, but on May 2, the convoy of 32 transports and cargo ships protected by seven ships of the line, two frigates, and two smaller warships finally left Brest with some 12,000 soldiers and sailors on board.¹¹⁷ Conditions on board ship were less than comfortable.

Baron Ludwig von Closen, an *aide-de-camp* to Rochambeau as well as a captain in the Royal Deux-Ponts was traveling with two servants on the *Comtesse de Noailles*. The *Comtesse* was a 300-ton ship of about 95 feet length on the lower deck, a width of 30 feet and a depth of 12 feet in the hold. For the next 70 days, she was home to 12 naval and 10 army officers and their domestics, of crew of 45, and 350 enlisted men from the Royal Deux-Ponts. Given the limited space available, even officers had to sleep ten to a cabin. At mealtime, 22 people squeezed into a chamber 15 feet long, 12 feet wide, and 4 1/2 feet high.¹¹⁸ Closen complained that odors from "men as much as from dogs," not to mention cows sheep and chickens, "the perpetual annoyance from the close proximity" of fellow officers, and "the idea of being shut up in a very narrow little old ship, as in a state prison," made for a "vexatious existence of an army officer ... on these old tubs, so heartily detested by all who are not professional sailors." Closen would have liked it better on the *Duc de Bourgogne*. In order to provide Rochambeau and his officers with the foodstuffs they were accustomed to, she even carried an oven to bake fresh bread! "There is nothing more ingenious," so the anonymous Bourbonnais grenadier, "than to have in such a place an oven for 50 to 52 loafs of bread of three pounds each! There is a master baker, a butcher, a cook for the officers and a scullion for the sailors and soldiers."

For enlisted men, conditions were much worse. War Commissary Claude Blanchard traveling on the *Conquerant*, a 74-gun ship of the line which drew 22 feet of water at the

¹¹⁷ The numbers given for the size of the convoy differ greatly; my numbers are from Dull, *French navy*, p. 190. 15 women and nine children are known to have crossed the Atlantic, though there may have been even more: the Bourbonnais grenadier writes that his number "includes the children."

¹¹⁸ Closen, *Journal*, pp. 6-8. Jean Baptiste Antoine de Verger, a Swiss officer, had entered the Royal Deux-Ponts as a 17-year-old *cadet-gentilhomme* in February 1780; He also traveled on the *Comtesse de Noailles*, described as having 550 tons and carrying 250 soldiers. His journal of the American campaigns is published in *The American Campaigns of Rochambeau's Army 1780, 1781, 1782, 1783* Howard C. Rice, Jr. and Anne S. K. Brown, eds. 2 vols., (Princeton and Providence, 1972), Vol. 1, pp. 117-188.

bow, had to share her with 959 men, among them the baron de Vioménil and the comte de Custine.¹¹⁹ The anonymous grenadier of the Bourbonnais embarked on the *Duc de Bourgogne* counted 1,432 persons on board at the time of departure!¹²⁰ Private Flohr, lodged on the *Comtesse de Noailles*, describes the first day of the journey thus: "Around 2 o'clock after the noon hour we had already left the French coast behind and lost sight of the land. Now we saw nothing but sky and water and realized the omnipotence of God, into which we commended ourselves. Soon the majority among us wished that they had never in their lives chosen the life of a soldier and cursed the first recruiter who had engaged them. But this was just the beginning; the really miserable life was yet to begin." Soldiers slept in linen hammocks, which were attached to spars on the four corners and described by Flohr as "not very comfortable." Since two men had to share a hammock, "the majority always had to lie on the bare floor." Flohr concluded by saying: "He who wanted to lie well had better stayed home."

Provisions on troop transports have always had a bad reputation, and the food served by the French navy was no exception. According to Flohr "these foodstuffs consisted daily of 36 loth Zwieback (=hardtack) which was distributed in three installments: at 7 in the morning, at 12 at noon and at 6 at night. Concerning meat we received daily 16 loth, either salted smoked ham or beef and was prepared for lunch. This meat however was salted so much that thirst was always greater than hunger. In the evening we had to make do with a bad soup flavored with oil and consisting of soybeans and similar ingredients. Anyone who has not yet seen our grimy cook should just take a look at him and he would immediately lose all appetite." Since starvation was their only alternative, the soldiers forced the food down, living proof for Flohr of the proverb that "Hunger is a good cook." The soup was cooked in a huge copper kettle large enough to feed 800 to 1,200, sometimes up to 1,400 people at a time! These were enormous kettles indeed: if everyone on board ship would get 2 cups of soup per meal, it took 150 gallons of soup for 1,200 men. If we add another 20% space for cooking to prevent boiling and spilling over, the kettles would have had to hold a minimum of 180 gallons!¹²¹

A common complaint on all transatlantic passages was the poor quality and the small quantity of drink available. According to Flohr, each man received 1 and 1/2 Schoppen of "good red wine" distributed in three installments at morning, noon and night with the meal. If they received "Branntwein" i.e. liquor, instead, he received 1/8 of a "Schoppen." Of water they received "very little, most of the time only 1/2 Schoppen per day."¹²² This poor diet lacking in vitamins and minerals soon started to claim its victims, and Flohr witnessed "daily our fellow brothers thrown into the depths of the ocean. No one was surprised though, since all our foodstuffs were rough and bad enough to destroy us."

¹¹⁹ *The Journal of Claude Blanchard*, pp. 5- 8.

¹²⁰ Only about 500 of these men belonged to Rochambeau's army: a ship the size of the *Duc de Bourgogne* (190 feet long, a 46 foot beam with a hold of 22 feet and a somewhat smaller draft) carried a regular crew of some 940 men. Most of them were needed to man its 80 cannons: it took 15 men to work just one of the thirty 36-pounders on the main deck during battle and hundreds more to operate the other fifty 18 and 8 pounders on board. All numbers are taken from Jean Boudriot, "The French Fleet during the American War of Independence" *Nautical Research Journal* Vol. 25, No. 2, (1979), pp. 79-86.

¹²¹ For a more detailed analysis see my "Nothing but Sky and Water: Descriptions of Transatlantic Travel from the Journal of Georg Daniel Flohr, Grenadier, Royal Deux-Ponts, 1780-1783" *Naval History* Vol. 13 No. 5, (September/October 1999), pp. 29-34"

¹²² 1 Schoppen = about 1/2 pint or 1/4 liter.

Arrival in Newport was anxiously awaited, and joy was universal when the convoy sailed into Narragansett Bay on July 11, 1780.¹²³ The troops debarking in Newport over the next few days were hardly ready to face a British attack. About 800 soldiers and some 1,500 sailors were afflicted with scurvy, and, according to Flohr, of companies 100 men strong, "barely 18-20 could still be used" to throw up defenses around the harbor. As the Newporters "could now daily see the misery of the many sick, of whom the majority could not even stand up and move ...they had very great pity on them and did all they could for them." Despite this care, Flohr thought that "200-300 men [died] every day," but here he got his numbers confused: some 200 men was the total number of deaths. From September to November 24 men of his own regiment died; another 12 men had died during the crossing itself. Without having fired a single shot his regiment was 73 men short by the time it went into winter quarters on November 1, 1780.¹²⁴

By July 15, 1780, Barneville reported that "les boulangers," i.e., the bakers, and "les bouchers," i.e., the butchers," sont établis au camp." From now on the troops received their daily "1 1/2 pounds of bread plus 2 loth rice besides 1 pound of beef." The amount of food consumed by Rochambeau's men was enormous. Besides the vast quantities of bread, rice, and vegetables for almost 6,000 men, the army needed 300 to 400 heads of cattle every six to eight weeks and kept an additional 200 heads in reserve around the camp as well as the salt pork it had brought over from France.¹²⁵ The troops seem to have supplemented their diet on their own: in late July 1780, Lafayette wrote to Washington that in Newport "Chicken and pigs walk Between the tents without being disturb'd."¹²⁶

6.2 The Old World Meets the New World

Lafayette's pastoral landscape of "chiken and pigs walk[ing] Between the tents" in the French camp in Newport "without being disturb'd," and of "a Corn field from which not one leaf of which has been touched," was deceiving. By sending troops to the New World, His Most Christian Majesty had taken a considerable risk: it was by far not certain that they would be welcome! Before Rochambeau's troops set foot on American soil only a small minority of Americans had ever met a Frenchman off the battlefield. Frenchmen knew Americans as part of the British Empire, as enemies, not as allies, and fifteen years of uneasy friendship before the alliance of 1778 had not been long enough to wipe out old prejudices. More positive concepts of the continent as a *tabula rasa* inhabited by noble savages and some English settlers forming lone outposts of European civilization in the American wilderness were mere ideals formed by the wishful thinking of the *philosophes*

¹²³ The *Île de France* with 350 men of the Bourbonnais got lost in fog and put into Boston instead.

¹²⁴ Samuel F. Scott, "The Soldiers of Rochambeau's Expeditionary Corps: From the American Revolution to the French Revolution," in: *La Revolution Américaine et l'Europe*, Claude Fohlen and Jacques Godechot, eds., (Paris, 1979), pp. 565-578, p. 570, puts the death toll in the first four months at almost 200; the Royal Deux-Ponts lost another 8 men before the year was over - fully half of its 162 dead for the whole campaign.

¹²⁵ Barneville, "Journal," p. 254. All witnesses agree that the Germans did not handle the voyage very well. On August 21, Barneville wrote: "Le régiment des Deux-Ponts a été inspecté aujourd'hui. Il est superbe, mais il y a beaucoup de malades."

¹²⁶ Lafayette to Washington, July 31, 1780, published in *Lafayette in the Age of the American Revolution. Selected Letters and Papers, 1776-1780* Stanley J. Idzerda, ed., 5 vols., (Ithaca, 1979), Vol. 3, p. 119.

-- Jean-Jacques Rousseau comes to mind -- rather than reality.¹²⁷ "In the eyes of their American hosts," as Scott has pointed out, "most Frenchmen remained alien, objects of suspicion and potential hostility." Many Americans saw the French as "the adherents of a despicable and superstitious religion, as the slavish subjects of a despotic and ambitious prince, as frivolous dandies lacking in manly virtues, as physical and moral inferiors whose very dress and eating habits evidenced this inferiority."¹²⁸ They were not afraid to express their feelings, before, and even more so, after!, the failed sieges of Newport and Savannah! Throughout its existence, the Franco-American alliance was under severe strains and it is a testimony to the leadership capabilities of both Rochambeau and Washington that the military cooperation achieved any results at all.

Such likes and dislikes, fears and apprehensions, can only be understood within their broader historical, religious, and cultural context. For decades, the French had been the traditional enemy for New Englanders. Throughout the eighteenth century, ministers from Maine to Massachusetts had encouraged repatriated prisoners of the Franco-Indian wars to record their experiences and read them from the pulpits of their churches. Their accounts were invariably anti-French and anti-Catholic, and "confirmed the longstanding Protestant tradition that linked the Catholic Church with violence, tyranny, immorality, and theological error." This practice had reached new heights during the French and Indian War and had been re-enforced as late as 1774.¹²⁹ On June 22 of that year, Parliament had passed the Québec Act, thereby extending the Province of Quebec south to the Ohio River and west to the Mississippi. The act not only ignored western land claims of Virginia, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, but also guaranteed the traditional language, civil law, and the Roman Catholic faith of its new French subjects. The repeal of the act had been a major demand of American revolutionaries.

A telling sample of the inter-dependence of Catholicism and oppressive government as seen by some New Englanders was provided by James Dana, pastor of the First Church of Wallingford, Connecticut, in "A Sermon Preached before the General Assembly of the State of Connecticut at Hartford on the Day of the Anniversary Election, May 13, 1779." In this sermon, delivered more than a year after the signing of the Franco-American alliance, Dana reminded the legislators that "the preservation of our

¹²⁷ Durand Echeverria, "Mirage in the West: French *Philosophes* rediscover America" in: *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité: The American Revolution and the European Response* Charles W. Toth, ed., (Troy, 1989), pp. 35-47. Most insightful analyses can be found in Jean-Jacques Fiechter, "L'aventure américaine des officiers de Rochambeau vue à travers leurs journaux" in: *Images of America in Revolutionary France* Michèle R. Morris, ed., (Washington, DC, 1990), pp. 65-82, and François Furet, "De l'homme sauvage à l'homme historique: l'expérience américaine dans la culture française" in: *La Révolution Américaine et l'Europe*, pp. 91-108. See also Pierre Aubéry, "Des Stéréotypes ethniques dans l'Amérique du dix-huitième siècle" *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* Vol. 6, (1977), pp. 35-58.

¹²⁸ Samuel F. Scott, "Foreign Mercenaries, Revolutionary War, and Citizen Soldiers in the Late Eighteenth Century" *War and Society* 2 (September 1984), pp. 42-58, pp. 42/45. For American attempts at counter-acting these images see William C. Stinchcombe, *The American Revolution and the French Alliance* (Syracuse, 1969), chapters VIII: "The Press and the Alliance," pp. 104-117, and chapter IX, "French Propaganda in the United States," pp. 118-132. The French side of the Atlantic is covered in Peter Ascoli, "American Propaganda in the French Language Press during the American Revolution" in: *La Révolution Américaine et l'Europe* pp. 291-308. For Connecticut see Charles L. Cutler, *Connecticut's Revolutionary Press* Connecticut Bicentennial Series XIV (Hartford, 1975).

¹²⁹ Gayle K. Brown, "'Into the Hands of Papists': New England Captives in French Canada and the English Anti-Catholic Tradition, 1689-1763" *The Maryland Historian* Vol. 21, (1990), pp. 1-11, p. 9.

religion depends on the continuance of a free government. Let our allies have their eyes open on the blessings of such a government, and they will at once renounce their superstition. On the other hand, should we lose our freedom this will prepare the way to the introduction of popery."¹³⁰ Enough members of the Connecticut legislature remembered this warning in their spring 1780 session and refused to vote funds to supply the French even though Jeremiah Wadsworth had been hired by the French as their purchasing agent.¹³¹ Despairingly Jedediah Huntington wrote to Wadsworth on May 5, 1780, of his fears that the French aid might not materialize at all: "I assure you I have apprehensions that our good Allies will [only] stay long enou' to cast upon us a look of chagrin and pity and turn upon their heels."¹³²

What worried some of the legislators was the very idea of a military establishment. A century after the Glorious Revolution of 1688, the slogan of "No Standing Army!" was an integral part of American political culture and had indeed been one of the rallying cries of 1776. In the Declaration of Independence the revolutionaries accused King George of having "kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies, without the consent of our legislatures." For many Americans, a standing army was a potential instrument of tyranny. That included their own Continental Army, which many political leaders such as Thomas Jefferson would have loved to convert to an all-militia force, and which was indeed reduced to a single regiment of 1,000 men as soon as the war was over!

In 1765, Baron de Kalb had reported that the Americans would not welcome a French army, a good ten years later, in May of 1776, John Adams had made his position very clear when he wrote: "I don't want a French army here."¹³³ In early 1778, Vergennes had sent agents across the ocean to probe American sentiments concerning the militarily desirable project of armed intervention by an expeditionary force. Their reports were less than encouraging as well. A year later, one agent recorded that the Americans were not at all disposed toward supporting foreign troops on their soil: "It seems to me that in this regard the Americans harbor an extreme suspicion." Other officers reported later that year that they too had taken up the issue with the Continental Congress though without much success. "The most enlightened members of Congress, though convinced of the necessity of this course of action, have not dared to propose it for fear of alarming the people by the introduction of a foreign army."¹³⁴ These fears are expressed in the diary of the Rev. Christian Bader of Hebron Moravian Church in Lebanon, Pennsylvania. On March 22, 1779, he recorded the rumor that "on the first of April the French fleet is to arrive at Philadelphia. Then all without exception are to swear allegiance to the king of France and, whoever does not, will be handed over to the French and stabbed to death."¹³⁵

¹³⁰ Quoted in Stinchcombe, *American Revolution* chapter VII: The Pulpit and the Alliance, p. 96.

¹³¹ Richard Buel, *Dear Liberty. Connecticut's Mobilization for the Revolutionary War* (Middletown, 1980), p. 226. Interestingly enough, "the journals for this meeting of the legislature have disappeared." (Ibid.)

¹³² "The Huntington Papers" *Connecticut Historical Society Collections* Vol. 20 (1923), p. 150.

¹³³ Quoted in Kennett, *French forces*, p. 38.

¹³⁴ Quoted in Kennett, "L'expédition Rochambeau-Ternay," p. 92. See Lee Kennett, "Charleston in 1778: A French Intelligence Report" *South Carolina Historical Magazine* Vol. 66, (1965), pp. 109-111, for reports of anti-French riots as well as Scott, "Strains," pp. 80-100.

¹³⁵ John W. Heisey, "Extracts from the Diary of the Moravian Pastors of the Hebron Church, Lebanon, 1755-1814." *Pennsylvania History* Vol. 34 No. 1, (1967), pp. 44-63, p. 57.

To alleviate such fears, Rochambeau's troops were declared *auxiliaries* but how much of a euphemism that really was became obvious to everyone when some 4,000 superbly uniformed, well-equipped, and regularly paid French troops joined forces with an equal number of ill-clad, poorly equipped, and unpaid Continentals at Philipsburg in June 1781.

How uncertain even leading Americans about military intervention became apparent when Lafayette approached Franklin with the idea in October 1779. The usually rather talkative American replied evasively that he had "no orders for troops, but large ones for supplies, and I dare not take any further steps than I have done in such a proposition without orders."¹³⁶ His request for instructions from Congress, mailed more than a month after the conversation with Lafayette, did not reach Philadelphia until March 1780, by which time Rochambeau's troops were ready to embark. When the French cabinet discussed the idea of sending troops to America, all it had to go by was Lafayette's enthusiasm and a letter by George Washington of September 30, 1779, in which the latter promised a cordial welcome if Lafayette should return at the head of "a corps of gallant Frenchmen."¹³⁷ The cabinet concluded, rightly as it turned out, that Congress would rather not be forced to make a decision at that point in the hope that the saying "the enemy of my enemy is my friend" would apply once the French had landed. But just in case that welcome would not materialize, Rochambeau was authorized to either make for the West Indies or to seize Rhode Island by force until he could be evacuated.

Such fears proved to be unfounded. Upon arrival William de Deux-Ponts, *colonel-en-second* of his regiment, remarked that the French had "not met with that reception on landing which we expected and which we ought to have had. A coldness and reserve appear to me characteristic of the American nation."¹³⁸ Clermont-Crèvecoeur believed that "the local people, little disposed in our favor, would have preferred, at that moment, I think, to see their enemies arrive rather than their allies." He thought the British were to blame. They "had made the French seem odious to the Americans ... saying that we were dwarfs, pale, ugly, specimens who lived exclusively on frogs and snails."¹³⁹ Nicolas François Denis Brisout de Barneville, at 44 still a *sous-lieutenant*, thought that the image of the papist French, those "adherents of a despicable and superstitious religion," those "slavish subjects of a despotic and ambitious prince,"¹⁴⁰ had at least in part been formed "by numerous French refugees," i.e., Huguenots who had settled in America.¹⁴¹

The legislatures of Rhode Island and neighboring states officially and heartily welcomed their illustrious guests -- everyone among the educated had heard about Chastellux -- and after some initial apprehension the officially-ordered welcome became genuine as officers were welcomed into the homes of Newport as well. High-ranking officers in Rochambeau's staff were quartered in Newport, and the close personal contact

¹³⁶ Quoted in Kennett, *French forces*, p. 8.

¹³⁷ *The Writings of George Washington* John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., 39 vols., (Washington, DC, 1931-1944), Vol. 16, p. 369.

¹³⁸ William de Deux-Ponts, *My Campaigns in America* Samuel Abbot Green, ed., (Boston, 1868), p. 91.

¹³⁹ Crèvecoeur journal as edited by Rice and Brown, eds., *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, pp. 15-100, p. 21.

¹⁴⁰ Scott, "Foreign Mercenaries," p. 43.

¹⁴¹ Barneville, "Journal," p. 242. In 1677, 12 Huguenot families purchased land in Ulster County, NY, where they established New Paltz in 1678; in October 1686, Huguenot refugees established Frenchtown in Rhode Island, 10 miles inland from Narragansett Bay.

helped to overcome fear, prejudices and hostility.¹⁴² By early September, Fersen could report, somewhat overly enthusiastic, that "there has not yet been a single complaint against the troops. This discipline is admirable. It astonishes the inhabitants, who are accustomed to pillage by the English and by their own troops. The most entire confidence exists between the two nations."¹⁴³ On 22 January 1781, even William de Deux-Ponts could write to his administrator in Europe that he "could get used quite easily to America. I love the inhabitants very much." But since he was married and loved his wife "more than anything else in the world," he would return to Europe at the end of the war.¹⁴⁴

If there were tensions they were caused more often by a clash of cultures based upon the social status and expectations of those involved rather than by ill will. Not surprisingly it was the court nobility that had the most difficulty adjusting to the New World. Some had hardly disembarked when they began to complain about the less than enthusiastic welcome. Fersen, though himself a member of that group, wrote his father how these "*gens de la cour*" were in "despair at being obliged to pass the winter quietly at Newport, far from their mistresses and the pleasures of Paris; no suppers, no theatres, no balls." The "simple necessaries of life" with which Americans made do were quaint and fun to watch in others, but for a member of the high aristocracy such a life-style betrayed a serious lack of culture. Cromot du Bourg thought it "impossible to dance with less grace or to be worse dressed" than the women of Boston.¹⁴⁵ The *till*, a dance in this "still somewhat wild country," was "a sad piece of stupidity."¹⁴⁶ Many French officers such as Clermont-Crèveœur thought the girls "pretty, even beautiful [but] frigid." Unless you "assume the burden of conversation, animating it with your French gaiety, [all] will be lost," and summed up his judgement by declaring that "one may reasonably state that the character of this nation is little adapted to society" -- at least not society as defined by the standards of Versailles and French court aristocracy.

As far as these men were concerned, the concept of *noblesse oblige* went beyond the intellectual horizon of the average American, who seemed "rather like their neighbors the savages." Their accounts are filled with complaints about the poor quality of American bread and monotonous dinners of vast amounts of meat washed down with innumerable toasts. In-between they drank either "very weak coffee,"¹⁴⁷ Blanchard thought that "four or five cups are not equal to one of ours," or "vast amounts" of strong tea with milk. Eating seemed to be the major occupation for Americans, "who are almost always at the table; and as they have little to occupy them, as they go out little in winter and spend whole days along side of their fires and their wives, without reading and without doing

¹⁴² Alan and Mary Simpson, "A new look at how Rochambeau quartered his army in Newport (1780-1781)" *Newport History* (Spring 1983), pp. 30-67; Warrington Dawson, ed., "With Rochambeau at Newport: The Narrative of Baron Gaspard de Gallatin" *The Franco-American Review* Vol. 1, Nr. 4, (1937), pp. 330-34.

¹⁴³ In a letter of 8 September 1780, in Fersen, "Letters," p. 302. But by April 25, 1782, his patience with the simple life in America had apparently run out and he wrote to his sister: "We are still in this wretched little hole of Williamsburg, where we are bored to death. There is no society at all." Heidenstam, *Letters*, p. 12.

¹⁴⁴ I am very grateful to Ms Nancy Bayer, a descendant of William de Deux-Ponts, for providing me copies of the correspondence of her ancestor in the possession of her cousin Anton Freiherr von Cetto in Germany.

¹⁴⁵ Marie-François Baron Cromot du Bourg, "Diary of a French Officer, 1781" *Magazine of American History* Vol. 4, (June 1880), pp. 205-214, p. 214.

¹⁴⁶ "Letters of a French Officer, written at Easton, Penna., in 1777-78" *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* Vol. 35, (1911), pp. 90-102, p. 96.

¹⁴⁷ Clermont-Crèveœur, "Journal," p. 20

anything, going so often to table is a relief and a preventive of *ennui*."¹⁴⁸ After dinner "each person wipes himself on the table-cloth, which must be very soiled as a result."¹⁴⁹ Looking back, such misunderstandings appear humorous, but one can only wonder about the hurt feelings of the host in Marion in June 1781, when an officer, invited to tea, pointed to some sprigs on the table and informed them that "one do give dis de horse in my country." Another "felt insulted that his dog should be suspected of drinking" his milk from "a cracked bowl" that Tavern Keeper Asa Barnes had poured it in.¹⁵⁰ And all prejudices of the people of Windham were confirmed when French soldiers, hardly encamped, came down upon the frogs in their pond and feasted on them during that memorable night of June 20, 1781.¹⁵¹

Some disagreements ran deeper and laid bare the deep cultural differences between the allies. In November 1778, Admiral d'Estaing informed the Navy Minister: "One must also fawn, to the height of insipidity, over every little republican who regards flattery as his sovereign right, ... hold command over captains who are not good enough company to be permitted to eat with their general officers (one must be at least a major to enjoy that prerogative), and have some colonels who are innkeepers at the same time."¹⁵² Compared to eighteenth-century France, New England society was a society composed largely of equals: in 1782, French traveler Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur observed that in America "the rich and poor are not so far removed from each other as they are in Europe." He defined an American as someone who had left "behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners," who saw no reason to defer to someone because he wore epaulettes or had a title of nobility.¹⁵³

Commoners in France had no right to question a nobleman's actions, yet the constable of Crompond arrested Rochambeau for damage done by his soldiers.¹⁵⁴ The chevalier de Coriolis explained the strange rules of warfare in America thus: "Here it is not like it is in Europe, where when the troops are on the march you can take horses, you can take wagons, you can issue billets for lodging, and with the aid of a gendarme overcome the difficulties the inhabitant might make; but in America the people say they are free and, if a proprietor who doesn't like the look of your face tells you he doesn't want to lodge you, you must go seek a lodging elsewhere. Thus the words: 'I don't want to' end the business, and there is no means of appeal."¹⁵⁵ The vicomte de Tresson, a captain in the Saintonge whose father had commanded the regiment until replaced by Custine, put his finger squarely on the problem when he wrote his father: "Here they have more respect for a

¹⁴⁸ Blanchard, *Journal*, p. 78.

¹⁴⁹ Closen, *Journal*, p. 51.

¹⁵⁰ Heman R. Timlow, *Ecclesiastical and other Sketches of Southington, Conn.* (Hartford, 1875), p. 53.

¹⁵¹ Forbes, "Marches," p. 271 and p. 272.

¹⁵² D'Estaing is also pointing out one of the discrepancies of revolutionary ideology and political reality. In the French army, the colonel was expected to keep an open table for any officer of his regiment, no matter what rank he held. The letter from d'Estaing to Navy Minister Sartine, November 5, 1778, in Idzerda, *Lafayette*, Vol. 2, pp. 202/03.

¹⁵³ Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer* (New York, 1957), p. 36.

¹⁵⁴ The story is told by Rochambeau's son in Jean-Edmond Weelen, *Rochambeau. Father and Son. A life of the Maréchal de Rochambeau and the Journal of the Vicomte de Rochambeau* (New York, 1936), pp. 259/60; also in Forbes, "Marches," p. 271, and Rice and Brown, eds., *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 168.

¹⁵⁵ "Lettres d'un officier de l'Armée de Rochambeau: le chevalier de Coriolis" *Le correspondant* No. 326, (March 25, 1932), pp. 807-828, p. 818. Coriolis was Blanchard's brother-in-law.

lout than they have for a duke in France."¹⁵⁶ Could it be that a colonist had just pointed out to de Tresson that here in America we "have no princes for whom we toil, starve and bleed."¹⁵⁷ Such language was anathema in the ears of a court nobility used to be accorded exactly that deference in Europe. They might find it amusing that the ranks of the New England militia contained "shoemakers who are colonels," who in turn asked their French counter-parts "what their trade is in France."¹⁵⁸ They might even chuckle as they told their friends and families anecdotes such as this one told by the chevalier de Pontgibaud:

One day I dismounted from my horse at the house of a farmer upon whom I had been billeted. I had hardly entered the good man's house when he said to me,

"I am very glad to have a Frenchman in the house."

I politely enquired the reason for this preference.

"Well," he said, "you see the barber lives a long way off, so you will be able to shave me."

"But I cannot even shave myself," I replied. "My servant shaves me, and he will shave you also if you like."

"That's very odd," said he. "I was told that all Frenchmen were barbers and fiddlers."

I think I never laughed so heartily. A few minutes later my rations arrived, and my host seeing a large piece of beef amongst them, said,

"You are lucky to be able to come over to America and get some beef to eat."

I assured him that we had beef in France, and excellent beef too.

"That is impossible," he replied, "or you wouldn't be so thin."

Such was, -- when Liberty was dawning over the land, -- the ignorance shown by the inhabitants of the United States Republic in regard to the French. This lack of knowledge was caused by the difficulty of intercourse with Europe.¹⁵⁹

But if the curiosity of Americans toward the noble titles of the court aristocracy could be ascribed to ignorance, their strange foodstuffs to local customs, their provinciality to remoteness from European culture, their greed, seen as lack of devotion to the cause of American liberty, bordered on treason. In Europe, food and lodging for the army would simply be requisitioned, but here everything had to be paid for, and quite dearly at that. The French government had been aware that their allies lacked virtually everything and that Rochambeau's forces would have to bring much of their supplies with them. When Rochambeau arrived in Newport, conditions were worse than expected. In July 1780 already, he pleaded with the War Minister: "Send us troops, ships and money, but do not count upon these people or their means," and added the sober warning that "this is going to be an expensive war."¹⁶⁰

What the French did not or could not bring they had to purchase at what was generally agreed were very high prices. Rochambeau felt himself "at the mercy of usurers."¹⁶¹ Axel

¹⁵⁶ Quoted in Kennett, "Rochambeau-Ternay," p. 100.

¹⁵⁷ Crèvecoeur, *Letters*, p. 36.

¹⁵⁸ Cromot du Bourg, "Diary," p. 209.

¹⁵⁹ Pontgibaud was an *aide-de-camp* to Lafayette from September 1777 until after the siege of Yorktown. Charles Albert comte de Moré, chevalier de Pontgibaud *A French Volunteer of the War of Independence* Robert B. Douglas, trans. and ed., (Paris, 1826), pp. 50/51.

¹⁶⁰ Quoted in Kennett, *French forces*, p. 72.

¹⁶¹ Quoted in Scott, "Strains," p. 91.

von Fersen vented months of frustration in January 1781 when he wrote to his father that "the spirit of patriotism only exists in the chief and principal men in the country, who are making very great sacrifices; the rest who make up the great mass think only of their personal interests. Money is the controlling idea in all their actions." They "overcharge us mercilessly ... and treat us more like enemies than friends. ... Their greed is unequalled, money is their God; virtue, honor, all count for nothing to them compared with the precious metal."¹⁶² Schwerin thought the inhabitants of Newport treated the foreigners "fort mal honette" and were anxious to cheat them out of their money. Even Flohr complained, and with good reason. A 3-pound loaf of bread cost him 40 to 44 sous, though a common soldier like him received only about 150 sous cash per month which bought him an extra loaf of bread every eight or nine days but nothing more!¹⁶³

Few officers wanted to admit that New Englanders were no worse than French under similar circumstances. Only Brisout de Barneville declared that "The merchants sell to us just as dearly as ours did to the Spanish when they were in Brest last year."¹⁶⁴ More importantly, the French, used to an economic system based on price and wage controls, received a lesson in free market economy based on the laws of supply and demand. Colonel Thomas Lloyd Halsey of Providence, one of Wadsworth's business partners, explained to Peter Colt, one of Wadsworth's agents, the high freight costs in his accounts thus. "I am sure they might have been lower had they even had asked a day before they wanted but they never would or did. They commonly sent to me at Sunsett to obtain what they wanted for the Morning, which is no way of taking the advantage of Business."¹⁶⁵

Americans had long since lost faith in the paper money issued by their government and insisted that unlike their own army, the French pay in specie: gold or silver. Spend the French did, to the tune of millions, and much to the chagrin of the purchasing agents for the Continental Army, who found out that no farmer was willing to sell to them for worthless paper as long as Rochambeau's agents paid in Pieces of Eight! Finance Minister Jacques Necker had arranged for a first-year credit of 7,674,280 livres in early March 1780, 2.6 million of which Rochambeau took with him in cash -- not in French livres but in Spanish piasters, the most widely circulating currency in the colonies.¹⁶⁶ But when Rochambeau arrived in Newport he found out that his purchasing agents had already spent some 700,000 livres. In addition he needed a minimum of 375,000 livres each month to keep his army going, on top of almost 90,000 livres he needed to prepare winter quarters for his troops. When an emergency shipment of 1,5 million arrived in late February 1781, the navy, which had only brought half a million, was down to a mere 800 livres in cash. In early May, Rochambeau's son brought another 6,6 million livres in cash and bills of exchange, but by the time the French and American armies joined forces at

¹⁶² " Fersen, *Letters*, p. 371.

¹⁶³ Schwerin had quoted 22 sous for a pound of better bread for officers.

¹⁶⁴ Barneville, "Journal," p. 241.

¹⁶⁵ Halsey to Colt, 23 October 1781, in Jeremiah Wadsworth Papers, Original Correspondence July 1781 to February 1782, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Connecticut.

¹⁶⁶ Timothy R. Walton, *The Spanish Treasure Fleets* (Sarasota, 1994), p. 183, "On the eve of the American Revolution, about half the coins used in the British North American Colonies, some 4 million pesos (24 million livres) worth, were pieces of eight from New Spain and Peru." The remainder of Rochambeau's funds were in bills of exchange which lost 1/3 or more of their value as opposed to specie. But since it cost 1 livre to bring 4 livres in specie to the New World, the French reluctantly accepted the loss.

Philipsburg, they were almost gone too.¹⁶⁷ Rochambeau loaned some 120,000 livres of the 300,000 he had left to Washington, much to the relief of the American, who was worried that his troops might refuse to march past Philadelphia unless they were paid.¹⁶⁸ For many Continental soldiers this was the first, and last, time they were paid in specie.¹⁶⁹

Unfortunately the military proficiency of New Englanders was vastly inferior to their skills in "fleecing," to use Fersen's term, their allies. The French prided themselves in their expertise and derived great satisfaction from the high level of proficiency of the armed forces under their command. French officers, though impressed with the skill and even more so the devotion of the Continental Army, had little faith in the fighting abilities of the militia, an opinion shared by their American counterparts. They were not afraid of expressing their views, but few descriptions of that soldiery can match the pen of the chevalier de Pontgibaud describing Rhode Island and Connecticut militia gathering for the siege of Newport in 1778.¹⁷⁰

"Hardly had the troops disembarked before the militia, -- to the number I believe, of about ten thousand men, horse and foot, -- arrived. I have never seen a more laughable spectacle; all the tailors and apothecaries in the country must have been called out, I should think; -- one could recognize them by their round wigs. They were mounted on bad nags, and looked like a flock of ducks in cross-belts. The infantry was no better than the cavalry, and appeared to be cut after the same pattern. I guessed that these warriors were more anxious to eat up our supplies than to make a close acquaintance with the enemy, and I was not mistaken, -- they soon disappeared."

Company grade and junior officers with limited financial resources, *sous-lieutenants* like Schwerin who were sitting in their rooms at night eating potatoes, learning English, and counting the days until they might be invited to another evening event, men who had to turn each livre over twice before they decided to spend it, were much less concerned with the niceties of dancing, the simplicity of the food, and the home-made dresses of their hosts. Baron Ludwig Eberhard von Esebeck, the 40-year-old lieutenant colonel of the Royal Deux-Ponts informed his father in Zweibrücken how he "would never have

¹⁶⁷ Noailles, *Marins et Soldats*, p. 204; Kennett, *French forces*, pp. 66-68. Altogether there were nine shipments of specie from France for a total of some 10 million livres, at first in Spanish piasters, later in French coin. In 1782, New York made French livres legal tender for the payment of taxes. Kennett estimates that "the French forces [army and navy combined and including private funds] may well have disbursed 20 million *livres* (sic) in coin" during their stay in America.

¹⁶⁸ Rochambeau was only able to agree to that arrangement because he knew that Admiral de Grasse would bring 1.2 million livres from Cuba. On the Spanish role in making funds available to France throughout the war see James A. Lewis, "Las Damas de la Havana, el precursor, and Francisco de Saavedra: A Note on Spanish Participation in the Battle of Yorktown" *The Americas* Vol. 37, (July 1980), pp. 83-99. Lewis estimates inter-governmental loans such as the one for de Grasse in August 1781 at about 2 million peso, loans arranged by private lenders at 3, possibly 4, million peso for a minimum of 30 million livres (at an exchange rate of 6 livres per peso). These funds were vital for the French, and American war efforts.

¹⁶⁹ The troops were paid on September 5, 1781, and "This was the first that could be called money, which we had received as wages since the year '76 or that we ever did receive till the close of the war, or indeed, ever after, as wages." Joseph Plumb Martin, *Private Yankee Doodle* (New York, 1962), p. 222.

¹⁷⁰ Pontigaud, *French volunteer*, p. 67. For other appraisals of the militia and the Continental Army see Orville T. Murphy, "The French Professional Soldier's Opinion of the American Militia in the War of the Revolution" *Military Affairs* Vol. 33, (February 1969), pp. 191-198 and Durand Echeverria, "The American Revolutionary Army: A French Estimate in 1777" *Military Affairs* Vol. 27, (1963), pp. 1-7 and pp. 153-62.

believed ... that I should find in America the means of hunting deer and foxes. In Europe it is the *exclusive luxury of the great*. (my emphasis)"¹⁷¹

From Philadelphia, French Resident Gérard had warned Vergennes that "the manners of the two peoples are not compatible at all. ... Should there be too close contact between the French soldier and the American colonists ... there can be no other result but bloody conflict."¹⁷² Rochambeau heeded Gérard's warning and attempted to keep frictions at a minimum by imposing the strictest discipline and by keeping them closely confined to their quarters. But this policy only heightened a sense of alienation felt by many French soldiers who were living in a hostile country, devoid of fellow countrymen, where hardly anybody spoke their language, and where their faith was more or less openly despised.¹⁷³

For the Germans in the Royal Deux-Ponts the situation was different. Flohr remembered that he "got along very well with the inhabitants." He was full of praise for their hospitality and the medical support provided for the hundreds of soldiers afflicted with scurvy. As an enlisted man not used to finer foods, he had few problems adjusting to the diet in New England. Bread was a staple for every French soldier who consumed nearly two pounds a day. By late summer already Blanchard's commissaries were unable to provide the almost 2 1/2 tons of flour the army and navy consumed every day. Not only did rations have to be cut, but the flour also had to be mixed with cornmeal, at least for the bread for the soldiers. But Flohr thought the bread, even with the corn meal, "very good" though "sold for a very high price." The "money of the inhabitants was made of paper, about the size of a playing card" and bearing "the seal of the province and the signature of the governor." It did not seem to have much buying power: one had "to add good words" i.e., plead, to get food if one tried to pay with these 'Continental's.'

American-German relations ran smoothly as well, even though the soldiers "could talk precious little with them, [and] every one of us soldiers" tried to learn some English in order to "caress" the "beautiful American maidens." The freedoms granted to the younger generation, particularly to the girls, greatly surprised him: "Once they are sixteen years old, their father and mother must not forbid them anything anymore, cannot give them

¹⁷¹ John M. Lenhart, "Letter of an Officer of the Zweibrücken Regiment," *Central-Blatt and Social Justice*, Vol. 28, (January 1936), pp. 321-322, and (February 1936), pp. 350-360, p. 322. The letters are dated Jamestown Island, December 12 and December 16, 1781.

¹⁷² Quoted in Kennett, "Rochambeau-Ternay," p. 100.

¹⁷³ Conflict erupted despite such precautions. In September 1778 a waterfront brawl in Boston between locals and sailors of d'Estaing's fleet resulted in the death of a French officer and a number of injuries; a similar incident occurred when the *Hermione*, a 32-gun frigate, put into Boston in 1780. On August 31, 1780, a French sergeant was executed for the murder of an American medical doctor in Newport, but the affair was hushed up so successfully that not even the name of the victim has survived. In the winter of 1780/81, the crewmen of the *Surveillance* and the American *Alliance* went at each other, again in Boston, but this affair too was hushed up despite the fact that two American sailors were killed. French consul Holker told Desandrouins "plusieurs autre histoires qui viennent a l'appui de cette observation ..." Gabriel, *Desandrouins*, p. 363.

Americans were not always innocent in these affairs: on February 1, 1781, Barneville's journal carries the entry: "les enrôleurs engagé jusqu'a des valets de l'armée française," and at least six French deserters from Ternay's fleet appear on the roster of the American frigate *Concorde* in 1781. When fellow sailors forcibly carried a deserted sailor back onto a French warship, the town of Boston served the Captain with a writ of *Habeus Corpus*, which the French captain honored! Kennett, *French forces*, p. 82 *et passim*.

any orders on anything any more, and if they have a lover he can freely go with them" without injury to their reputations.

Here Flohr also provides one of the reasons for this *entente* when he writes: "In our vicinity we had two beautiful neighbors who lived in a wind-mill. One of them was named Hanne, the other Malle (Molly). We were especially welcomed by these girls because we (i.e. the Royal Deux-Ponts) were Germans, and they hold the German nation in very high esteem." By implication this has to be read to mean that the French nation was not held "in very high esteem." Germans were well liked in Colonial America, Franklin's occasional outbursts about "Palatine Boors" notwithstanding. The Lutheran and Calvinist co-religionists in the Royal Deux-Ponts were welcome anywhere in New England. Around New York Americans dropped such finer distinctions: "Whenever you entered a house around Suffern ...the inhabitants would ask you if you wanted to stay with them and promised to hide you until *the French* were gone!" (my emphasis)¹⁷⁴

As they spent the winter of 1780/81 in Newport and began their march south in the early summer of 1781, Rochambeau's troops marveled at a country where "all inhabitants are wealthy and well. One does not see a difference between rich and poor." Here "one does not see a difference between the Sunday clothes and their workday clothes," and women were "always dressed like ladies of the nobility." Many a time Flohr "wondered where their wealth came from since they don't work at all." Looking around he realized that this wealth was created by a relatively equal distribution and free ownership of land, where the absence of tenancy leveled social distinctions based on birthright and noble privilege. Like Crèvecoeur, Flohr appreciated the egalitarian character of that American society of citizens who despite their wealth were "not haughty at all. They talk to everybody, whether he be rich or poor." In America, so Flohr, common folk live "more ostentatiously than the nobility in Europe." That roles were reversed in America was driven home to Graf Schwerin in Philadelphia:

"On the last day of our stay in Philadelphia I was surprised to see a one-horse-chaise stop before my tent. In it sat two women and a man, who drove it. They said they were from Dierdorf; I asked them to get out of the carriage and recognized the one to be the Henritz who was a servant at the (your) castle and the other to be her sister, who has already been married to a beer brewer in Philadelphia for 18 years and who is very rich. I had dinner with them; they have a perfectly furnished house. In the evening they introduced me to a man named Dichon who had been with you at Dierdorf. ... I had breakfast with him before our departure from Philadelphia. He has a superb house and lots of ready money, because he showed me a little chest full of Louis d'Ors."

The spirit of equality, opportunity, and freedom was not lost on members of the lower nobility in the officer ranks either: Flohr's lieutenant colonel Esebeck thought that "no

¹⁷⁴ Punishment for desertion was eight years in chains, but of seven executions in America, five were for desertion. In one instance in the Royal Deux-Ponts in mid-August 1781, a captured deserter was sentenced "to be hung, but in consideration of the number of relatives he had in his Regiment M. de Deux-Ponts persuaded the General to consent that he should be shot, and he was so executed." Cromot du Bourg, "Journal," p. 306. Since Rochambeau could hardly afford to lose dozens of men to the executioner, the *schlagueurs* went into action: three Royal Deux-Ponts deserters who were handed over in early July "by some Americans, good Whigs (sic), ... were flogged." Closen, *Journal*, p. 91.

one could live more happily than here. There is a freedom here the like of which is found nowhere else."¹⁷⁵ For hundreds of landless sons of impoverished peasants in the Royal Deux-Ponts, the strangely wonderful New World exerted a powerful temptation to desert. Of 316 deserters from Rochambeau's corps who avoided recapture, 104 came from the Royal Deux-Ponts alone, another 186 deserters were German-speaking soldiers (mostly from Alsace and Lorraine) serving primarily in Lauzun's Legion. Many of them deserted around New York and during the march through Pennsylvania, where, so Flohr, half of the regiment met friends and relatives anxious to help a fellow countryman disappear. Few Frenchmen on the other hand were prepared to venture into a country inhabited by locals anxious to make a dollar, or in this case a livre or a louis d'or, by returning deserters to their units. A scant 26 deserters (8% of the total) were native Frenchmen who successfully ventured out into the hostile environment of America. And of those only six acquired their freedom in New England, the other twenty deserted in Virginia.¹⁷⁶

The "gallant Frenchmen" had come to America, so the vicomte de Noailles "to deliver America entirely from the yoke of her tyrants," but all they seemed to be doing was waste time and money in Newport.¹⁷⁷ In September the conference between Washington and Rochambeau at Hartford did not result in military action despite Horatio Gates' disastrous defeat at Camden on August 16, and the treason of Benedict Arnold on September 25. With nothing accomplished, at least so it seemed, the infantry and artillery went into winter quarters in Newport on November 1.

The death of Admiral de Ternay and his grand funeral in December brought little distraction. In January, the Pennsylvania and New Jersey lines mutinied, and French officers were convinced that the Americans had reached the end of the line. In Newport, frustration about the forced inactivity resulted in at least three duels among officers. When André de Bertrier des Forest, a captain in the Saintonge with 22 years of service committed suicide on March 5, 1781, after a violent dressing down by Custine, his friends in the officer corps very nearly lynched the colonel. The naval expedition designed to capture Arnold in the Chesapeake in February resulted in the capture of the 44-gun *Romulus*, but Arnold was still free. A visit by Washington helped prop up morale; so did a second sortie to Virginia from which French Admiral Charles René chevalier Destouches, who had assumed command over the French fleet after the death of de Ternay, returned on March 26, claiming victory in a naval battle since Admiral Marriot Arbuthnot had refused to renew the engagement.

The campaign of 1781 would have to produce results. Rochambeau's son returned from France with badly needed cash on May 10, 1781, (Rochambeau needed between 375,000 and 400,000 livres per month to keep his troops paid and supplied) but also with the news that the second division would not be coming after all. Rochambeau was advised to draw up plans for the coming campaign, possibly in cooperation with Admiral de Grasse who had left Brest for the Caribbean on April 5, and who might be able to provide naval support. At Wethersfield in late May 1781, Washington and Rochambeau decided to join the forces on the North River for an attack on New York "as the only

¹⁷⁵ Lenhart, "Letter," p. 359.

¹⁷⁶ Desertion figures in Scott, "Strains," p. 96. Naval desertion was considerably more serious: by June 1781, Barras' fleet was nearly 1,000 sailors short. Kennett, *French forces*, p. 85.

¹⁷⁷ So in a letter to Vergennes of September 1780, quoted in Kennett, *French forces*, p. 87.

practicable object under present circumstances," as Washington reminded Rochambeau on June 13. A march to the south had been ruled out since the summer heat would decimate the troops too much.¹⁷⁸

THE CONNECTICUT EXPERIENCE (1781)

7.1 Order and Organization of the March

Preparations for the march had been going on for months before the French forces broke camp. In April, Quartermaster-General Pierre François de Beville had used a visit to Washington's headquarters in New Windsor to inspect the roads from Newport to New York. Upon his return his assistants began drawing maps and picking campsites. French purchasing agent Jeremiah Wadsworth began collecting the vast amounts of supplies needed to feed thousands of men, up to 1,500 horses for the officers, 4-500 horses for the artillery and almost 900 horses for the wagon train! By mid-May he had also hired "a number of Laborers employed in building Ovens and making the necessary preparations for the accommodation of said Army on their march."¹⁷⁹ Rochambeau's force was quite small by European standards: barely 4,800 officers and men on March 1, 1781.¹⁸⁰

REGIMENT	PRESENT OFFICERS AND MEN OF ALL ARMS	DETACHED	HOSPITALS	TOTAL		
			Newport Providence		Renegades	
Bourbonnais	852	30	32	-	914	-
Soissonnais	971	8	16	-	995	2
Saintonge	882	2	26	1	911	1
Royal Deux-Ponts	912	-	21	-	933	-
Artillerie	404	-	9	-	413	-
Mineurs	21	-	2	-	23	-
Lauzun Infantry in Newport	330	12	13	-	355	-
Lauzun Hussars in Lebanon	212	15	6	-	233	-
	4.584	67	125	1	4.777	3

¹⁷⁸ For a detailed discussion of Franco-American strategy in the summer of 1781 see below.

¹⁷⁹ Florence S. Marcy Crofut, *Guide to the History and Historic Sites of Connecticut* 2 vols., (New Haven, 1937), Vol. 1, p. 69. The location of the ovens is unknown. Crofut thinks they "may not have been used," but Wadsworth "operated a shuttle of wagons that carried bread baked in Hartford ovens westward to the French Army at successive camps as far as Newtown." Chestler Destler, "Newtown and the American Revolution" *Connecticut History* Vol. 20, No. 6, (1979), pp. 6-26, p. 16. According to Rice and Brown, eds., *American Campaigns*, Vol. 2, p. 12, the troops were to "draw four days' rations" in Hartford. "Each division ... will be followed by a sufficient number of wagons to carry bread for four more days."

¹⁸⁰ The table is based on information in U. S. Congress, Joint Committee on the Library, *Rochambeau. A Commemoration by the Congress of the United States of the Services of the French Auxiliary Forces in the War of the American Independence* D.B.Randolph Keim, ed., (Washington, DC, 1907).

On June 11, 1781, just as he was about to leave for New York, a convoy carrying 592 infantry replacements and two companies, 68 men, of artillery, arrived in Boston, but only about 400 were healthy enough to join their units. These replacements had been drawn from the regiments of Auvergne and Neustrie for the Bourbonnais, Languedoc for Bourbonnais, Soissonais, and Saintonge, Boulonnais for Saintonge, Anhalt and La Marck for the Royal Deux-Ponts, and Barrois for Lauzun's Legion. Of these 660 men, some 260 men afflicted with scurvy and 200 healthy arrivals remained with Choisy as a garrison in Newport. So did the siege artillery with some 30 officers and men, the sick, and a small detachment, about 90 men under Major de Prez of the Royal Deux-Ponts, which guarded the stores in Providence. Rochambeau added 200 men from his regiments to the garrison and was forced, much against his wishes, to detach 700 men to replenish the thinned ranks of the navy. Since Lauzun's Legion, almost 600 men, followed a separate route to the south of the main army, the French forces marching to New York through Connecticut numbered around 450 officers and 2,900 to 3,000 enlisted men.

But the actual convoy was much larger: Rochambeau again hired American wagoners "for two dollars per day," so Lauberdère, and 15 mostly female cooks for the 210 wagons of four horses each in the 15 brigades of his train.¹⁸¹ As officers completed their equipment, they hired servants and purchased horses: even a poor *sous-lieutenant* such as Schwerin kept two servants for the campaign. Baron Closen acquired one of the most important status symbols of the eighteenth century, a Black servant, when he hired Peter, "born of *free* parents in Connecticut,"¹⁸² who accompanied him to Europe in 1783. Rochambeau and his fellow generals had 8, 10, or more servants, some free, some slaves. On June 9, 1781, the French advertised in the *Newport Mercury* that on Wednesday, June 13, "at 10 o'clock in the morning, at Captain Caleb Gardner's wharf, A number of Negro Men, Women and Boys, lately captured by his Most Christian Majesty's fleet" would be sold to the highest bidder. In what seems to have been a pre-public sale, Rochambeau on June 5, 1781, acquired a black slave captured during Admiral Destoches' expedition to Virginia in February 1781 for 170 piastres.¹⁸³ If the ratio of two domestics per officer was observed throughout Rochambeau's little army, the practice would have added as many as 1,000 *domestiques*, the equivalent of a whole infantry regiment, to the march!¹⁸⁴

As the troops got ready to break camp, tensions ran high among officers anxious for glory and honor. No one wanted to share the fate of *aide-major-general* Du Bouchet, appointed chief of staff in Newport, who felt slighted though he was the perfect choice for the position. When Lauberdère offered to buy his horses since he would have no need of them in Newport, Du Bouchet took that for an insult and challenged Lauberdère to a duel. Lauberdère was "seriously wounded" in this *affaire d'honneur*," Du Bouchet was almost killed. Mauduit du Plessis, second to both of them, had to help pull Lauberdère's

¹⁸¹ This includes the 14 wagons for Lauzun's Legion, though it is unknown whether that brigade was in Rochambeau's train. The names of drivers and cooks are listed in Kenneth Scott, "Rochambeau's American Wagoners, 1780-1783" *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register* Vol. 143, (July 1989), pp. 256-262, based on *Etat Générale des voitures attelées chacune de quatre [cheveaux] ... dont la distribution à été faite le 15th de ce mois [June 1781]* in the Wadsworth Papers in the New York Historical Society.

¹⁸² Closen, *Journal*, p. 187.

¹⁸³ Musée de Rennes, *Les Français dans la Guerre d'Indépendance Américaine* (Rennes, 1976), p. 83. The price, 892 livres 10 sous, was a bit more than 1/3 of the 100 guineas (=2,450 livres) the marquis de Laval had paid Wadsworth for a 10-year-old stallion in April 1781.

¹⁸⁴ The actual number of servants was probably closer to 500 men.

sword out of Du Bouchet's shoulder, where it had lodged underneath the collar bone. "For a few days" Lauberdère's life was in danger, but since he had defended his honor so valiantly in his first duel, he received "demonstrations of the most conspicuous concern ... from all his comrades and all the general and superior officers." Once the duelists had recovered, Choisy invited his officers to dinner where the two antagonists embraced. Lauberdère left Newport on June 23, Du Bouchet sailed to Virginia with Barras.¹⁸⁵

On June 11, 1781, the troops crossed over from Newport to Providence. Blanchard, who traveled with two servants, "set out in the morning (of June 16) for General Washington's camp ... stopping at the different places where our troops were to be stationed, in order to examine if anything was needed. The Americans supplied us with nothing; we were obliged to purchase everything and to provide ourselves with the most trifling things. It is said that it is better to make war in an enemy's country than among one's friends."¹⁸⁶ That same day the replacements joined their units and on Monday, June 18, the First Division set out for Waterman's Tavern in Rhode Island, their first stop.¹⁸⁷ Rochambeau, who marched with the First Division, had established this order:

- 1) The regiment Bourbonnais under the comte de Rochambeau, to leave on June 18
- 2) The regiment Royal Deux-Ponts under baron de Vioménil, to leave on June 19
- 3) The regiment Soissonnais under comte de Vioménil, to leave on June 20
- 4) The regiment Saintonge under comte de Custine, to leave on June 21

The eight twelve-pounders and six mortars of the field artillery were divided into four detachments with one detachment attached to each of the divisions. Lauzun's Legion left Lebanon on the 20th, the day the First Division reached Windham, pursuing a route about 10-15 miles to the south of the main army, protecting its flank (see below)

Each division was led by an Assistant Quarter Master General and preceded by workmen commanded by an engineer who filled potholes and removed obstacles.¹⁸⁸ Then came the division proper. In the case of the First Division, this meant that the vicomte de Rochambeau led the column.¹⁸⁹ Then came the officers and men of the Bourbonnais and the guns of the field artillery drawn by horses. The seven wagons of Rochambeau's baggage headed the baggage train, followed by the ten regimental wagons (one per company) with the tents of the soldiers and the luggage of the officers. Each captain had been allowed 300 pounds, each lieutenant 150 pounds of baggage for a total of 1,500 pounds per regiment distributed on wagons drawn by 4 horses each. Staff was allowed a separate wagon; a wagon for stragglers completed the regimental assignment of twelve

¹⁸⁵ Lauberdère account is based on his *Journal* in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. For Du Bouchet see Morris Bishop, "A French Volunteer" *American Heritage* Vol. 17, Nr. 5, (August 1966), pp. 47, 103-108.

¹⁸⁶ Blanchard, *Journal*, pp. 107/08. Blanchard reached the Continental Army on June 26, 1781.

¹⁸⁷ Deux-Ponts, *Campaigns*, p. 113. His brief account of the march through Connecticut is on pp. 113/14.

¹⁸⁸ The first division was preceded by 30 pioneers, half of whom carried axes, the second through fourth division by 15 pioneers, eight of which had axes.

¹⁸⁹ The Second Division was led by Captain Charles Malo comte de Lameth, an aide-de-camp to Rochambeau until May 1781, the third by Captain Georges Henry Victor Collot, also a former aide-de-camp to Rochambeau, and the fourth by Louis Alexandre Berthier, upon whose journal this paragraph is based. Somewhat different numbers are given in Destler, *Provisions State*, p. 54.

wagons.¹⁹⁰ Besides their muskets, the soldiers, dressed in gaiters, wigs, and tight-fitting woolen underwear, carried equipment weighing almost 60 pounds. Behind the regimental train followed the three wagons assigned to Blanchard, and the division's hospital wagons. Eight wagons carried the military chest under the supervision of chief treasurer Monsieur de Baulay.¹⁹¹ Wagons for the butchers, loaded with bread, with fodder, the "King's stock," and the brigade of wheelwrights and shoeing smiths brought up the rear. Even the Provost had his own wagon for the instruments of his trade. The make-up of the 2nd through 4th divisions followed the same pattern. Behind their QMG guide came the individual regiments, followed by a quarter of the field artillery, part of the baggage train of the headquarters staff led by the baggage of the general in charge of the division and the field hospital down to wheelwrights and shoeing smiths.

In order to avoid having to march in the heat of the day, the regiments got up early: *veille* was around 2:00 a.m., by 4:00 a.m. the regiments were on their way. The next campsite, usually 12 to 15 miles away, was reached between 8:00 a.m. and noon, and the soldiers set up their tents.¹⁹² Afterwards they received meat, bread, and supplies "in front of the camp."¹⁹³ Until Newtown was reached "we were much too far from the enemy to take any other precautions than those, which our own discipline required,"¹⁹⁴ and the convoy proceeded "hardly militarily." The general officers lodged in a near-by tavern, the company-grade officers slept, two to a tent, with their men. The early arrival provided an opportunity to meet the locals who came from afar to see the French, and for dancing with the "beautiful maidens" of Connecticut; music courtesy of the regimental bands.

7.2 The March of Rochambeau's Infantry through Connecticut, June 18-July 2, 1781

The description of Connecticut from the *Americanische Reissbeschreibung* of Georg Daniel Flohr is typical for that found in other journals. It contains, in a nutshell, all of the major events along the route. His regiment, the Royal Deux-Ponts, which formed the second division, left Newport on June 10, 1781, for Providence. Then,

"On June 19 we broke camp and marched 15 miles to Waterman's House, a pretty Gentleman's manor and set up camp there.

On the 20th we broke camp there again and marched 15 miles to Plainfield, again a beautiful Gentleman's manor in a beautiful area.

On the 21st again 15 miles to Windham, a little town,

On the 22nd 16 miles to Bolton, also a little town in the mountains.

On the 23rd 11 miles until Hartford, a rather large town on a much-navigated river, which therefore has a lot of trade. There we had rest days until the 27th.¹⁹⁵

On the 27th we broke camp from there again and marched 12 miles to Farmington, a little

¹⁹⁰ All numbers from Berthier, "Journal," p. 246. Clozen, *Journal*, p. 84, writes: "the general allotted 14 wagons to a regiment, two for each general officer and 2 for his six aides-de-camp. He kept only 4 for himself." Scott, "Wagoners," gives each regiment 15 wagons and five each to the general officers.

¹⁹¹ I have been unable to identify "de Baulay," also spelled "de Baulny" in the Newport quartering records.

¹⁹² Soldiers slept eight to a tent according to their *chambrées*, the precursors of the modern infantry squad.

¹⁹³ Clozen, *Journal*, p. 85.

¹⁹⁴ Deux-Ponts, *Campaigns*, p. 113.

¹⁹⁵ Hereafter Flohr's timetable for the march is off by a day; he left Hartford on June 26, not June 27, 1781.

town. As soon as we had set up our camp there and the Turkish Music could be heard playing prettily, such a large number of inhabitants assembled there that one was surprised and had to wonder where all these people were coming from since we had encountered very few houses along our way during the daytime. This coming together of inhabitants continued to happen every day. As soon as we reached another camp we

were immediately surrounded by Americans. Among them one saw very few male persons however but only women folk: if one saw a man among them it was unfailingly an old man or a cripple because all men folk from their 14th until their 60th

year had to join the colors. Because of this there was a great dearth of men there. Almost everyone there nearly perished since the English treated them very badly at the time. But there was no lack of women folk, which is why they oftentimes came into our camp to buy out soldiers from among us which was denied them however very curtly so that they had to go home again with empty hands.

On the 28th we departed again from there and marched 13 miles to Barne's Tavern, an inn along the road. We set up our camp very close to it. We again had very numerous visits from the American maidens who circled the camp on horseback and who appeared just like English horsemen. This afternoon our MM generals gave a ball on the open field in front of our camp and invited the American maidens to it. This lasted into the dark night. All joy could be seen there what with dancing and singing as well with the soldiers as with the officers who had fun with the English girls.

After that we went to sleep in our tents, but the girls went home all sad.

On the 29th we broke camp again and marched 13 miles to Break Neck, a little town in the mountains in a most beautiful area where the entertainments were even greater what with dancing and frolicking with the lovely beautiful American girls who lived there. All these entertainments took place in the open air.

On the 30th we broke camp again and marched 13 miles until Newtown, a little town; along the way we encountered a nice hamlet called Gutbahr,¹⁹⁶ about 2 English miles long. We set up our camp quite close to Newtown and had rest days there, which caused us especially great joy to have time to have fun with the beautiful girls.

On July 3 we broke camp again and marched 16 miles to Ridgebury; along the way we passed through a hamlet called Danbury. We set our camp up near Ridgebury, a beautiful Gentleman's manor; there we had numerous visits again.

On the 4th again 10 miles to Bedford, quite close to the North River and New York.

On the 5th we made 7 miles to North Castle."

Flohr's account of the march through Connecticut is singular in that it was written by an enlisted man, but it needs to be compared with, and supplemented by, the accounts of officers. The most useful are those of Baron Closen and Cromot du Bourg, both aides-de-camp to Rochambeau, of Lieutenant Clermont-Crèveœur, who marched with the artillery in the first division, Captain Berthier, the Assistant Quarter-Master General guide of the 4th division, and of comte de Lauberdière.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁶ Guthbar has not been identified, I assume he is talking about Southbury.

¹⁹⁷ In order to keep footnotes to a minimum, all quotes from the Closen journal in this section are identified as (1), Cromot du Bourg as (2), Clermont-Crèveœur as (3), Berthier as (4), and Lauberdière as (5).

In the early morning of June 19, the first division crossed into Connecticut "one of the most productive in cattle, wheat, and every kind of commodity," so Clermont-Crèveccœur. "It is unquestionably the most fertile province in America, for its soil yields everything necessary to life. The pasture is so good here that the cattle are of truly excellent quality. The beef is exceptionally good. The poultry and game are exquisite. (It is) one of America's best provinces. ... This country has a very healthy and salubrious climate. We have seen old people here of both sexes who enjoy perfect health at a very advanced age. Their old age is gay and amiable, and not at all burdened with the infirmities that are our lot in our declining years. The people of this province are very hard-working, but they do not labor to excess, as our peasants do. They cultivate only for their physical needs. The sweat of their brow is not expended on satisfying the extravagant desires of the rich and luxury loving; they limit themselves to enjoying what is truly necessary. Foreigners are cordially welcomed by these good people. You find a whole family bustling about to make you happy. Such are the general characteristics of the people of Connecticut."(3)

Plainfield, their first stop, was but "a collection of about thirty houses around its *meeting-house*" (1). The campsite was located beyond Plainfield; "on the right bordered by a forest and on the left by the road to Cantorbery (sic)." (5) Rochambeau and some of his officers stayed with Captain Eleazar Cady; others were put up in the Eaton Tavern.¹⁹⁸ Their next camp was at Windham, "a charming market town, where, incidentally, there were many pretty women at whose homes we passed the afternoon very agreeably. ... As we are still far from the enemy we occupy camps only for convenience, and the distribution of forage, bread, meat, and wood ordinarily is made in front of the camp." (1) Others too found the situation of the little town" of 100 to 150 homes "most agreeable. A mile away is a beautiful river (the Shetucket) with a fine wooden bridge. We camped on its banks very comfortably, though hardly militarily." (3)

On their way to Bolton the following day, the army marched through Columbia, part of Lebanon until 1804, and called Lebanon Crank in the eighteenth century. From there to Bolton, "a very small town," of maybe ten or twelve houses and a church, "the roads were frightful, with mountains and very steep grades." Officers above company grade stayed either at Oliver "White's Tavern" across from the campsite or at Daniel "White's Tavern at the sign of the Black Horse" on Hutchinson Road. Rochambeau spent the night in the home of the Rev. George Colton, on whose land the troops camped.

On June 22, the Second Division arrived in Bolton. In the afternoon Colonel Christian de Deux-Ponts ordered the band of his regiment to play without asking the commanding officer of the division, the baron de Vioménil for permission. According to Gabriel-Gaspard baron de Gallatin, a *sous-lieutenant* in the Royal Deux-Ponts, a row ensued and Christian ordered the band to cease playing. But as the daily concert had apparently become a source of revenue for the musicians of the band, Vioménil, who dared not order the band to strike up again, gave them "a *louis*" (24 livres) to make up for the lost income.¹⁹⁹ That left each musician with 1 livre 12 sous, almost a week's wages.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁸ Crofut, *Guide*, Vol. 2, p. 853; Forbes and Chapman, *France and New England* Vol. 1, p. 139. See also Marian D. Terry, *Old Inns of Connecticut* (Hartford, 1937), pp. 235-237.

¹⁹⁹ Rudolf Karl Tröss, "Die Regimentsmusik von Royal-Deux-Ponts vor Yorktown" in Tröss, *Royal-Deux-Ponts*, pp. 70-76, p. 70, gives the strength of the regimental band as 15 musicians.

In the meantime the Reverend Colton, the "Presbyterian minister, in this town, a large, fleshy man, very prosperous, married, but childless, suggested to the wife of the grenadier, (Adam) *Gabel* (sic), of the Royal Deux-Ponts, that she leave him one of her daughters. He would adopt the four-year-old as his own child, in return for some 30 louis to ease the campaign for her. The grenadier and his wife, who were very much attached to this child of four, steadily refused M. *Coleban's* (sic) offer, and thus proved their fine character and disinterest. This proposed sale was published in all the gazettes, even in France." (1) Cromot du Bourg remembered the incident as well: "We came to Bolton with the greatest difficulty imaginable, so frightful were the roads. The host of M. de Rochambeau was a minister at least six feet three inches in height.²⁰¹ ... This man, whose name was Cotton (sic), offered the wife of a grenadier to adopt her child, to secure his fortune and to give her for herself thirty Louis in money. She repeatedly refused."²⁰²

The next stop was in East Hartford for a few days of rest. The Bourbonnais occupied the campsite near the Connecticut River from June 22 through June 24; the Saintonge used the site from June 25 through the 27th. The Royal Deux-Ponts camped beside them from June 23 through June 25, while the Soissonnais camped along the road from Bolton from June 24 to June 26 on today's Silver Lane. After being stored in the house of James S. Forbes on Forbes Street, kegs of silver were opened at the French encampment to pay soldiers and officers, presumably giving the name of "'Silver Lane' to that locality."²⁰³

On June 25 the first division crossed the ferry into Hartford and marched on to Farmington via West Hartford, where a field hospital had been established by Blanchard near the Second Meeting House.²⁰⁴ The road to Farmington and the seventh camp was fine enough, and "the village, tucked into the bottom of a pleasant valley, very pretty." (3) Rochambeau and some of his officers boarded at Phineas Lewis' Elm Tree Inn, others stayed at Peter Curtis' Tavern, while the troops camped on the plains south of Farmington along the road to Asa Barnes' Tavern, their next destination.

For Camp 8 most of the troops put up tents in that part of Southington called Marion at the foot of what is still known as French Hill and where Barnes's Tavern is located. Some of the officers stayed at Barnes', others "at an inn on Queen Street," i.e., Deming's Tavern 6 miles away on the other side of town and at Daniel Allen's Tavern half-way in-between. The troops arrived at the site early, Berthier' fourth division started setting up camp at 8:00 a.m., and after a good days' rest, they were ready for some fun. Private Flohr, as we have seen, entered into his diary: "On the 28th (i.e., 27th) we marched 13 miles to Barnes' Tavern, an inn along the road. We set up our camp very close to it. We again had very numerous visits from the American maidens who circled the camp on horseback and who appeared just like English horsemen. This afternoon our MM generals gave a ball on the open field in front of our camp and invited the American

²⁰⁰ Warrington Dawson, "Un Garde suisse de Louis XVI au service de l'Amérique" *Le correspondant* Vol. 324, Nr. 1655, (September 10, 1931), pp. 672-692, p. 675.

²⁰¹ Colton, the "High Priest of Bolton," was 6' 8."

²⁰² Information on Gabel, a thirty-year-old veteran with eleven years of service, is from the *contrôles*, the enlistment records 1 YC 869, Service Historique de l'Armée de Terre, Vincennes, France.

²⁰³ Crofut, *Guide*, Vol. 1, p. 188.

²⁰⁴ Crofut, *Guide*, Vol. 1, p. 71.

maidens to it. This lasted into the dark night. All joy could be seen there what with dancing and singing as well with the soldiers as with the officers who had fun with the English girls. After that we went to sleep in our tents, but the girls went home all sad."

From Barnes' Tavern the route went to Waterbury, a "village of 50-some houses" and Breakneck, an assemblage of "two or three houses." The roads were "détestables," and the first division reached Breakneck (in Middlebury) on June 27 only with "the greatest difficulty. ... the village is frightful and without resources."(2) Clermont-Crèveœur's detachment of artillery in the first division did not reach the camp "until after three in the morning" on the 28th, just as the infantry was getting ready for the next day's march!²⁰⁵

After a few hours rest, Clermont-Crèveœur and his artillery marched on to Newtown via Woodbury across the Housatonic River, called the "Stratford" or "Little Stratford" by the French. Upon arrival in Newtown, the staff officers boarded in Caleb Baldwin's Tavern while the tents of the soldiers stretched all the way back to today's Church Hill Road. Newtown was "full of Tories." For the first time the soldiers also "saw much poverty there among the inhabitants as well as ruined fields and houses. This is the capital of the Tory country, and as you may well imagine, we took great precautions to protect ourselves from their acts of cruelty. They usually strike by night, when they go out in bands, attack a post, then retire to the woods where they bury their arms. ... These people are very difficult to identify, since an honest man and a scoundrel can look alike." (3) The First Division rested at Newtown from the 28th through the 30th of June; the Second Division arrived on the 29th and rested on the 30th.

7.3 The March of Lauzun's Legion from Lebanon to Ridgefield, June 21-July 2, 1781

Lauzun's Legion derived its name from its commanding officer and *colonel* Armand Louis de Gontaut-Biron, duc de Lauzun. Born in Paris on 13 April 1747, Lauzun became an ensign in the elite French Guards, commanded by his uncle the duc de Biron, three months before his 14th birthday; six months after he turned 20, he was breveted a colonel in the Guards. Not quite 19 when he married the 14-year-old Duchess Amélie de Boufflers, he lived separate from his wife and had no legitimate children. In 1769, Lauzun fought in Corsica, five years later he had his own regiment as colonel of the *Légion Royale*. Then came news of the rebellion in America.

When Louis XVI signed treaties of Amity and Friendship and of Military Alliance with the United States on February 6, 1778, France and Britain understood them as a declaration of war. France quickly realized that she was short of the marines, from 260 men and four officers for a 110-gun man of war to 15 soldiers for a corvette of 16 guns, to provide the infantry supplement for the navy. On September 1, 1778, *comte* de Sartine ordered the creation of the *Volontaires étrangers de la Marine*: eight *légions* of some 70 officers, four companies of infantry, one of artillery, one of workmen plus two escadrons of hussars each. A *compagnie générale* brought the *volontaires* to almost 600 officers and 4,500 men. Raised mostly from German-speaking subjects of the crown and *étrangers* i.e. foreigners, the *volontaires* were to double the number of French marines.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁵ Breakneck is part of the present town of Middlebury, incorporated as a separate town in 1807.

²⁰⁶ Gerard-Antoine Massoni, "Le Corps des <Volontaires-Etrangers de la Marine>" *Carnet de la Sabretache* No. 135, (1998), pp. 9-14.

Lauzun volunteered his services as soon as war was declared and on September 1, 1778, became *colonel propriétaire* of the *volontaires étrangers de la Marine*. He did not wait idly for the men to be recruited, equipped, and trained. In January 1779, he commanded the military force that conquered Senegal. Come April, he was back in Brittany with the Second *Légion* of his *volontaires* preparing for the attack on England. Commanded by Lauzun, the *légion's* 32 officers, 523 infantry, and 156 hussars (in June 1779) formed the vanguard of the first wave of assault scheduled to cross the Channel under the command of Rochambeau. But the attack never came. In its place Louis XVI on February 2, 1780, approved plans for the *expédition particulière*, the ferrying of ground forces to America under the command of Rochambeau. Since Rochambeau wanted light troops as well, Lauzun, eager to participate in the campaign, offered his services. "Too much in fashion not to be employed in some brilliant manner," Lauzun was promoted to brigadier and appointed to command the light troops on March 1, 1780.

Lauzun needed troops, but his *volontaires étrangers de la marine* were unavailable. The First Legion had been raised in the West Indies and participated in the capture of Grenada in July 1779. The Third Legion was stationed on the Île de France (Mauritius) in the Indian Ocean for deployment in India. But the Second Legion, quartered on the coast of Normandy, was available. On March 5, 1780, recruitment for the remaining five legions of the *volontaires étrangers* was suspended. Staff, *compagnie générale*, headquarters hussars, the Second Legion, and four infantry companies of the *Volontaires étrangers de Nassau* attached to the Second *légion* since June 1, 1779, were all dissolved.

Out of these men the *ordonnance* created the *Volontaires étrangers de Lauzun*: five companies of infantry, i.e. two of fusiliers and one chasseurs with 6 officers, 18 non-commissioned officers, a frater, two tambours and 144 men each, and a grenadier company of 6 officers and 102 NCOs and men. The cannonier company had 6 officers and 165 men for its four four-pounders, and the two escadrons of hussars consisted of 6 officers and 168 men each. A staff of 5 officers, 14 NCOs, and a provost completed the unit, whose nominal strength stood at 1,196 officers and men. Lauzun became its *colonel propriétaire* and *inspecteur*. Now that a regimental size unit of cavalry and light infantry under the department of the navy had been created for Lauzun expressly for use across the ocean, he was set to go.²⁰⁷

On April 5, Lauzun, his staff, and most of his men boarded the *Provence*, a 64-gun ship; the remainder embarked on the *Baron D'Arras*, some 60 men made the crossing on

²⁰⁷ Lauzun's *Mémoires* have to be used with caution. The best history of the *volontaires* and of the Legion is in Gérard-Antoine Massoni, *Détails intéressants sur les événements dans la guerre d'Amérique. Hyver 1781 à 1782. Hampton, Charlotte et suite. Manuscrit de Claude Hugau, lieutenant-colonel de la Légion des Volontaires étrangers de Lauzun*. (Besançon: Université de Franche-Comté, 1996. Maîtrise d'histoire moderne). Uniform and equipment are described in Vicomte Grouvel "Les Volontaires Etrangers de la Marine" *Le Passepoil* vol. 18, No. 1, (1938), pp. 5-8, Harry C. Larter, "The Lauzun Legion, French Navy, 1780-1783" *Military Collector and Historian* vol. 3, No. 1, (March 1951), pp. 40-42, Eugene Lelièvre and René Chartrand, "Volontaires Etrangers de la Marine, 1778-1783. Volontaires Etrangers de Lauzun 1780-1783" *ibid.* vol. 24, No. 4, (1974), pp. 226-228, Albert Rigondaud, "The Lauzun Legion in America 1780-1783" *Tradition* No. 68, (1992), pp. 2-7, and by Peter J. Blum, "Some Notes on the Lauzun Legion" *The Soldier Shop Quarterly* Vol. 14, No. 4, (August 1970), pp. 1-3.

the *Lyon*. Due to a lack of shipping space, only some 250 men of the hussars, grenadiers, chasseurs, and cannoniers, some 600 men in all, made the crossing; another 400 men and the hussar's horses had to be left behind. On July 11, 1780, the convoy sailed into Narragansett Bay; Lauzun's troopers were deployed around Brenton Point, southwest of Newport. On July 16, General Heath informed Washington that "The French troops are landed and encamped in a fine situation South East of the Town The troops make a good appearance. The Legion under the command of the Duke de Lauzun, (the officer who took Senegal last year) is as fine a Corps as ever I saw; it is about 600 Strong."²⁰⁸

Lauzun's forces were to go into winter quarters on 1 November 1780, just like the rest of the French troops. But where? Rochambeau had planned to quarter the Legion at Providence. But since "the immoderate cupidity of the neighboring inhabitants" around Newport, Rochambeau wrote to Governor Trumbull on October 19, 1780, had "raised forage to an extravagant price in hard money, I have had a conference about it with Colonel Wadesforth whom you love, and he agreed that I would write to Your Excellency to ask that a winter quarter be assigned to the Cavalry of the Duke of Lauzun in Connecticut State."²⁰⁹ On the 23rd, the legislature it resolved "that the said Duke of Lawzun's cavalry may be quartered in the towns of Windham, Lebanon and Colchester, or any of them, and that Colo. Jeremiah Wadsworth, David Trumbull, Esqr, and Mr. Joshua Elderkin be impowered and directed . . . to provide suitable quarters for the officers and barracks for the men for said legion in all or any of the towns aforesaid."²¹⁰

Rochambeau charged Dumas with "the establishment of the quarters of the legion,"²¹¹ and on November 10, the Legion left Newport for Providence. Two days later, it took up camp in Windham, where it stayed for a week.²¹² Next Lauzun and some 220 hussars found themselves in Lebanon. Assuming that only the best would be good enough for the duke, David Trumbull offered Lauzun his home "Redwood," the only one with a carpet in it. Lauzun was not impressed. "I started for Lebanon on the 10th of November; we have not yet received any letters from France. Siberia alone can furnish any idea of Lebanon, which consists of a few huts scattered among vast forests," he wrote.²¹³ The legionnaires arrived none too soon, there was "no time to be lost for the barracks."²¹⁴ It rained during much of October, and the first snow fell on November 13. The men were cold and hungry in their barracks west of the Meeting House and on the southern end of the village street.

²⁰⁸ In October 1781, the two fusilier companies, some 332 men, that Lauzun had left behind, sailed for the New World as part of an expeditionary corps under the comte de Kersaint. In February 1782, the corps captured Demerary, Essequibo, and Berbice.

²⁰⁹ Rochambeau's letter is quoted in Crofut, *Guide*, vol. 1, p. 74.

²¹⁰ Charles J. Hoadley, ed., *The Public Records of the State of Connecticut from May, 1780, to October, 1781, inclusive* (Hartford, 1922), p. 187.

²¹¹ Dumas, *Memoirs*, p. 53.

²¹² See Joshua Elderkin to D. Trumbull, November 8, 1780, and Dumas to D. Trumbull, written at 8:00 p.m. on November 11, 1780. CHS, Wadsworth Papers, Correspondence, July 1781 to February 1782.

²¹³ Lauzun, *Memoirs*, p. 194. See also Forbes and Cadman, "De Lauzun's cavalry at Lebanon, Connecticut" in: Forbes and Cadman, *France and New England* vol. 2, pp. 99-108, and Rowland Ricketts, Jr., *The French in Lebanon 1780-1781 Connecticut History* Vol. 36 No. 1, (1971), pp. 23-31.

²¹⁴ Dumas to David Trumbull, November 11, 1780, CHS, Jeremiah Wadsworth Papers, Correspondence, July 1781 to February 1782.

Relations between the hussars and the locals were not always cordial over the next few months, and visits by dignitaries such as Rochambeau in December 1780, by Chastellux on January 5, 1781, or George Washington on March 4-5, 1781, did little to break the monotony of life in Lebanon.²¹⁵ It was Lauzun and Chastellux who went squirrel hunting,²¹⁶ it was Lauzun and Rochambeau who huddled in the War Office before dinner with the Governor, but for the enlisted men, such visits meant drill, polishing equipment and parades. And so the hussars languished in "Siberia" until early summer, when replacements from the Regiment Barrois, which had arrived in Newport in early June, brought the strength of the Legion back up to just over 600 men. They were ready and anxious for the campaign to begin, and so were the citizens of Lebanon.²¹⁷

Establishing an itinerary for Lauzun's troops poses a number of problems. Schedule and route were tentative, and "no detailed maps of its marches have been found. ... The conflicting evidence concerning the exact route can perhaps be explained by the fact that the Legion ... did not necessarily march in a single column. In carrying out the Legion's general assignment detachments of hussars presumably ranged over wide areas and would thus have appeared in scattered localities not on the principal route."²¹⁸

The marching order for the Legion specified that "Lauzun's entire Corps of Foreign Volunteers will leave Lebanon" the day the First Division of the French infantry left its camp at Windham.²¹⁹ That day was June 21, 1781. From Lebanon, so de Béville's itinerary, the Legion was to "proceed to camp along the Middletown road 7 miles beyond Colchester on the west bank of Salmon Brook opposite the landslide caused by flood waters. This brook can easily be forded. The bed is good but stony. Major Sheldon will be assigned to lead this column."²²⁰ The march was to be 15 miles, a leisurely pace for cavalry and light infantry in a screening pattern.

Departure date and route are confirmed in a letter John Carter wrote from Waterman's Tavern in Rhode Island on June 18: "I forgot to acquaint you that the Legion after leaving Lebanon take a different Rout from the rest of the Army: they consist of 300 Infantry + 300 Horse and it will be necessary to send some person Immediately to Provide forage wood and meat for them they leave Lebanon on the 21st + encamp at Salmon Bridge, 22nd at Middletown where they remain until the 1st Division of the Army leaves Farmington

²¹⁵ By March 13, William Williams had had enough. In an angry letter on behalf of his brother Dr. Thomas Williams he berated Lauzun how the people of Lebanon had been promised "that the French Troops were kept under the best government and discipline and that the Inhabitants of Newport had not lost a Pig nor a Fowl by them, which was a great Inducement to provide them Quarters here. ... but soon they began to pilfer and steal, which was, and is, in many instances borne." Lately, however, they had begun "to steal wood from Dr. Williams, ... thirty or more trees, ... much of his fence, four or five sheep, a number of Geese" and much more. Williams demanded an immediate end to these practices, though without success.

²¹⁶ For a description of the squirrel hunt and dinner with Trumbull see Chastellux *Travels*, vol. 1, p. 229/30.

²¹⁷ For a more detailed analysis of the winter quarters and the subsequent march of the Legion through Connecticut see my *Rochambeau's Cavalry: Lauzun's Legion in Connecticut 1780-1781*. (Hartford, 2000).

²¹⁸ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, vol. 2, p. 17, note 12. The issue is compounded by the fact that no eyewitness account for the march have been found.

²¹⁹ The itinerary quoted here and subsequently is taken from Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, vol. 2, pp. 16 and 17. It is based on a document prepared by French Quarter-Master General de Béville.

²²⁰ The Major Sheldon mentioned here is Dominique Sheldon (1760-1802), an Englishman attached to the Legion as *mestre de camp* on April 5, 1780, not Colonel Elisha Sheldon, of the Continental Army.

and then they encamp at Wallingford -- then at Oxford, New Stratford where they stay one day -- Ridgefield, Pinesbridge."²²¹

But only a few miles outside Lebanon, Lauzun's men apparently deviated from this route: as the 600 troops reached the inter-section of today's Routes 207 and 16 in the Exeter section of Lebanon, the Legion separated into two detachments.²²² One took the right-hand, north-westerly road (Route 207) to Hebron, while the other continued on the left-hand, southerly road (Route 16) to Colchester, past John Taintor's Tavern on Buckley Hill Road and the home of Colonel Henry Champion at the intersection of Routes 16 and 149 and camped most likely on the evening of the 21st in the vicinity of (or in?) the modern-day Salmon River State Forest near Old Comstock Covered Bridge. The northern group encamped just north of Amston on Amston Lake (west side of Route 207 just before it becomes Route 85) where the men found water for cooking and for their horses.

The second day's march on June 22, was to go "From the camp on the west bank of the Salmon Brook ... to camp [at Middletown] on the west bank of the Connecticut River, taking care to ferry its infantry across first. If the entire corps should not be able to make the crossing in one day, the rest could cross the next day."²²³ Such a route would have meant that while the northern detachment had to march from its camp at Amston Lake through Marlborough and East Hampton toward Middletown, the southern group would have turned southwest away from the coast toward East Hampton to meet up with the northern detachment in Middletown. But only the northern group seems to have marched for Middletown where it remained from June 22 through Sunday, June 24, 1781.

The instructions for the third day of the march read: "As the First Division of the right column (i.e., the infantry is not scheduled to leave East Hartford for its camp at Farmington until the seventh day of its march, Lauzun's Foreign Volunteers will not leave their camp at Middletown until this day, marching through Wallingford, Oxford, North Stratford, Ridgefield, Bedford, and Pines Bridge, to cover the left flank of the army. This road has not yet been reconnoitered. All that is known is that it is passable."

If these instructions were followed, the Legion left Middletown on June 25, the day Rochambeau's troops left East Hartford for Farmington. The northern detachment set up camp in Wallingford along East Center Street, Scard and Northford roads. The next day, June 26, this group marched south along the Quinnipiac River through North Haven to New Haven, where it united with the southern detachment which had taken the road to East Haddam (Route 149) where it crossed the Connecticut River and continued toward the coast along the route through Chester to Pettipaug, where it entered the Boston Turnpike. It is unknown where these men camped on the evening of the 22nd, or, for that matter, the evening of the 23rd, 24th, and 25th.²²⁴ The next time we encounter them is on

²²¹ Connecticut Historical Society, Wadsworth Papers Box 153, Letter Book D, p. 33.

²²² Forbes and Cadman, *France and New England*, vol. 1, p. 151.

²²³ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, vol. 2, p. 16. The French could have either used the Middletown Ferry, established in 1726, or the Upper House Ferry north of Middletown, established in 1759.

²²⁴ On 23 June Rochambeau informed Washington that Lauzun was marching "ahead of my first division via Middletown, Wallingford, North Haven, Ripton (today's Huntington) and North Stratford (became Trumbull in 1797), where he will be on the 28th." The French constantly confused "North" and "New" or simply wrote "N" as in "N. Stratford" and Rochambeau could very well have meant New Haven rather than North Haven a few miles up the Quinnipiac River. Crofut, *Guide*, vol. 1, p. 76.

Monday, June 26, when Ezra Stiles reported the presence of the complete Legion, all 600 men, in New Haven. "This Afternoon arrived and encamped here the Duke de Lazun with his Legion consist^s of 300 Horse & 300 foot Light Infantry. They pitched their Tents in the new Town half a mile East of the Colledge. I paid my Respects to the Duke and was received very politely at the House of the late Gen. Wooster. He does not expect much from the Congress at Vienna, nor does he expect peace this year or next. He is marching to joyn G. Washington on N^o River."²²⁵

The following day, June 27, Stiles informs us that "The French Troops marched at six o'clock this morn^g in their way thro' Darby." The exact site of the camp in Derby/Oxford is unknown, but there is a local tradition that the troops spent the night on Sentinel Hill and that Lauzun and some of his officers stayed with a Mr. Beard in his home "Brownie Castle." Depending on who marched where from Derby on the 28th, Lauzun's men crossed the Naugatuck and/or Housatonic Rivers and marched either southwest to North Stratford, i.e., Trumbull, as Rochambeau thought they would and as de Béville's itinerary indicates. Or they marched northwest to New Stratford/Monroe, as John Carter and Alexandre Berthier thought they would and where Lauberdière located them from the evening of June 27 for the next three days until June 30. That day, Lieutenant-Colonel David Cobb, Washington's aide, also wrote his commander-in-chief from Newtown: "the duke's legion ... is now at New Stratford."²²⁶

There is of course the possibility that the Legion divided once again, possibly even into a number of smaller parties. One detachment may have marched from Derby to Ripton/Huntington on to North Stratford/Trumbull and North Fairfield to Ridgefield. To the north, the other detachment would have crossed the Housatonic about 2 1/2 miles north of its confluence with the Naugatuck and then continued due west to New Stratford and Redding²²⁷ to Ridgefield. Local lore has troops along both routes: until recently there was a sign on Mountain Hill in Abraham Nichols Park, home of the Trumbull Historical Society, commemorating the camp of some 15 troopers of the Legion. In 1781, they would have seen the Sound from the hill. As the French entered "Connecticut's Tory Towns" such scouting parties increased in frequency and importance."²²⁸

The larger part of Lauzun's Legion does seem to have marched northwest to New Stratford/Monroe to a camp just south of the city center. Monroe welcomed the French with a dance in the evening in the 11x24 foot second-floor ballroom of the Daniel Bassett

²²⁵ *The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles* Franklin B. Dexter, ed., vol. 2 (of 3), (New York, 1901) p. 544. General David Wooster's house in Wooster Street is no longer standing. On June 28, 1781, the *New Haven Connecticut Journal* reported "Yesterday passed thro' this town on their way to join the American Army, the Duke de Lacuzon (sic) with his Legion, consisting of about 600."

²²⁶ Quoted in Crofut, *Guide*, vol. 1, p. 77. Lewis G. Knapp, *In Pursuit of Paradise. History of the Town of Stratford, Connecticut* 2 vols., (Stratford, 1989), vol. 1, p. 96, writes that Lauzun "crossed through Ripton and camped in North Stratford (Trumbull) and on the green at New Stratford (Monroe) on June 30, 1781."

²²⁷ Charles Burr Todd, *A History of Redding, Conn.* (Newburgh, 1906), p. 45, writes that the French "passed through Redding on the march, and encamped over night, it is said, on the old parade ground."

²²⁸ Stephen P. McGrath, "Connecticut's Tory Towns. The Loyalty Struggle in Newtown, Redding, and Ridgefield 1774-1783." *Connecticut History* vol. 44, No. 3 (1979), pp. 88-96. French artillery lieutenant the comte de Clermont-Crèvecoeur wrote from Newton "This is the capital of the Tory country, and as you may well imagine, we took great precautions to protect ourselves from their acts of cruelty. They usually strike by night, when they go out in bands, attack a post, then retire to the woods where they bury their arms. ... These people are very difficult to identify, since an honest man and a scoundrel can look alike."

homestead on June 30. That night, Lauzun and his officers went to sleep in the tavern kept by Nehemiah de Forest. When a son was born to de Forest, Dillon gave the boy his sword for a memento; in gratitude the proud father named his boy "de Lauzun."²²⁹

²²⁹ Forbes and Cadman, *France and New England*, vol. 1, p. 153. The same story is told, however, about the son of John Norris in Ridgefield. Forbes and Cadman, *France and New England*, vol. 1, p. 147.

AMERICA MEETS FRANCE OUTSIDE NEW YORK CITY

8.1 The March of the French Forces to Philipsburg, July 2-6, 1781

As they were getting closer to New York, Rochambeau re-organized his troops into brigades. Bourbonnais and Royal Deux-Ponts formed the First Brigade, the Soissonais and Saintonge the Second. On July 1, his 56th birthday, Rochambeau set out with the First Brigade for Ridgebury via Danbury, a village of maybe 80 houses. Here he received a letter from Washington dated June 30, 1781, asking him "to put your First Brigade under march tomorrow Morning (i.e., July 1), the remaining Troops to follow as quick as possible, and endeavor to reach Bedford by the evening of the 2d. of July."²³⁰

Washington's letter indicated a change of venue on the part of the American general, which occasioned a change of routes as well. Until now, King's Ferry had been the destination of the French forces; at this time Philipsburg became the new gathering point. The move southward removed any doubts, if there were any, as to the objective of the campaign: the political and military center of British power in America, Sir Henry Clinton's headquarters in New York, had been targeted for an attack. But since Quarter-Master de Beville and his aides had prepared neither maps nor itineraries for this eleventh day of march from Newport, there is no official source to indicate which route was taken.²³¹ As Rochambeau redirected his Brigade to Mount Kisco, (known as North Castle after 1722 and as New Castle after 1791) the following day, his troops marched south on Ridgebury Road to Tacoma Trail. Next they took CT SR 33 on to Ridgefield, where they turned east onto SR 35 and soon crossed into Westchester County and New York. At Mill River Road they turned south again until they reached NY-SR 172 near Poundridge Town Hall whence they turned east to Bedford Village -- or rather what little there was left of it. But a single house had survived the fire Banastre Tarleton's men had set during a raid on the morning of Sunday, 11 July 1779.²³² Clermont-Crèvecoeur recorded on July 2, 1781, that Bedford "had already suffered much damage and, in fact, hardly any houses left standing. This settlement is very small and denuded of every resource."²³³ The men of Rochambeau's First Brigade set up their first camp in the State of New York and their 12th camp since Newport, in the early afternoon of July 1, 1781, near the lake in the triangle formed by Seminary, Court, and Poundridge Roads.²³⁴ (SITE 1)

The order to form brigades reached the Fourth Division around 10:00 p.m. on July 1, 1781, as it was resting in Newtown. "Without stopping here to rest, my (i.e., the Fourth) Division joined that of the comte de Vioménil (i.e., the Third) to form a brigade

²³⁰ Quoted in Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 31, n. 31. In eighteenth-century military parlance, *brigade* usually denotes a tactical unit composed of infantry, cavalry, and artillery of varying size, though usually larger than one regiment, while *division* is often used for regimental size tactical units of multiple components, though the use of either term was flexible.

²³¹ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns* Vol. 2, p. 33, note 49.

²³² Dorothy H. Hinitt and Frances R. Duncombe, *The Burning of Bedford July 1779* (Bedford, 1974)

²³³ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns* Vol. 1, p. 32.

²³⁴ The route described here is consistent with that of Richard G. Lucid, "Rochambeau in Westchester." *The Westchester Historian of the Westchester County Historical Society* Vol. 35 No. 3, (July 1959), pp. 63- 65.

commanded by the latter and led by M. Collot." The next day "the Second Brigade left Newtown and marched 15 miles to Ridgebury, where it arrived at eleven o'clock (i.e., a.m.). It was preceded on its march to the camp by an advance detachment of grenadiers and chasseurs. I was ordered to lead them and to choose a good position for them a mile ahead of the brigade on the road to New York, where they camped after stationing sentries at all points leading in from enemy territory. Here we received a change of itinerary."⁽⁴⁾ The main body of troops camped close to the Congregational Church along the road to Danbury, the advance guard about one mile south at the intersection of Old Stagecoach Road and Ridgebury Road. At midnight July 2/3, the Second Brigade received orders to proceed to North Castle, 22 miles away. Three hours later the troops were on their way.

Since it marched to North Castle directly from Ridgebury rather than via Ridgefield, its route was different from that of the First Brigade. After leaving Ridgebury on Ridgebury Road, the men turned east onto Mopus Bridge Road, which becomes Wallace Road in the State of New York, to North Salem, where they entered NY State Route 116. Here they continued on SR 116 (Titicus Road) to SR 121, south on SR 121 to Grant Corner and Hawley Road to the Old Post Road (Mead Street) past Lake Waccabuc. Continuing on the Old Post Road they turned east again (SR 35/124), crossed the Cross River on a wooden bridge now covered by the Cross River Reservoir, and continued on SR 121 to Bedford Village. Near Camp 1 of the First Brigade (**SITE 1**) in Bedford Village, the routes of the First and Second Brigades merged again. The Second Brigade did not stop but continued on Guard Hill Road to Baldwin Road and on to SR 172 (South Bedford Road) to Bedford Four Corners and Mount Kisco. Having covered the 22/24 - mile march in just about 8 hours time, the Second Brigade arrived at the edge of Leonard Park and the grounds of the Northern Westchester Hospital Center (junction of Routes 117 and 172) in Mount Kisco around 13:00 on July 3. According to Lauberdière, North Castle was a village of "no more than four or five houses situated close to a very extensive pond. It is not [a] natural [pond] and the water does not flow into it but via dykes."²³⁵ Here the First Brigade, just arrived after an easy march from near-by Bedford on the same route as that the Second Brigade had taken, had set up Camp 13 to await the arrival of the Second Brigade and of Lauzun's Legion.²³⁶ (**SITE 2**)

In Mount Kisco, Berthier recorded that "the grenadiers and chasseurs camped on a height to the left of the New York Road in front of a pond that adjoins the North Castle Meeting House. The rest of the army was encamped on high ground in back of the pond and the little North Castle River [Kisco River], with their left at the meeting-house and their right resting on a wood." The town itself, so Berthier, "has few houses, and they are widely separated. The headquarters was very poorly housed -- just how poorly you will understand when I tell you that the assistant quarter-masters general were obliged to sleep in the open on piles of straw, which was, to boot, rather too green." North Castle Meeting House was St. George's Protestant Episcopal Church founded in 1761, (demolished in 1819, resurrected as St. Mark's Protestant Episcopal Church from 1851-1911), which

²³⁵ Lauberdière, *Journal*, fol. 72 .

²³⁶ See Richard G. Lucid and Arthur I. Nernhard, "Northcastle Camp." *The Westchester Historian* Vol. 35 No. 1, (January 1959), pp. 3-8.

stood at the intersection of East Main Street/Corner of St. Mark's Place in Mount Kisco, just a few hundred feet from the site of the French camp.²³⁷ (SITE 3)

They did not have to wait long for Lauzun. In the evening of June 30, while enjoying a ball in Monroe/New Stratford, the *duc* had received orders from Washington via his aide Lieutenant-Colonel David Cobb to march immediately to Bedford via Ridgefield where Washington expected him in the evening of July 2, for an attack at Morrisania.²³⁸ Early in the morning of July 1, Lauzun broke camp in New Stratford and headed for Ridgefield on CT-SR 102.²³⁹ Lauzun and his men encamped in the Scotland district of Ridgefield "along the ridge east of the North Salem Road" some 9 miles south of the main army.²⁴⁰

On July 2, Lauzun's Legion joined Rochambeau and his First Brigade on the march to Bedford Village, where Lauzun's troops rested briefly with Rochambeau's infantry near the lake that forms part of the triangle created by Seminary, Court, and Poundridge Roads. (SITE 1) As the infantry was making camp, Lauzun set out on a night march to meet up with American General Benjamin Lincoln. Following SR 22, the Old Post Road, past Wampus Pond through Armonk south to the Kensico Reservoir, (south of which it becomes White Plains Roads) through East Chester and West Chester, Lauzun's troops were late in reaching Morrisania at the juncture of the Harlem and East Rivers in the morning of July 3. Morrisania was the estate of General Lewis Morris and occupied by the loyalists of James De Lancey. Lauzun, Fersen and de Vauban, two of Rochambeau's aides who had permission to accompany the duke, could not prevent the failure of the two-pronged surprise attack on British posts, once the enemy had become aware of Lincoln's movements.²⁴¹ Following a brief encounter with De Lancey's Loyalists, Lauzun withdrew in the evening of July 3 to Valentine's Hill and camped on the East Chester Road. The next day, July 4, his men marched to Wampus Pond where they joined Rochambeau's infantry on its march to Philipsburg on the 6th.²⁴²

²³⁷ Herbert B. Howe, "'St. Georges' - The Old Northcastle Church." *Quarterly Bulletin of the Westchester County Historical Society* Vol. 5 No. 2, (April 1929), pp. 37- 39.

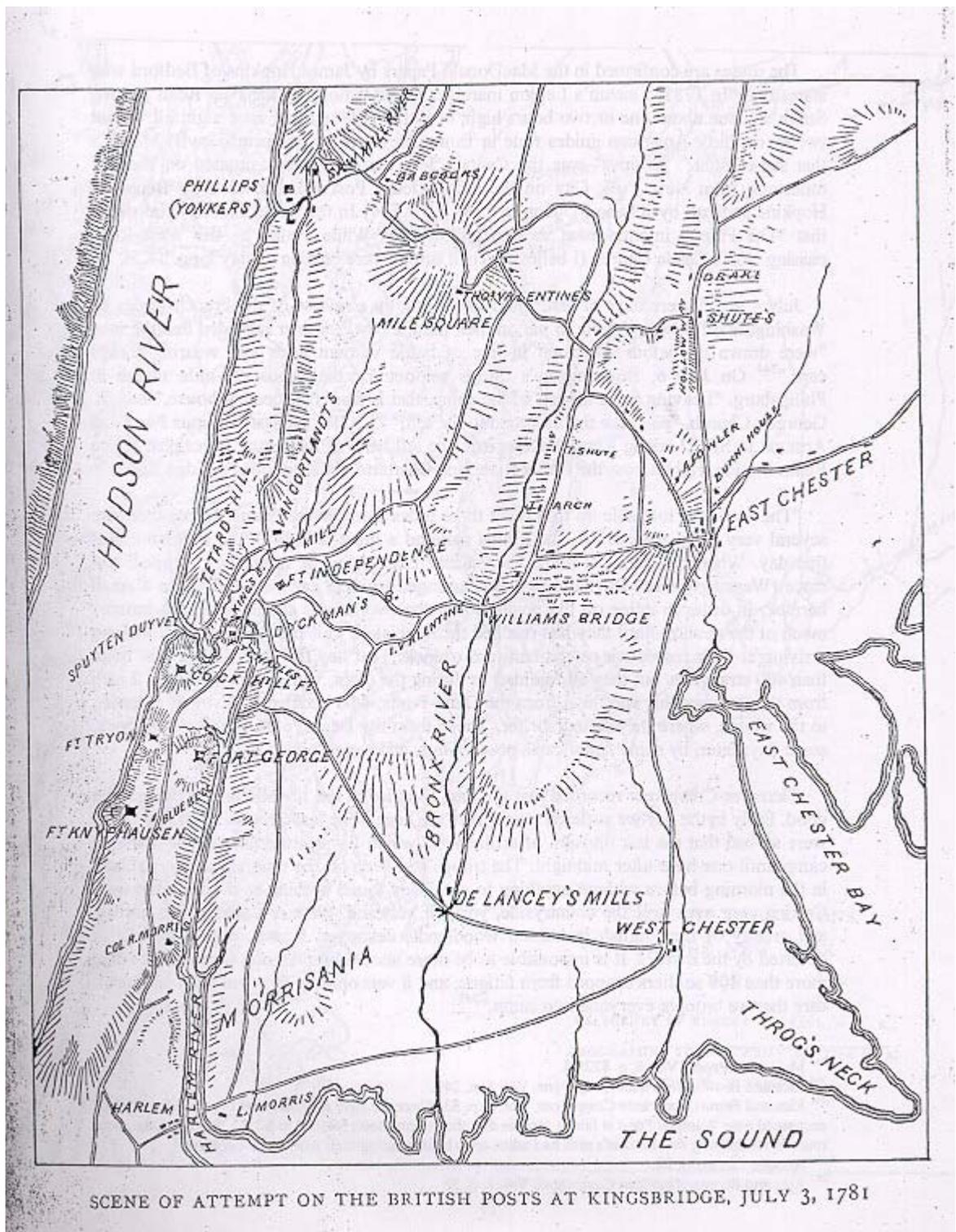
²³⁸ The correspondence surrounding the Morrisania raid is in Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 22, pp. 291-331.

²³⁹ See Silvio Bedini, *Ridgefield in Review* (Ridgefield, 1958), pp. 133-139, and George L. Rockwell, *The History of Ridgefield, Connecticut* (Ridgefield, 1927) p. 135.

²⁴⁰ Bedini, *Ridgefield*, p.136.

²⁴¹ Both sides gave different reasons for the failure of the attack, each side blaming the other. A good brief overview is found in Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 32, note 33. See also Acomb, *Closen*, p. 89; Washington *Diaries*, Vol. 1, pp. 297-299, and Joseph Plumb Martin, *Private Yankee Doodle* (Hallowell, ME, 1830; repr. Boston, 1962), pp. 214-218. An older analysis is John Austin Stevens, "The Attempt upon the British Posts at Kingsbridge" in his "The Operations of the Allied Armies before New York, 1781" *Magazine of American History* Vol. 4, No. 1 (January 1880), pp. 4-9 and 34-41. See also Lloyd Ultan, *Legacy of the Revolution. The Valentine-Varian House*. (New York, 1983), pp. 50-53.

²⁴² On July 6, "our generals found the Lauzun Legion on the road." Acomb, *Closen*, p. 90. Lauberdière wrote that Lauzun "camped four miles from G[ener]al Washington on the left bank of the Bronx." On the 6th it "left the position it had taken after the march to Morrisania and went to camp at the left flank of the French camp." This is confirmed in the McDonald Papers Vol. 5, p. 738, by Josiah Quinby of Newcastle, aged 85, on 25 October 1847: "The French once lay south-east of Wampus Pond on lands belonging to Job Coxe and Marston Brundage where they built ovens. I think the French were there a week or two." They stayed only three days, but there seem to have been ovens there: see Josham Carpenter of North Castle, on 30 October 1847, in Vol. 5, p. 771. "The French army built two very large ovens about 40 rods north of Sand's Mills where they baked five hundred loaves at a time in the two." (1 rod=5.5 yards) Sand's Mills, where John André's captors had handed their prisoner over to Lt.-Col. Jameson in September 1780, was north of Armonk on SR 128 near the A.L. Ehrmann Park. It was demolished early in the 20th century.



The routes are confirmed in the MacDonald Papers by James Hopkins of Bedford who states that "In 1781, Lauzun's Legion marched from Bedford by the Post Road passing Smith's at sun about one or two hours high, or rather I should say, near nightfall. About twenty or thirty American guides rode in front. They went to (General Lewis) Morris's that same night." "Smith's" was the Captain John Smith Tavern, situated on the 37th milestone from New York City on the old Danbury Post Road, owned by Benjamin

Hopkins and run by Ichabod Ogden in 1781. (SITE 4) In the same interview he stated that "The French infantry next day passed towards White Plains by the West Road passing North Castle Church (I believe). Their drums were beating all day long."²⁴³

July 4 and 5 were days of rest, interrupted only by a review of the French forces by Washington on July 5. Unable to put on their parade best, Berthier recorded that the men "were drawn up before the camp in line of battle without arms and wearing forage caps."²⁴⁴ On July 6, Rochambeau's troops set out for the almost 20-mile march to Philipsburg. "Leaving from the left of the camp, that is from the meeting house," i.e., St. George's Church, "you take the first road to the left," i.e., SR 128 past Wampus Pond and Armonk to SR 22, along Kensico Reservoir, the left bank of the Bronx River past White Plains Station, right across the Bronx River and Chatterton Hill, to today's Ridge Road."²⁴⁵

"The road was tolerable up to a point three miles from White Plains, where there are several very steep mountains. The troops suffered a great deal from the excessive heat that day. When our generals found the Lauzun Legion on the road, they stopped; and since (Washington and Rochambeau) had arranged to meet each other there in a small barrack, in order to agree on the position that the two armies should take, we scoured much of the country until they had reached their decision. This prevented the troops from arriving at their respective camps before 6 o'clock. That day the army left behind more than 400 stragglers, but they all rejoined us during the night, with the exception of 2 men from the Bourbonnais and three from the Deux-Ponts, who decided in favor of deserting to the woods, where they found shelter. Those from the Deux-Ponts were brought back, some days later, by some Americans, *good Whigs*, and were flogged."²⁴⁶

Clermont-Crèvecœur recorded that the first 14 miles of the 17-mile march "were quite good. Early in the day we suffered much from the heat." The last three miles of "the roads were so bad that the last division of artillery, to which I was attached, did not arrive in camp until one hour after midnight. The troops had been on the road since three o'clock in the morning before without anything to eat. They found nothing to drink on the way. Casting your eyes over the countryside, you felt very sad, for it revealed all the horrors and cruelty of the English in burned woodlands, destroyed houses, and fallow fields deserted by the owners. It is impossible to be more uncomfortable than we were that day; more than 400 soldiers dropped from fatigue, and it was only by frequent halts and much care that we brought everyone into camp."²⁴⁷

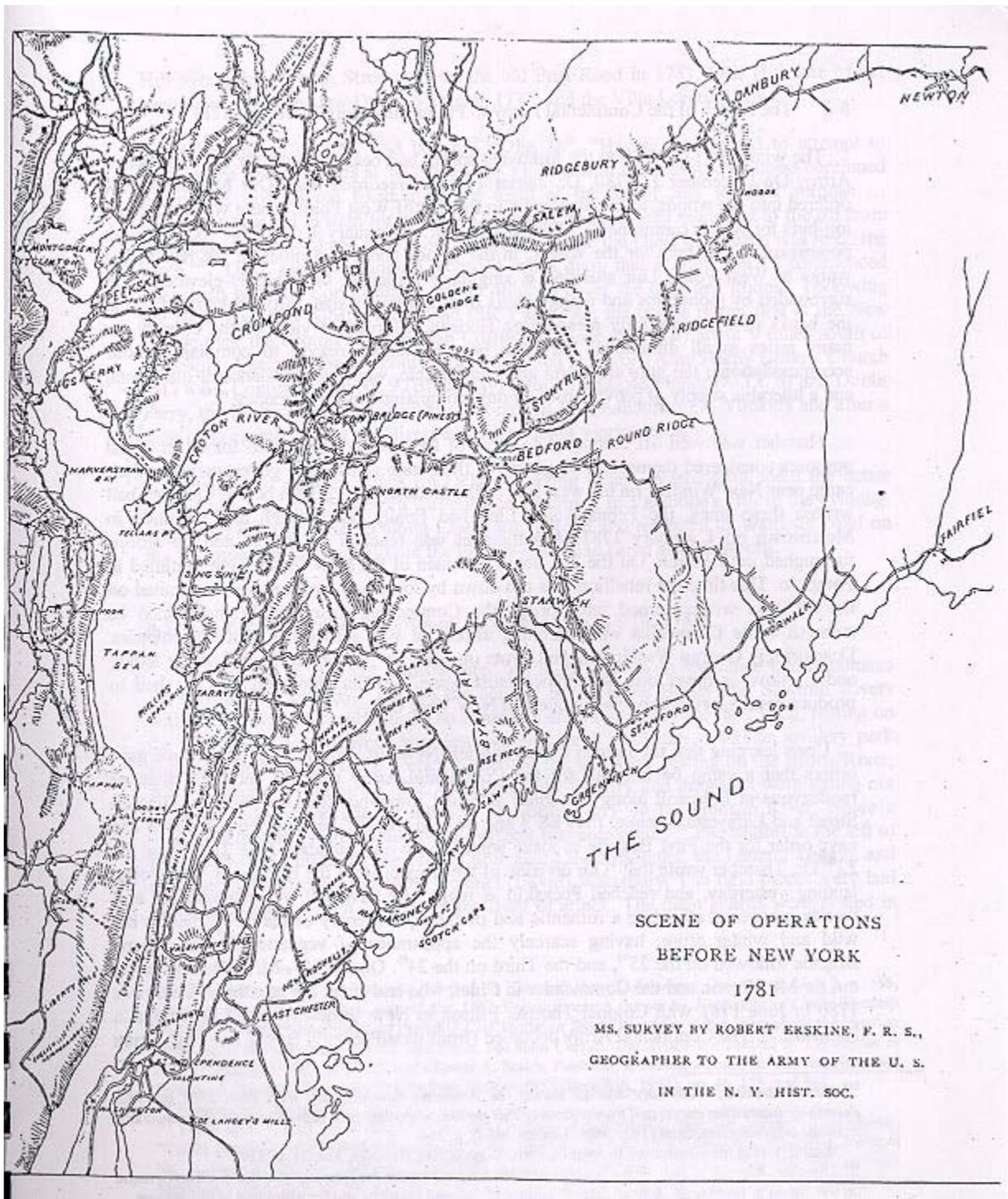
²⁴³ McDonald Papers Vol. 6, p. 822/23.

²⁴⁴ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 249.

²⁴⁵ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 2, p. 33. Since we have evidence that Lauzun's Legion was encamped near Wampus Pond is fair to assume that the infantry took SR 128 to SR 22, following the same route to Philipsburg that Lauzun's men had taken once before during their march to Morrisania.

²⁴⁶ Acomb, *Closen*, p. 90.

²⁴⁷ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 32.



8.2 The March of the Continental Army to Philipsburg, July 2 - July 4, 1781

The winter of 1780/81 and the following spring had been difficult for the Continental Army. On December 1, 1780, Dr. James Thatcher recorded that "Our brigade is now ordered into the woods, in the highlands, in the rear of West Point, where we are to build log-huts for winter cantonments." Five weeks later, on January 3, 1781, his "brigade took possession of our huts for the winter, in the woods about two miles in the rear of the works at West Point. Our situation is singularly romantic, on a highly-elevated spot,

surrounded by mountains and craggy rocks of a prodigious size, lofty broken clefts, and the banks of the beautifully meandering Hudson, affording a view of the country for many miles in all directions. We have now no longer reason to complain of our accommodations; the huts are warm and comfortable, wood in abundance at our doors, and a tolerable supply of provisions. Our only complaint is want of money."²⁴⁸

Thatcher was well off compared to most of the enlisted men, who for all practical purposes considered themselves forgotten by their state and federal governments in their camp near New Windsor on the west side of the Hudson River. Even before Thatcher had written these lines, the Pennsylvania Line had finally had enough and mutinied in Morristown on 1 January 1781. A settlement was reached on the 9th and the troops furloughed until March. On the 20th about 200 men of the New Jersey Line mutinied in Pompton. This time the rebellion was put down by force and two men were executed on the 27th. As winter turned into spring, the Continental Army barely maintained its strength while Cornwallis was marching almost at will across the southern colonies. Despairingly George Washington had wrote on April 9: "We are at the end of our tether, and ... now or never our deliverance must come."²⁴⁹ The campaign of 1781 had to produce results, preferably the conquest of New York City.

Upon learning that the French troops had left Newport, Washington on 16 June gave orders that a camp be laid out for the Continental Army near the intended place of rendezvous at Peekskill along the south side of Crompond Road between Washington Street and Lafayette Avenue. (SITES 5 and 40) On the 18th he brigaded his troops and gave order for the First Brigade to leave winter camp on Thursday, June 21, and on the 22nd Dr. Thatcher wrote that "Our division of the army crossed the Hudson at West Point-landing yesterday, and reached Peekskill at night. We have left our cantonments in a woody mountain, affording a romantic and picturesque scenery of nature clothed in her wild and winter attire, having scarcely the appearance of vegetation." The Second Brigade followed on the 23rd, and the Third on the 24th. On the 25th, Mrs Washington set out for Mt. Vernon and the Commander in Chief, who had spent the months of December 1780 to June 1781 with Colonel Thomas Ellison in New Windsor, joined his troops in Peekskill.²⁵⁰ The Continental Army occupied (from west/Peekskill Bay to the East) Drum Hill overlooking South Street, part of the old Post Road in 1781, Oak Hill, site of the hanging of convicted spy Daniel Strang in 1777, and the Villa Loretto Hills.²⁵¹

The campaign of 1781 had begun. On the 28th, "Having determined to attempt to surprize the Enemies Posts at the No. end of Yk. Island, if the prospt. of success continued

²⁴⁸ James Thatcher, *A Military Journal during the American Revolutionary War, from 1775 to 1783, describing interesting events and transactions of this period; with numerous historical facts and anecdotes, from the original manuscript* (1823, repr. Boston, 1854), p. 264.

²⁴⁹ Washington in his instructions to John Laurens. Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 21, p. 439.

²⁵⁰ Thatcher, *Journal*, p. 264. There is a commemorative plaque near the location of Colonel Ellison's home on 9W South in Newburgh. A week later Washington changed his plans and the allies met in Philipsburg.

²⁵¹ The identification of the campsite is based on Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 2, p. 186, based on a note written on a map of the 1782 Peekskill camp drawn by Rochambeau's aide-de-camp Cromot du Bourg. I am grateful to Peekskill City Historian John Curran for information about the location of the camp and the images on the Site Form. See John Curran, *The Attack at Peekskill by the British in 1777* (Peekskill, 1998), pp. 91-93, and Chester A. Smith, *Peekskill, A Friendly Town: Its Historic Sites and Shrines: A Pictorial History of the City from 1654 to 1952* (Peekskill, 1952), pp. 46, 125, and 148.

favourable, and having fixed upon the night of the 2d of July for this purpose ... everything was put in train for it and the Count de Rochambeau requested to file off from Ridgebury to Bedford and hasten his Mar (ch) -- while the Duke de Lauzen was to do the same."²⁵² On 2 July, Washington recorded in his diary that at 3:00 a.m. "I commenced my march with the Continental Army in order to cover the detached troops." Following the New York and Albany Post Road (SR 9 and 9A), the troops rested first at the New Bridge over the Croton near the Van Cortlandt Manor (**SITE 6**) about 9 miles south of Peekskill. A second rest of about 2 hours followed at Tarry Town/Sleepy Hollow Church (**SITE 7**). Continuing on SR 9 (Broadway) through Philipse Manor (**SITE 8**) and Dobbs Ferry, the Continental Army turned east onto SR 9A (Ashburton) in Yonkers and after a long night march arrived at Valentine's Hill at about sunrise on July 3.

The planned surprise attack on Delancy having failed, Washington spent the better part of July 3 on an impromptu surveillance, returning to Valentine's Hill in the evening. Lauzun's Legion bivouaced along East Chester Road and retreated to Wampus Pond on the 4th while Washington laid out the Franco-American camp at Philipsburg.

8.3 The Encampment at Philipsburg, July 4/6-August 18/19, 1781

"The camp," so Berthier, "was located at Philipsburg on an eminence that dominates the surrounding country," i.e., on the heights between the Bronx and Sawmill Rivers within the town of Greenburgh. "The American army composed the right wing, resting on the Saw Mill River to which you descend by a steep bluff; the American artillery park occupied the center; and the French composed the left wing, resting on the Bronx River, whose banks are very steep. The American light infantry and dragoons were strung out from the right of the line all the way to Dobbs Ferry on the Hudson River, where a battery of four 12-pounders and two howitzers was emplaced."²⁵³ The heights at the left of the line were occupied by the French grenadiers and chasseurs, the Lauzun Legion, and an American unit commanded by Colonel (David) Waterbury. The field pieces were laid before the camp at each opening in the front of attack. The main guards were posted in advance on the most strategic heights, guarding all points at which the enemy could approach the camp."²⁵⁴

Lauberdière described White Plains, "a name deduced, I believe, from the color of the flowers which cover the ground during the pretty season" as "covered with bunches (or pockets) of trees, of ravines, and of heights. Closen, who had been sent ahead to Philipsburg with Cobb on the 4th, described Philipsburg as "a certain district containing only some hills and wasteland, almost uninhabited and full of heather and thorns."²⁵⁵ The "French were encamped one quarter of a mile from the left wing of the American camp,

²⁵² Washington, *Diaries*, Vol. 2, p. 231.

²⁵³ For a brief history of Dobbs Ferry in the American Revolutionary War see William S. Hadaway, "'Dobbs Ferry' in the Revolution" *Quarterly Bulletin of the Westchester County Historical Society* Vol. 8 No. 3, (July 1932), pp. 114-121. For a brief history see Margaret J. Lane, "They say 'Dobbs Ain't Melodius.'" *Ibid.*, Vol. 49 No. 4, (Fall 1973), pp. 77-81, and Alice Munro Haagensen, "The Blockhouse defending Dobbs Ferry in Rockland." *Ibid.*, Vol. 19 No. 4, (October 1975), pp. 10-17.

²⁵⁴ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 249.

²⁵⁵ Acomb, *Closen*, pp. 89-91.

from which they were separated by a small stream, on which several communications posts were established. To the right of the American camp, three miles away, was Dobbs Ferry, on the North River (or Hudson), and to the left of the French camp, half a mile away, was the little Bronx River, which could be forded in several places; the mounted patrols relieved each other continually along this river, and several small posts were established on both banks." These mounted patrols were provided by Lauzun's hussars encamped on Chatterton Hill. On 17 July the hussars moved about 2 miles to the north-east toward Silver Lake and the grenadiers and chasseurs of the Second Brigade (i.e., the Soissonnais and Saintonge) took over their camp on Chatterton Hill.²⁵⁶

In an interview with McDonald in 1847, Dr. Nehemiah U. Tompkins remembered that "In 1781, some of the French lay at Chatterton Hill. But the main body encamped on my uncle Isaac Tompkins's farm. The French park of Cannon were on a smooth piece of ground west of my uncle's old house and towards Col. Odell's."²⁵⁷ John Tompkins of Greenburgh told McDonald on 7 September 1846 that "The French cannon were placed in the smooth field west of my house and of the old house, and where a ridge commences which runs towards Colonel Odell's. The main body of the French was also encamped west of our houses. Some of them were encamped on Underhill's ridge four or five hundred yards south or southwest of our house." *Underhill's ridge* is today's Sunningdale Country Club on Underhill Road,²⁵⁸ (SITE 9), the *smooth piece of ground* is the site of the former Henry Gaisman Estate, part of the property purchased by John Tompkins in 1737 and now Hart's Brook Nature Preserve & Arboretum on Ridge Road leading west to Dobbs Ferry. On the ridge overlooking Central Park Avenue where the artillery was placed stands today a religious facility of the archdiocese of New York.²⁵⁹ (SITE 10)

²⁵⁶ Some time before August 1, the Legion "returned to its first camp on the other side of the Bronx; the battalion of grenadiers and chasseurs commanded by M. de La Valette (of the Saintonge) occupied the camp abandoned by Lauzun." Acomb, *Closen*, p. 103.

²⁵⁷ McDonald Papers Vol. 4, p. 480. Vol. 4, page 493.

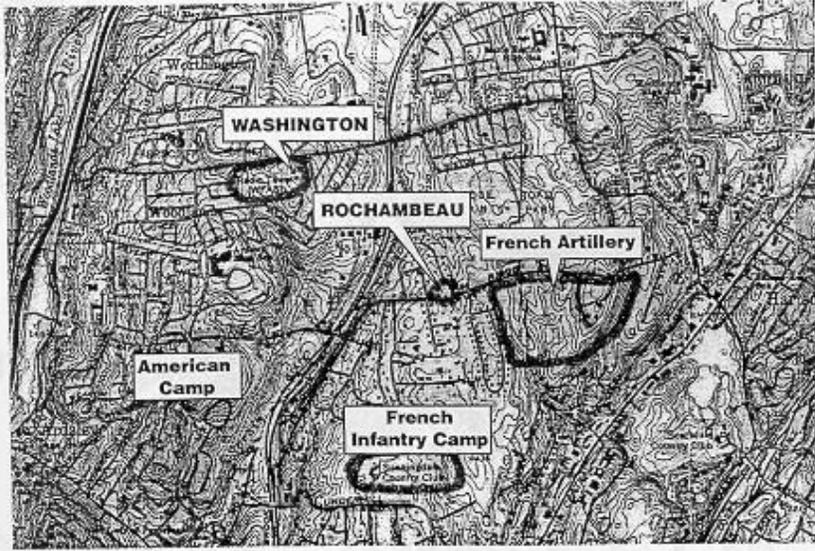
²⁵⁸ A marker listed in Historical Area Markers of New York State (New York, 1970) describing the 139 large Historical Area Markers put up at rest areas along state roads in the 1960s and on the web under www.nysm.nysed.gov/srv/largemarkers/index.html with this inscription could not be located:

FRENCH CAMP

HEREABOUTS, FRENCH TROOPS,
UNDER COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU,
SENT TO ASSIST WASHINGTON
MADE THEIR CAMP JULY 6,
TO AUGUST 19, 1781.

Location: UNDERHILL RD. & CLAYTON ST., E. OF ARDSLEY

²⁵⁹ Today the hillside is covered with tall trees, offering no view whatsoever. In Closen's days it was but a "wasteland, almost uninhabited and full of heather and thorns," i.e., low-growth shrubbery. For an example of changing landscape see the images of Fort Lafayette taken in 1904 attached to site forms 23 and 28!

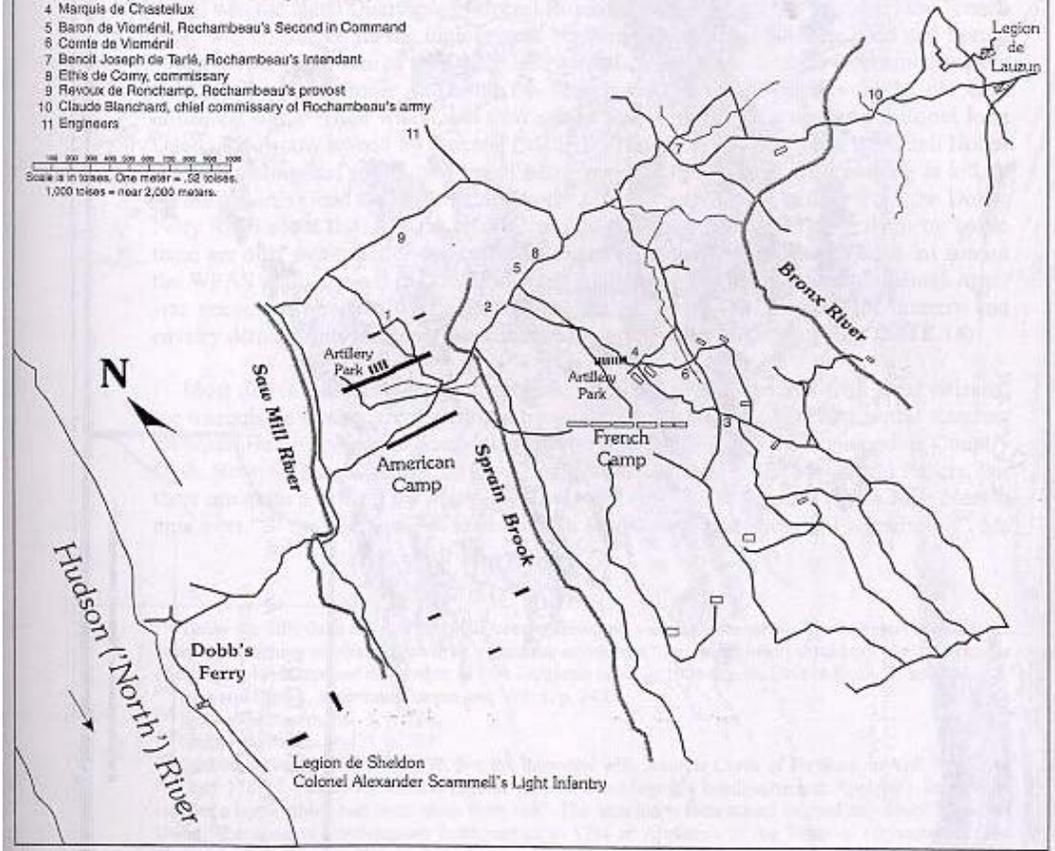


41 LODGINGS OF STAFF HEADQUARTERS [PHILIPSBURG CAMP]

Logements of the General Staff

- 1 George Washington
- 2 Comte de Rochambeau
- 3 Pierre François de Berville, Maréchal général de logis
- 4 Marquis de Chastellux
- 5 Baron de Vioménil, Rochambeau's Second in Command
- 6 Comte de Vioménil
- 7 Benoît Joseph de Tilly, Rochambeau's Intendant
- 8 Ethis de Corry, commissary
- 9 Révoux de Ronchamp, Rochambeau's provost
- 10 Claude Blanchard, chief commissary of Rochambeau's army
- 11 Engineers

Scale in toises. One toise = 52 1/2 feet.
1,000 toises = near 2,500 meters.





"The headquarters," so Berthier, "was set up behind the camp in several widely separated houses."²⁶⁰ Widow Sarah Bates was Rochambeau's hostess; Colonel John Odell after whom the house is named today, had been one of the guides of the Continental Army. His son Jackson Odell was still alive and living in the house in the 1840s. Interviewed by McDonald on September 12, 1845, he declared that "Rochambeau's Head Quarters were at Colonel John Odell's house then owned by one Bates and now by Jackson Odell."²⁶¹ (SITES 11 and 12) References to the headquarters of both generals are frequent in the McDonald interviews and leave no doubt as to their location. On Friday, 3 October 1845, a "Mrs. Churchill, born Taylor, living on the Tuckeyhoe Road near Hart's corner," told McDonald that she "was a girl 15 or 16 years of age in 1781 when the French army lay south of the Bates House now occupied by Jackson Odell. This house was the Head Quarters of General Rochambeau during all the time (sic) the French army was encamped on the high ground between the [Ikendahl] Allaire road and Sprain Brook on the south side of the Dobbs Ferry Road. While there General Rochambeau gave four or five large dinner parties to the French and American officers in the old barn northwest of the house which was then owned by Mr. Bates, afterwards by Colonel John Odell, and is now owned by Jackson Odell."²⁶² Though the barn is gone the Odell House is still standing and in the process of being restored by the SAR. But nothing is left of "Washington's Head Quarters ... at Joseph Appleby's about half a mile from the Dobbs

²⁶⁰ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 249

²⁶¹ McDonald Papers Vol. 1, p. 138.

²⁶² McDonald Papers Vol. 1, p. 187.

Ferry Road about the same (as much) from the Saw mill river."²⁶³ Of the Appleby house there are only stone fences and cellar holes left from the farm on the wooded lot behind the WFAS radio station. (SITE 13) Facing south toward Ardsley, the Continental Army was encamped between Sprain Brook and the Saw Mill River with light infantry and cavalry detachments covering the front and the approaches to Dobbs Ferry. (SITE 14)

Most of Washington's and Rochambeau's officers were quartered with local citizens; the marquis de Chastellux stayed at a house on John Tompkins' land that is still standing on South Healy Avenue in Scarsdale near the eastern border of the Sunningdale Country Club. No eyewitness account of Chastellux could be found in the McDonald Papers, but there are quite a few on the duc de Lauzun, who "resided at a house where John Norton now lives,"²⁶⁴ i.e., the home of Captain John Falconer on Broadway in Philipsburg.²⁶⁵ Ms Davis remembered "the Duke de Luzerne" as "very polite, had a handsome person, wore moustaches, was liberal with money." Handsome, polite, liberal with money: these are all attributes fitting for Lauzun. But a mustache? Grenadiers and chasseurs wore them as signs of their elite status with a line regiment, and so did Lauzun's hussars. No portrait of a mustachioed *duc*, a highly unusual facial ornamentation in eighteenth-century America or France, has come to light, but other eyewitnesses confirm Mrs Davis. On 5 November 1845, William Griffen of Mamaroneck quoted Lauzun as saying "The women of this country don't like my whiskers. I can't get along with them -- but I can't cut them off."²⁶⁶

John Tompkins of Greenburgh told McDonald how his father "Isaac Tompkins was a young married man in July and August 1781, when the French army encamped on our farm, and lived then in a log house, a little north of my grand-father's John Tompkins. In that same month of July my mother had her first child. A French general (or officer) was about taking possession of our house for his quarters, but hearing of my mother's situation relinquished his intention and erected his marquée near the rocks north of the house and very close to it. This officer was very kind to my mother during her confinement, frequently sending her presents of wines and other delicacies (Dumas? Lamothe? &c?). A French general (I don't remember his name) – it might have been de Beville – took my grandfather's house, which was a little southwest of my father's, for his quarters and occupied it during the time they remained encamped at Greenburgh."²⁶⁷

On both counts Tompkins' memory did not fail him. The "French general ... at Gilbert Underhill's about 400 yards south of our house," was de Beville, whose headquarters were located near the junction of present-day Central Park Avenue and Underhill Road.

²⁶³ McDonald Papers Vol. 1, p. 138. See the interview with Andrew Corsa of Fordham in Vol. 5, p. 690: "In July 1781, I was up for several days at General Washington's headquarters at Appleby's in order to reclaim a horse which had been taken from me." The location is determined beyond any doubt by James Owen, "Location of Washington's headquarters in 1781 at Appleby's in the Town of Greenburgh." *The Quarterly Bulletin of the Westchester County Historical Society* Vol. 8 No. 3, (July 1932), pp. 101-108. Owen already suggested in his article almost 75 years ago that a marker be placed on or near this site. See also Morgan H. Seacord, "Site of the Appleby House." *Ibid.*, Vol. 10 No. 1, (January 1934), pp. 8-13.

²⁶⁴ McDonald Papers Vol. 1, p. 263. Interview with Zipporah Davis, wife of Abraham Davis.

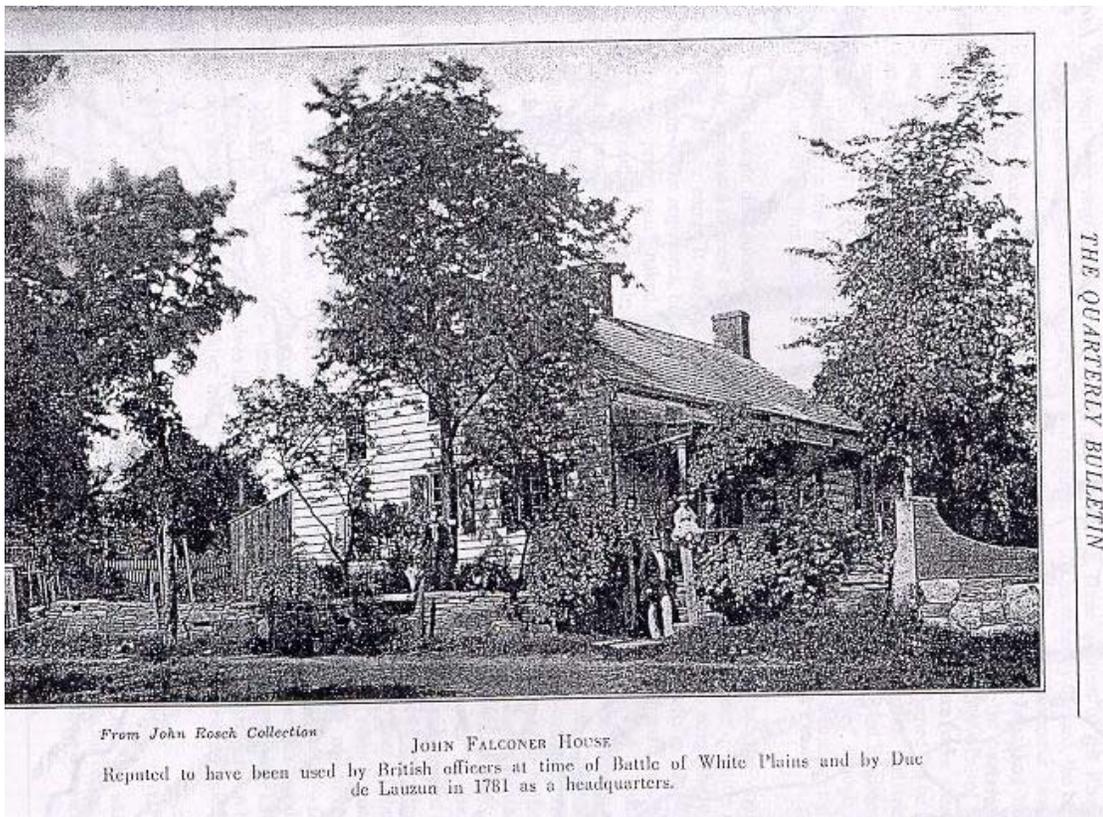
²⁶⁵ The image of Falconer's home is taken from Elizabeth G.H.Coles, "Washington in White Plains and Vicinity." *Quarterly Bulletin of the Westchester County Historical Society* Vol. 8 No. 1, (January 1931), pp. 1-18, p. 8.

²⁶⁶ McDonald Papers Vol. 3, p. 403.

²⁶⁷ McDonald Papers Vol. 4, p. 493, on 7 September 1846.

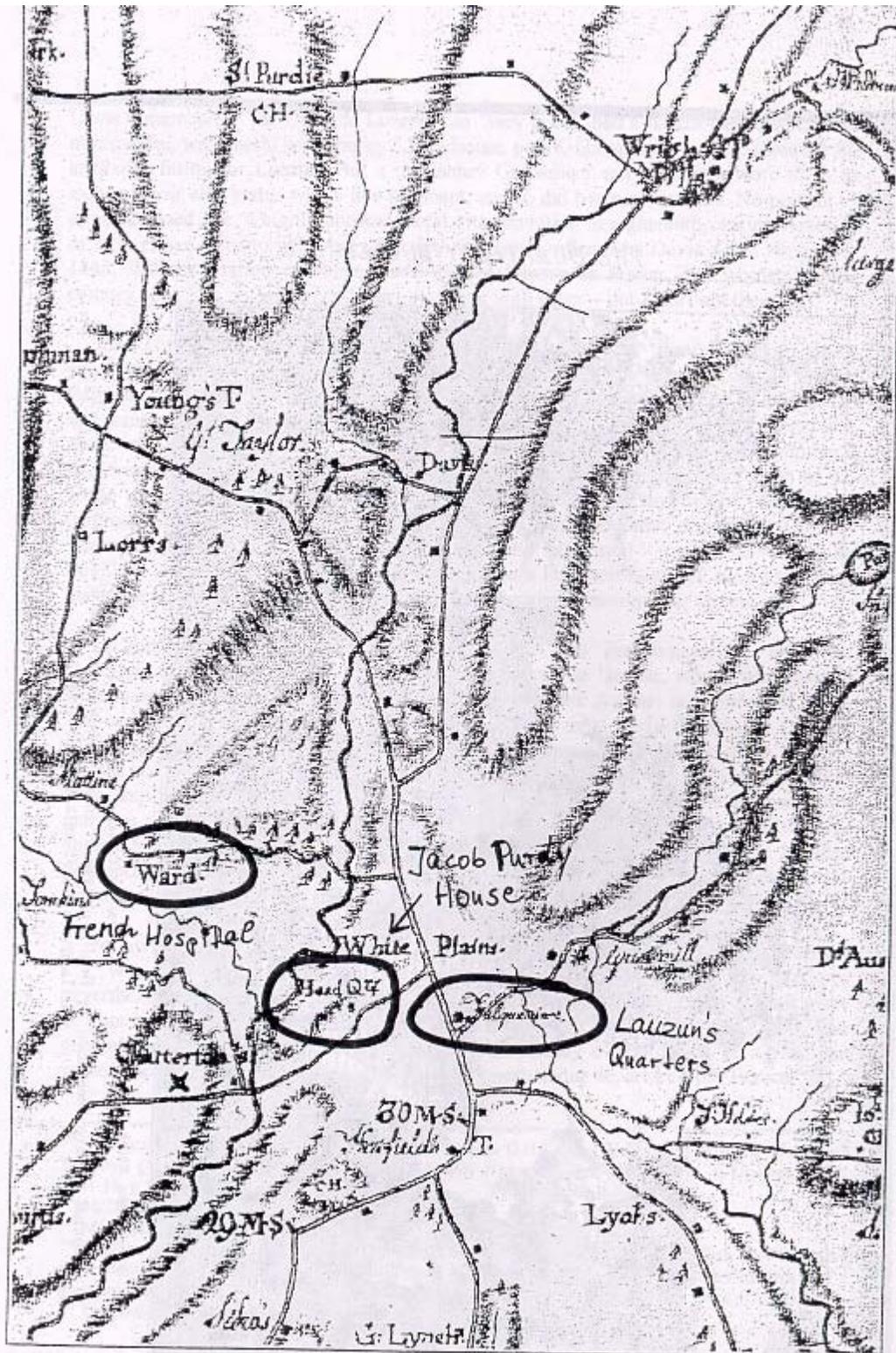
The officers who relinquished his father's house were most likely Charles de Lameth, who together with fellow assistant quarter masters general and aides-de-camp Mathieu Dumas and Alexandre Berthier had been assigned a house which they found too far away from that of their commanding officer de Beville. Instead they built themselves a marquee made of six soldier's tents complete with an English bulldog to warn them of approaching strangers. In their journals, Dumas, Berthier, and Lameth give detailed descriptions of the pastoral life, the "six weeks of perfect happiness," they led in the "marquee". Even General Washington came to visit.²⁶⁸

Following informal visits on the 7th, Washington reviewed the French forces on the 8th. "We hadn't had more than a day to repair the disorder of the march, but our troops nevertheless appeared in the grandest parade uniform. M. de Rochambeau took his place in front of the white flag of his oldest regiment and saluted General Washington. ... Our general received the greatest compliments for the beauty of his troops. It is true that without doubt those that we have with us were superb at our departure from France."²⁶⁹



²⁶⁸ Berthier as quoted in Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 250. Here also the other descriptions. John Tomkins remembered that "The French general whose tent was near my father's gave a great entertainment while there, erecting a bower for the purpose on the large flat rock there. (Dumas?)"

²⁶⁹ Lauberdière, *Journal*, fol. 74v.



The next day "all the American army presented arms; General Washington invited our headquarters staff to come to see it." Baron Cloisen was in for a surprise. "I had a chance to see the American army, man for man. It was really painful to see these brave men, almost naked with only some trousers and little linen jackets, most of them without

stockings, but, would you believe it? Very cheerful and healthy in appearance. A quarter of them were negroes, merry, confident, and sturdy. ... Three quarters of the Rhode Island regiment consists of negroes, and that regiment is the most neatly dressed, the best under arms, and the most precise in its manoeuvres (sic)."²⁷⁰ Clermont-Crèvecoeur "went to the American camp, which contained approximately 4,000 men. In beholding this army I was struck, not by its smart appearance, but by its destitution: the men were without uniforms and covered with rags; most of them were barefoot. They were of all sizes, down to children who could not have been over fourteen. There were many negroes, mulattoes, etc. "²⁷¹ To Cromot du Bourg, the Continental Army seemed "to be in as good order as possible for an army composed of men without uniforms and with narrow resources." He too, like all observers, singled out the 1st Rhode Island Regiment for praise: "The Rhode Island Regiment, among others, is extremely fine," though it provided but a few hundred of the "great number of negroes in the army," whose strength he estimated at "four thousand and some hundred men at the most."

The comte de Lauberdière gave probably the most detailed observations. The whole army "consisted at most of 4000 men. We found them lined up in the order of battle in front of their camp. It was not a very pleasant sight not because of the attire and the uniform of the regiments, because at present, and ever since they have been in the war, they are pretty much naked. But I remember their great accomplishments and I can not see without a certain admiration that it was with these same men that General Washington had so gloriously defended his country. The officers were in the uniform of their regiment; they are armed and salute with the spontoon." What also bothered Lauberdière was that the Americans "lined up in the ranks according to seniority. This method infinitely hurts the eye and the beautiful appearance of the troops because it often places a tall man between two short ones and a short one between two tall ones." What a difference to the French line, which was "well lined up, of an equal height, well dressed."

Viewing the American camp, Lauberdière noticed how "The Americans are camped in the English manner in two parallel rows of tents, under arms they are aligned in two lines according to height."²⁷² When the weather is fine they stack their arms in front of their tents on an easel (or towel horse, a *chevalet*) and retrieve them at night or when it rains. This arrangement is subject to many inconveniences." Comparing equipment, Lauberdière noticed how "Our soldiers were overloaded and too warmly dressed for the summer. The Americans, on the contrary, have nothing but a kind of shirt or jacket and a big pair of trousers. Right now their coat is worn only at three-quarter length; they have no shoes. They trouble themselves little with provisions: actually they are given just a bit of corn meal of which each soldier makes his own bread. Each man is also provided a small woolen blanket which he always carries with him. This method is good in a country where the cold of the night follows quickly the searing heat. Since the havresack of the American soldier is not burdened any further this provides light and quick cover, something that we can not give our troops for fear of augmenting a load that is already

²⁷⁰ Acomb, *Closen*, pp. 90/92.

²⁷¹ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, pp. 33/34.

²⁷² Baron Closen observed this as well: "The American army is always drawn up in two lines" but added significantly: "a custom which we have also adopted." Acomb, *Closen*, p. 92. Rochambeau had ordered to line up in two, rather than the three, rows as prescribed by the ordonnance of 1776, during the crossing on board the *Duc de Bourgogne* and had the order entered in the *livre d'ordre*.

too heavy." Abbé Robin too noted with surprise and approval the differences in French and American uniform and equipment. "Neither do these troops in general wear regular uniforms. ... Several regiments have small white frocks, with fringes, which look well enough; also linen over-alls, large and full, which are very convenient in hot weather and do not at all hinder the free use of the limbs in marching. ... This advantage in dress, I believe, has not been sufficiently considered in France. We are apt to consult the gratification of the eye too far, and forget that the troops were designed to act, and not merely to show themselves and their finery."²⁷³ He was also "astonished to find, that their whole travelling equipage and furniture would not weigh forty pounds" as opposed to the almost 60 pounds plus musket carried by the French.²⁷⁴

"The regiments which should have been 600 men strong had barely 250. Many officers were also missing who had not yet rejoined since the army had marched and quit its (winter) quarters. Marriage is the normal condition (*un état*) in America; celibates are little esteemed here. Almost all the officers of the army are married and they often demand permission to return home. ... in that they differ much with our officers and even our soldiers." This often caused officers and men alike to request frequent home leaves and to return late, but Lauberdière thought that "In general our allies are slow (*paresseux*) and they don't inconvenience themselves (*gener*)" more than absolutely necessary.

After the review Washington invited the French officers to his headquarters "where there is always a table set with glasses and many bottles, of wine, rum ... (sic) for the refreshment of those who need it and of which there is always a great number. On meeting someone it is their custom to give each other the right hand and to shake it, and I have often admired the patience and goodness of General Washington who had the courtesy to do this all day long 80 or 100 times for people who presented themselves to him. Such is, it is true, the state of a republic where everyone has his voice."

It is difficult to ascertain how much contact there was between the two armies. Lauberdière wrote that Rochambeau "always had with him and at his table a very great number of American officers. General Washington also had many French (officers)."²⁷⁵ Washington's secretary Jonathan Trumbull wrote to Colonel Richard Varick on July 13: "The Junction of the two armies is formed at this Place, & has commenced with high seeming Cordiality & Affection, demonstrated by constant Acts of Conviviality & social Harmony. A very fine Body of Troops compose the French Army, which seems anxious to give some Marks of Heroism, to distinguish their Attachment & Military Pride."²⁷⁶ That same day Dr. Thatcher "received an invitation, with a number of officers of our regiment, to dine with a party of French officers in their camp. We were politely received under an elegant marquee: our entertainment consisted of excellent soup, roast-beef &c., served in French style. The gentlemen appear desirous of cultivating an acquaintance with our officers, but being ignorant of each others' language, we can enjoy but little conversation. The French army exhibit their martial array to the greatest advantage. In the officers we recognize the accomplished gentlemen, free and affable in their manners.

²⁷³ Abbé Robin, *New Travels through North America* (Philadelphia, 1783), p. 35, in a letter dated Philipsburg, August 4, 1781.

²⁷⁴ Robin, *Travels*, p. 36

²⁷⁵ Lauberdière, *Journal*, fol. 75.

²⁷⁶ Quoted in Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 34, note 37.

Their military dress and side-arms are elegant; the troops are under the strictest discipline, and are amply provided with arms and accoutrements, which are kept in the neatest order; they are in complete uniform, coats of white broadcloth, trimmed with green, and white under-dress, and on their heads they wear a singular kind of hat or chapeau. It is unlike our cocked hats in having but two corners instead of three, which gives them a very novel appearance. It has been remarked, to their honor, that during their march from Newport to join our army, their course has been marked with the most exemplary order and regularity, committing no depredations, but conducting towards the inhabitants on their route with great civility and propriety. We now greet them as friends and allies, and they manifest a zealous determination to act in unison with us against the common enemy. This conduct must have a happy tendency to eradicate from the minds of the Americans their ancient prejudices against the French people. They punctually paid their expenses in hard money, which made them acceptable guests wherever they passed; and, in fact, the large quantity of solid coin which they brought into the United States, is to be considered as of infinite importance at the present period of our affairs."²⁷⁷

Clermont-Crèvecœur on the other hand wrote that the American artillery officers "were the only ones with whom we occasionally lived."²⁷⁸ Baron Gallatin finally wrote that "we never had a lot of contact with them. It was rare to see us in their camp and them in ours."²⁷⁹ One of the reasons for this lack of contact was a lack of money. On August 2, Colonel Ebenezer Huntington wrote his brother Andrew: "We are serving with the French Army where the officers dine in luxury and give us frequent invitations to their tables, we can't go to them, because we can not return the compliment."²⁸⁰

Among the enlisted men there was hardly any contact at all, if nothing else because Rochambeau had forbidden it. "No French personnel, including officers, could leave camp without a pass signed by a major general. ... The commanders of the guard were 'to allow no Foreigners, be they Americans or deserters, to enter the precincts [*l'intérieur*] of the army."²⁸¹ Private Plumb does not record having met a French soldiers, and neither Privates Flohr of the Deux-Ponts, Amblard of the Soissonnais, or the anonymous soldier in the Bourbonnais admitted ever meeting an American. And though they are contained in the diary of an Englishmen, the observations of Frederick Mackenzie contain more than a grain of truth in them. Under August 9, Mackenzie recorded: "Seven Continental deserters came in this morning. ... They say the common talk in the army is, that New York is to be besieged as soon as the French fleet appears, which is daily expected. By their accounts the Army consists of 4000 Rebels, and 5000 French. The former are very ill supplied with provisions, having lately received only 2 1/2 lb of flour in 8 days, altho' at the same time the French troops were furnished with the 1 1/2 lb of bread pr day, and numbers of them came into the Continental camp, and offered to sell their loaves, which weigh 3 lb for half a Dollar, in Cash, as no other money is circulating. This has given great offence to the Continental Soldiers and Militia, who abuse the French, and say that

²⁷⁷ Thatcher, *Journal*, p. 265.

²⁷⁸ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 34.

²⁷⁹ Warrington Dawson, ed., "Un Garde-Suisse de Louis XVI au Service de l'Amérique: Le Baron Gaspard de Gallatin." *Le Correspondent* 324 No. 1655 (September 10, 1931), pp. 672-692, p. 676.

²⁸⁰ Quoted in Scott, *Yorktown*, p. 57. Here and in Kennett, *French Forces*, p. 118, are additional examples for tensions between the two allies.

²⁸¹ *Livre d'orde* for July 13 and August 9, quoted in Scott, *Yorktown*, p. 56.

they who have never done any service to the Country are well paid, fed, and clothed, while themselves, who have been fighting for the Country are almost destitute of every thing. The French Soldiers are frequently knocked down, and their loaves taken from them. The French will not suffer the rebel Soldiers to come into their encampment."²⁸²

But if there was not much (friendly) inter-action between the two armies, the French soldiers still came into contact with a local population anxious to sell its wares for hard money rather than the worthless Continentals with which their own troops were paid. On 10 July, Washington issued a proclamation establishing two markets at Philipsburg: one just behind his house in the American camp, and the other near Rochambeau's headquarters. Provided they had a certificate "signed by two civil Magistrates" showing "their attachment to the American Cause and Interest," they could sell their wares "without Molestation or Imposition."²⁸³ The beneficiaries were of course the French, who paid in bullion. John Tompkins told McDonald how "The French camp formed a good market where everything was paid for in hard money at the highest rate." Many of the interviewees remembered into their old age that the presence of the French was synonymous with money: Mary Beagle of Somers told McDonald in October 1847 that they were "paying liberally for everything they bought or took in hard money."²⁸⁴ And Abraham Weeks, 82, also of Somers, told McDonald the same month that "They paid for everything in hard money and cut crown and dollars in 1/4th and 1/8th for change."²⁸⁵ This led Joseph Rouse, a soldier in a Connecticut Regiment, to complain that "They look much better than our lousey army who have Neither money nor close God Bless the State of Connecticut you noes what I mean."²⁸⁶

As a matter of fact, the French seemed to have so much money that sometimes they even lost track of it. "Old Mr (Joseph [Travis] in margin) of Peekskill who owned the upper part of the land where the present village of Peekskill stands, and who owned what was then called the upper dock, used to tell a story of his having, for several days, had possession of a barrel of specie part of the French military chest. The story was this: going out early one morning upon his wharf, he found lying there a strong iron bound cask containing something apparently very heavy. After enquiry in vain for the owner he directed it to be taken for safe keeping to his storehouse. Nearly a week had elapsed when an American officer at the head of a guard of men came to Peekskill describing the cask in question and making anxious enquiry respecting it. On surrendering it Mr. Travers was informed that it contained specie belonging to the French army which had been forwarded from some place above by water and landed by some mistake in the night time, at the wrong spot, by persons ignorant alike of the owners and contents."²⁸⁷

²⁸² *Diary of Frederick Mackenzie* 2 Vol., (Cambridge, 1932), Vol. 2, p. 583. Bread rations in the French army in mid-July were 1/4 of a pound per day though by the time Mackenzie wrote his entries rations were up to 1 pound of bread, 8 ounces of corn, and 1 1/2 pounds of fresh beef daily. Scott, *Yorktown*, p. 56.

²⁸³ Washington, *Writings*, vol. 22, p. 351.

²⁸⁴ McDonald Papers Vol. 5, p. 722.

²⁸⁵ McDonald Papers Vol. 5, p. 722. None of the currencies mentioned here are American or French: the crown is a British coin, the Dollar the Spanish Piece of Eight.

²⁸⁶ Though the letter was published in Rivington's *Loyalist Gazette* on 14 August and may have been contrived by Rivington it did express feelings shared by officers and enlisted men alike.

²⁸⁷ McDonald Papers Vol. 6, p. 937.

Such abundance coupled with carelessness in turn invited thieves, or better, would-be thieves, viz. the interview with General Nathaniel Montross shows: "When the French lay at White Plains four iron chests of specie were sent from Crompond to pay off the French troops. The stopped at night a short distance from North Castle Church at the home of one Thomas or Joseph Green. The specie was suffered to remain in the covered wagon in which it had been transported and a soldier was posted to guard it. Two white men named Carpenter, a free negro and a negro slave formed a plan to get possession of one or more of the boxes." One of the black men was to be on the look-out, the other was to overpower the guard, while the two whites were to carry the cash away. Stark naked, the free African-American crawled up to the guard and overpowered the soldier. But just as the two whites are about to untie the tarpaulin over the money chests, something is moving on the wagon. Afraid that there might be a second guard hidden on the wagon, the two men let go of the cover and bolt, followed by the black man. Later it turned out that there had been but a dog sleeping on the wagon, and with a bit more courage the heist just might have worked out. "This attempt made some noise at the time but the plot was never known until after the conclusion of the war," so General Montross.²⁸⁸

A few days later, on August 10, Mackenzie recorded another well-established fact, i.e., the tendency of German soldiers to desert in America. "Four French Hussars came in yesterday afternoon, with their horses and appointments: Two more came in this Morning. There is no doubt but if the Armies were in the Field, and nearer each other, the desertion from the French troops would be very great. Many of them being Germans, particularly Duponts, and the Legion, wish to come in when they have an opportunity."²⁸⁹ Not all deserters made it: on August 17, 33-year-old Corporal Jean Pierre Verdier of the Bourbonnais was hanged for desertion despite 15 years of service in the regiment.²⁹⁰

The strict discipline enforced by Rochambeau kept tensions with the locals to a minimum. Margaret, the daughter of Caleb Paulding, told McDonald that "When the French army lay at White Plains, a French Major had his quarters at my father's house. This major was extremely kind to us children, making pictures for us, and amusing us in various ways."²⁹¹ John Tompkins was full of praise for the discipline of the French

²⁸⁸ McDonald Papers Vol. 5, p. 716.

²⁸⁹ Ibid., pp. 584-585. Entries listing French deserters can be found almost daily, e.g., two deserters on 11 July, five on 30 July, four farriers from the Legion on 1 August, "several" on 7 August, four from Saintonge on 16 August, etc. It must be pointed out, however, that the British forces in New York suffered their share of desertions. Baurmeister also reported the arrival of French deserters to Baron Jungkenn: 14 hussars, 11 grenadiers, 9 fusiliers and 5 artillerymen by August 19. Baurmeister, *Letters*, p. 459.

Besides these contacts there were others which show how much the spirit of *noblesse oblige* was still alive in the eighteenth century. On August 4 "an English packet arrived from Falmouth. It brought open letters addressed to French officers in Rhode Island and sent in care of Count Rochambeau. Captain Marquard, who at present is with his Excellency General von Lossberg, took charge of them and was treated very kindly at the French outpost. A courteous reply came back for General Clinton." Ibid., pp. 459-460.

Eventually the sending of flags became so frequent in mid-August and was so obviously abused for spying on the French and Americans that Rochambeau informed Clinton that flags would no longer be admitted in camp. Examples of spying can be found at "Spy Letters of the American Revolution from the Collections of the Clements Library" at <http://www.clements.umich.edu/spies/index.html>.

²⁹⁰ Scott, *Yorktown*, p. 57.

²⁹¹ McDonald Papers Vol. 1, p. 325.

troops: "The springs about our place supplied the whole French army with pure water,²⁹² and the watered their horses at the Bronx. The strictest discipline was kept up among the French soldiery. Squads were posted on all sides for the protection of property so that the soldiers could not steal or destroy had they been so disposed. ... When they came, they advanced from the northwest and cut a road through our wheat fields of which they were very careful, posting sentries all around for its protection. When they retired they marched the same way, - that is, by their right through the wheat field, and in the direction of Colonel Odell's, or a little west."²⁹³

John Tompkins' reminiscences are a good example of selective memory and of the dangers of oral history. Baron Gallatin wrote that "the plain where they had us camp was covered with the most beautiful wheat, close to being ready for harvesting: it happened faster than the owner could have guessed. Within half an hour there was not a single ear of wheat standing." The soldiers cut the wheat for their horses, oxen, and for other uses, and "it was in vain that the farmer, tears in his eyes, begged that his field be spared."²⁹⁴

When there were troubles the guilty party was not often easily identified. Nehemiah U. Tompkins remembered how "The French soldiers made use of my father's horses which so provoked him that he seized and shook one of them who screamed for assistance. His comrades came to his aide and my father threw them about and knocked some of them down. More came and the French soldiers, now very much excited, raised the cry of 'Refugee! Refugee!'" Tompkins was taken to Rochambeau, who "after a short confinement discharged him, first however making him promise never again to attack the French army."²⁹⁵ Nehemiah's brother John remembered the story as well. "The farm of James Tomkins was near to and a little south of the French camp. He was an uncommonly strong man and of a very irritable disposition. One day he found a French soldier riding a mare, which belonged to him in company with others to the watering place, and ordered him to dismount. The Frenchman refused. He immediately seized the horse and dragged the rider off. The soldiers attempted to regain the horse, but he knocked or threw down everyone that approached him. They then made a great outcry calling out "Refugee! Refugee! And multitudes of comrades soon came to their assistance and surrounded James Tompkins, who drew a stake from the fence and for a long time defended himself - beating and knocking down all within his reach. Closing up on all sides the soldiers at last took him prisoner, and conducting him to the headquarters called upon General Rochambeau to punish him. Extremely exasperated the soldiers were very desirous he should be hanged. To gratify them Rochamebau kept him for some time under guard, and when he was released said to him: "You little man must never attack the French army again." He solemnly promised he would not."²⁹⁶ That settled the fight but left open the question as to why the soldier was riding Tompkins' mare in the first place!

²⁹² J. Leonard leViness, "Taxes! Ever Irksome!" *The Westchester Historian* Vol. 46 No. 4, (Fall 1970), pp. 85-87, p. 86, tells "that my great, great grandmother Tompkins one June morning in 1781, went out to the spring for a pail of water and found two French soldiers in bright blue uniforms standing guard beside it. They politely bailed the water for her." The two soldiers would have been men of the Royal Deux-Ponts.

²⁹³ McDonald Papers Vol. 4, p. 493.

²⁹⁴ Gallatin, "Garde-Suisse," pp. 675-676.

²⁹⁵ McDonald Papers Vol. 4, p. 480.

²⁹⁶ McDonald Papers Vol. 4, p. 493.

Not all encounters ended amicably; some Americans had quite different experiences with their French allies. Being at the edge of the "Neutral Ground" where irregular units such as De Lancey's and Andreas Emmerich's Loyalists called "Refugees," "Skinners," or "Cowboys" by contemporaries, as well as regular light troops such as the Hessian *Jäger*, plied their trade, meant constant reconnaissance and patrols. Especially along the "little Bronx River ... the mounted patrols relieved each other continually," so Closen. But this also meant that one could never be certain who was friend and who was foe. Here was exactly the situation why Rochambeau had wanted Light infantry and cavalry in his command. Lauzun's hussars began performing their duties immediately, at times without differentiating too carefully whom they visited during their *creative* foraging expeditions. In an interview on 5 November 1845, William Griffen of Mamaroneck remembered a visit by a "friendly" party of hussars to his father's house. "His men took cider, - three or four barrels from us without paying,* and my father then went to the Plains and complained to the Duke who immediately sent an officer to us and paid liberally. (sic) The officer was angry because my father complained to the Duke. ... My father invited the Duke's officers (sic), who paid us, to dinner -- treated them to some "cider Royal" (sic) when they forgot their pique about his complaint to the Duke, and got very merry. I think some of the Duke's legion - officers and men - were Dutch or German." There is a "*" at "without paying" and a footnote: "They brought a cart with them from White Plains and threatened to kill my father if he hindered them."²⁹⁷

Some encounters ended in bloodshed and even death. On July 7, the day after the arrival of the French forces, was spent, so Closen, "in more extensive reconnaissance of the neighborhood." The next day, July 8, the hussars apparently set out to make their presence known in the neighborhood. Joseph Odell (*1766) of Greenburgh was one of many interviewees who remembered what happened that Sunday morning: "Elijah Vincent was from near East Chester Village and he had a brother who was a blacksmith and had his shop, in the Revolutionary War, near where Armstrong's tavern was afterwards built. Soon after the French Army came to West Chester County, a detachment of Lauzun's cavalry called at his Smithy and requested him to shoe some horses. He refused because it was Sunday. Some altercation ensued which ended in a fight and Vincent was killed. Elijah Vincent vowed revenge and watched the French patrol with a party of men for some time till he fell in with the scout whose Captain he killed. He took from the Frenchman's pockets an elegant gold watch and some coin."²⁹⁸

Daniel Odell of Yonkers told McDonald on 20 October 1845, that "A detachment of French Cavalry stopped at Vincent's smithy in east Chester and requested him to shoe some horses which he refused saying he had iron in the fire for other work upon which he was engaged. Some altercation ensued which ended in a quarrel. A French officer (?) drew his sword and cut Vincent down leaving him for dead but at length he recovered. His brother Elijah Vincent on being informed of it vowed revenge and waylaid the French horse. The Vincents were born and brought up on the place (at East Chester) of their father which was afterwards owned by Colonel William S. Smith, son in law of President John Adams."²⁹⁹

²⁹⁷ McDonald Papers Vol. 3, p. 403.

²⁹⁸ McDonald Papers Vol. 1, p. 193.

²⁹⁹ McDonald Papers Vol. 1, p. 215. The property, later known as the Vincent-Halsey House, was situated on Provost Avenue in the Bronx between the original Boston Post Road and Coles Road.

And John Williams of Peekskill, aged 90, told McDonald that the blacksmith killed by French was called Gilbert Vincent who lived about ¼ of a mile from East Chester. He had told the French hussars that he had no coal when he refused to shoe the horses, but the French had not believed him. In revenge his brother shot a French officer “near Scarsdale despoiling him of all his arms which he afterwards showed me and which I saw consisting of a sword, dagger, pistol, epaulettes, scarf, belt etc all extremely elegant.”³⁰⁰

The truth of these stories is confirmed in Mackenzie's *Diary*, where Elijah is identified as an ensign in the "West Chester Refugees." Planning to "surprize some French Officers quartered at a house in the front of their camp" with seven men of his corps, "on their way there they fell in with a patrole of 6 Hussars of The legion de Lausun, which was followed by an Officer and 25 Dragoons." Vincent shot the officer and "brought off the Officers Cap, Sword, &c."³⁰¹ If Gilbert Vincent was killed on Sunday, July 8, Elijah did not waste any time. The personnel file of 25-year-old *sous-lieutenant* Pichon, adjutant of Lauzun's Legion, records: *Tué en patrouille*, killed while on patrol, on 10 July 1781.³⁰²

But the *Refugees* could play this game of random killing, of murder and revenge, as well, especially when French personnel was careless enough to venture out in small groups.³⁰³ At the very beginning of the McDonald papers the reader finds the cryptic remark by Samuel Oakley, dated October 1844: "Shube [Merrit of Rye] killed the French commissary in or near King Street, and took 150 Louis d'ors from him, in 1781."³⁰⁴ "Lydia (a colored woman)" had witnessed the whole scene and told McDonald this on 24 October 1844: "In 1781, a French sutler and three men came to my master's (Andrew Lyon of King Street), and made a purchase of some cider for the French army at White Plains. Mr. Lyon and his men were in the cellar getting out the cider and the sutler on the fence by the door when Shube Merrit [Neb Merrit and Tim Saxton] came upon them. Shube shot the Frenchman dead, and, searching him, found a belt around his body filled with gold – one hundred Louis d'ors 'tis said. This was divided among three of them. (?) The next day a detachment of French came over from White Plains to enquire into the matter. They (Merritt and party?) took one Frenchman prisoner and the rest got off."³⁰⁵

³⁰⁰ Vol. 6, p. 823. See also Frederick Rich, age 80, of Mile Square in Vol. 4, p. 506, in September 1846: "Elijah Vincent ambushed the French because they killed his brother, a smith of East Chester, who refused to shoe the horses of the French dragoons." Vol. 4, p. 510, contains an interview with Philemon Fowler of East Chester in September 1846. "Vincent was a blacksmith, and killed because he would not shoe a horse for them (a party of French) in consequence of which Elijah Vincent vowed revenge and soon after shot a French Captain." The only dissenting voice is found in Vol. 1, p. 196, in a note written 8 October 1845. "Mr Jackson Odell tells me he has ascertained from Mr (blank) that Vincent's brother lived though cut to pieces, and that this barbarity was practiced not by the French but by Americans."

³⁰¹ Mackenzie, *Diary*, p. 568. Mackenzie gives the date of the incident as July 17.

³⁰² Bodinier, *Dictionnaire*, p. 380.

³⁰³ For harrowing examples of intra-American violence, retaliation, kidnapping, and murder even by American soldiers see the letter by General Selleck Silliman to Governor Trumbull of February 5, 1781 in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Seventh Series* Vol. 3, (Boston, 1902), pp. 192-198. See also Catherine S. Crary, "Guerilla Activities of James DeLancey's Cowboys in Westchester County." In: Robert A. East and Jacob Judd, eds., *The Loyalist Americans: A Focus on Greater New York* (Tarrytown, 1975), pp. 14-24.

³⁰⁴ McDonald Papers Vol. 1, p. 30. I have been unable to identify the French commissary mentioned here. Robin, *Travels*, p. 40, in a letter dated September 1, 1780, reports that the Refugees "have lately hanged a Secretary belonging to one of our Commissaries, and assassinated an officer of the legion of Lauzun."

³⁰⁵ McDonald Papers Vol. 1, p. 53.

Nehemiah Brown of King Street in Portchester remembered how "In July 1781, a sutler, attached to the French army, and two other Frenchmen were at Andrew Lyon's, near Portchester, where Mr. Bush now lives, eating dinner. They had come from White Plains with a team or wagon to buy cider. Shube Merritt with Neh. Merritt and Tim Saxton heard of it and came to attack them. These refugees looked in at the window (windows and doors being open), and the Frenchmen ran. Tim. Saxton, pursuing, rested his gun upon the bars of the fence and shot the sutler dead. Shube Merritt, being active, sprang over the fence and stripped the Frenchman of a belt he wore around his waist, which contained two or three hundred "French guineas." (sic) These the robbers divided - Shube retaining the largest portion. Another Frenchman was (previously?) overtaken, and surrendered himself (to Shube Merritt?) a prisoner. The third ran north, towards Samuel Brown's (the next house) for his life, pursued by Neb. Merritt with his loaded gun. The Frenchman, hard pressed by Neb. Merritt, took up a large stone and faced him. He pointed his gun. The Frenchman hurled the stone, and running round Samuel Brown's house, jumped in at the window and got under a table followed by Neb. Who could not find him. Neb. Then left the room in search of him, and Mrs. Brown concealed him first in a closet or pantry, but he was so incautious as to (look) stick his head out the moment Neb. Left the room. Mrs. Brown then concealed him in the cellar. Neb. Insisted Mr. Brown should tell him where the Frenchman was. Brown did not know that the Frenchman was in the house - not having yet seen him, and denied him to Neb. Declaring he was not in the house. Neb. at length went away. Sometime afterwards, a detachment of Continentals with an officer, being informed &c. came to Brown's and inquired for the Frenchman in the cellar. Brown at first denied him, because several neighbors, loyalists, were present. He managed to acquaint the officer of this who ordered the Tories off, and then he brought out the Frenchman who was conducted to camp. The Refugees took the Frenchmen's horses and left the wagon. The wagon was taken into camp by the American party."³⁰⁶

8.4 The Grand Reconnaissance, July 21-23, 1781

Since New York had been agreed on at Wethersfield as the target of the '81 campaign, Washington and Rochambeau did not want to waste time before probing for weak spots in the British defense perimeter. The raid on Morrisania on July 2/3 had failed. A week later, on July 10, the *Romulus* and three French frigates from Newport entered the Sound between Long Island and the mainland in an attempt to capture Fort Lloyd (or Fort Franklin near Huntington, Long Island). This enterprise too failed and the little French fleet was back in Newport on the 14th.³⁰⁷ On July 12, the two generals inspected the defenses at Dobbs Ferry,³⁰⁸ and on July 13, Washington issued orders for 2,000 Americans and 2,000 Frenchmen to be ready by 8:00 p.m. for a reconnaissance in force toward Manhattan Island. Heavy rain forced the postponement that night and a series of

³⁰⁶ McDonald Papers Vol. 1, p. 68. Gallatin tells how Lieutenants Joseph von Berg and Gaspar de Custine of his regiment brought one of the Refugees into the American camp. Washington ordered the man hanged immediately. Warrington Dawson, ed., "Un Garde-Suisse de Louis XVI au Service de l'Amérique: Le Baron Gaspard de Gallatin." *Le Correspondent* 324 No. 1655 (September 10, 1931), pp. 672-692, p. 679.

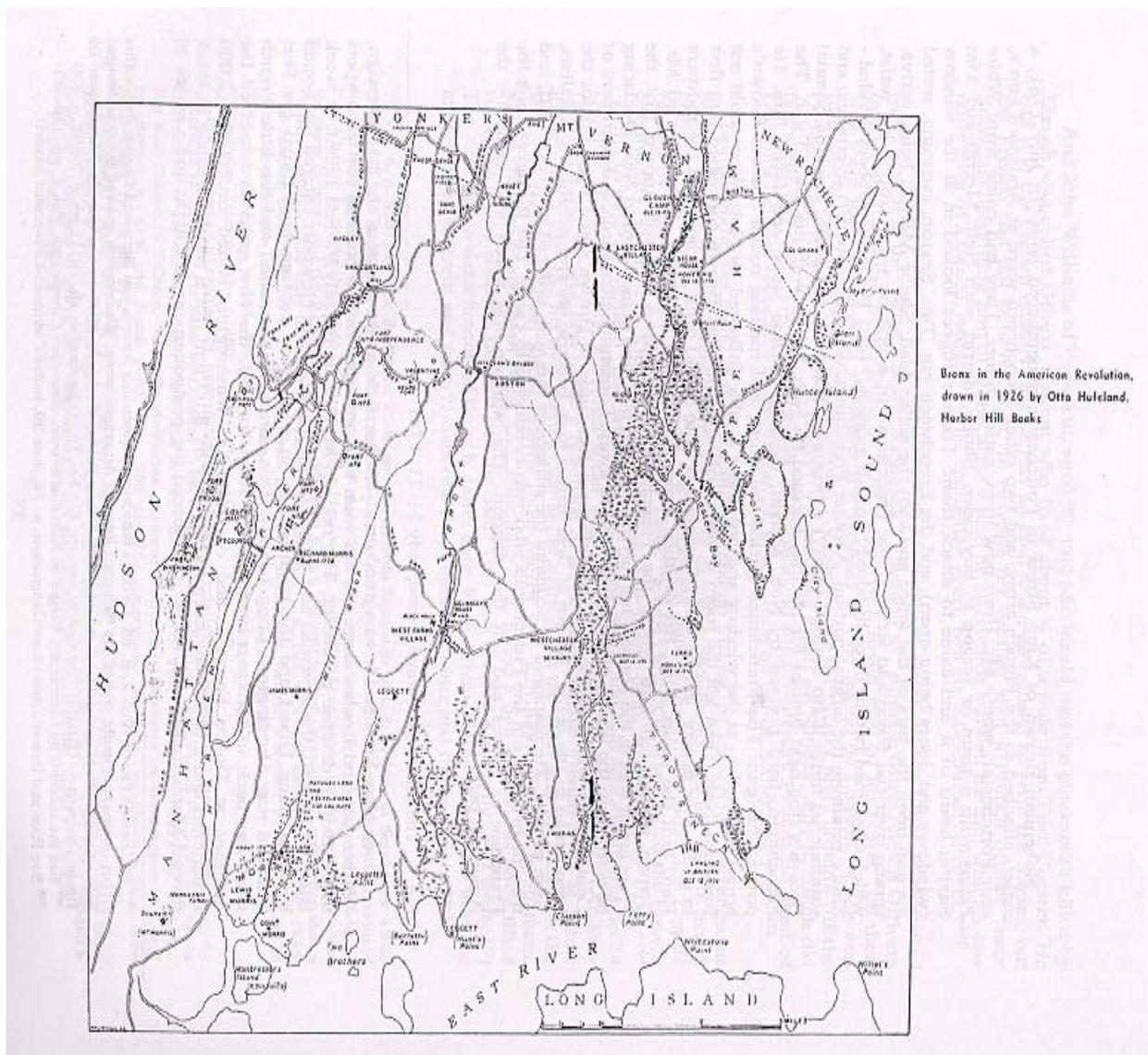
³⁰⁷ See the account by Lieutenant Verger in Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, pp. 130-132.

³⁰⁸ See Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, p. 34, note 39, in the Clermont-Crèvecoeur journal.

first false, and then real, alarms the following nights and days kept Washington from carrying out his intentions. On the 16th, a British raiding party sailed up the Hudson to Tarrytown and had to be covered until it returned to New York in the morning of the 19th.³⁰⁹ (SITE 22) Concurrently on the night of July 17/18, a patrol of six hussars and 10 infantry of Lauzun's Legion, which was by now quartered at "Red House" about 2 miles north-east of Chatterton Hill, ran into an ambush set by De Lancey dragoons. The French suffered their first combat related casualty when *sous-lieutenant* Jacques Hartmann was killed in the early morning hours of the 18th.³¹⁰

³⁰⁹ See Acomb, *Closen*, p. 95.

³¹⁰ Acomb, *Closen*, p. 96, Cromot du Bourg, "Diary," p. 301, and Bodinier, *Dictionnaire*, p. 241. Hartmann's riderless horse galloped back toward the French lines and was shot moments later when a sentry received no answer to his call. Lieutenant-Colonel Etienne Hugau of the Legion accused one of his own officers, Major Jean Ladislas Pollerescky, of having fleeced the corpse of their dead comrade and of stealing Hartmann's possessions. See Massoni, *Détails*, p. 75. On Pollerescky, who was forced to resign from the Legion by his fellow officers in the spring of 1782, see Joseph Cincik, "Major John L. Pollerecký fought for America's Independence" *Slovakia* (September/December 1957), pp. 83-87, and George J. Krajsa, "Major Jan L. Polerecky: An Officer of Slovak Heritage in the American Revolution" *Jednota Annual Furdek* Vol. 18 (1979), pp. 223-232. Pollerescky's services as told in these articles is pure fantasy.



At daybreak on the 18th, Washington, Presle du Portail, Washington's French-born chief engineer, Rochambeau, Quarter-Master General de Beville and his chief engineer Desandrouins, accompanied by 100 dragoons, crossed the North River to reconnoiter the west side of Staten Island but returned at night. Following their return from the Jersey shore, Rochambeau, who did not favor an attack on New York, probed Washington one last time for a "plan définitif" before the long-delayed reconnaissance began.³¹¹ Following the pattern established at Hartford and at Wethersfield, he posed Washington on July 19 a series of written questions. When he asked whether preparations for a march southward should not be made, Washington responded that unless certain conditions were met, "the enterprise against New York and its environs has to be our principal object."³¹²

³¹¹ Acomb, *Closen*, p. 96. See also Washington, *Diaries*, Vol. 2, p. 237-239, where he indicates that 150 mounted troops accompanied them, and Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 35, note 44.

³¹² For a full discussion of Franco-American strategy in July and August 1781 see below.

At last the stage was set for the "Grand Reconnaissance."³¹³ By 7:00 p.m. on July 21, Rochambeau's First Brigade as well as the grenadiers and chasseurs of the Second, some 2,200 men plus their 175 or so officers, assembled for a night march, and were on their way by 8:00 p.m. So were about 2,000 Americans under Major Generals Lincoln and Howe, who formed the right column, marching, in modern terms, roughly by the Saw Mill River Road. On their right flank marched Connecticut troops under Major General Samuel Holden Parsons and 25 of Sheldon's dragoons. The center column was lead by a battalion of French grenadiers and chasseurs with four artillery pieces marching down Sprain Brook Parkway to Central Park Avenue. Behind them came the First Brigade with four artillery pieces and two 12-pounders. Washington and Rochambeau were both in this column. The left column, commanded by Chastellux and composed of the grenadier and chasseur companies of the Second Brigade and Lauzun's Legion, marched with its four artillery pieces down the Bronx River parallel on SR 22 (the old east Chester Road) to Tuckahoe Road. Rather than turn left at Hunt's Bridge to cross the Bronx and continue on to Williams Bridge, Chastellux turned right and joined the other two columns at the place of rendezvous on Valentine Hill, eight miles from the encampment in Philipsburg and four miles from Kingsbridge. The Legion was quickly rerouted.³¹⁴ (SITE 15)

It was already 1:00 a.m.³¹⁵ on the 22nd, a Sunday, when Valentine Hill was reached. Andrew Corsa of Fordham, age 89, one of the guides who led Rochambeau and Washington, provided this eyewitness account on October 7, 1848. "In July 1781, I was up for several days at general Washington's headquarters at Appleby's in order to reclaim a horse which had been taken from me. - I became acquainted with many of the American guides. Soon after the French and American armies came down to reconnoitre. Cornelius Oakley and Isaac Webbers then came for me on a Sunday morning to accompany them in the capacity of a guide to Morrisania, and I went."³¹⁶ We found Generals Washington and Rochambeau and the Duke de Lauzun waiting for us, opposite the gate that now leads to Dr. Powell's at Fordham. In conducting the force to Morrisania we followed the old road along the Bronx till we came to Graham's point and then turned to the right and advanced to Morrisania."³¹⁷ (SITE 16) "The moment we approached upon the Ridge or high ground," around 5:00 a.m., according to Clermont-Crèveccœur, "the British batteries opened upon us from Randall's Island, Snake Hill, Harlem and from the ships of war. We (the guides) stopped at the Ridge, not liking the cannonade, which

³¹³ The Great Reconnaissance is described frequently; e.g., by Berthier in Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, pp. 251-253, Clermont-Crèveccœur in *ibid.*, pp. 36-38, by Baron Closen in Acomb, *Closen*, pp. 97-102, and by the comte de Laubardière in his *Journal* fols. 77-84. Rochambeau's report is printed in Doniol, *Histoire*, Vol. 5, pp. 518-19. See also Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 36, note 45. On the American side see Washington's instructions printed in Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 22, pp. 370-372, and his account in *Diaries*, Vol. 2, pp. 241-245. A brief account can be found in Hufeland, *Westchester County*, p. 400 and in Ultan, *Legacy of the Revolution*, pp. 53-54, with a list of primary sources. For British accounts see especially Mackenzie, *Diary*, Vol. 2, p. 570, and *John Peebles' American War. The Diary of a Scottish Grenadier, 1776-1782*. Ira D. Gruber, ed., (New York, 1998), pp. 460-461.

³¹⁴ Hufeland, *Westchester County*, pp. 397-398.

³¹⁵ Berthier in Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 251.

³¹⁶ The six main American guides John Odell, Cornelius Oakley, Abraham Dyckman, Michael Dyckman, Isaac or Uck Odell, cousin of John, and John Pine received the pay of captains. See "Andrew Corsa" *The Quarterly Bulletin of the Westchester County Historical Society* Vol. 8 No. 2, (April 1932), pp. 55-58.

³¹⁷ I am grateful to Drs. Allan Gilbert, Associate professor of Anthropology, and Roger Wines, Professor of History at Fordham University, for pointing this site out to me and for providing the information attached to the site form.

was very furious, but Washington and the French commanders moved forward as though nothing had occurred. We returned in the afternoon and the army encamped for the night near my father's I think, but am not certain, a little north of our house.³¹⁸ The next day (Monday, July 23) we went down again but this time advanced no further than the Mill. Both times we returned in a pretty direct line across the fields of Fordham. The last time the army (as I heard) encamped for the night somewhere towards Valentine's Hill."

A few days later, on October 19, Corsa added that "It was just before sunrise on Sunday the 22d. of July 1781 that I was awakened in my bed (in my father's house where the Roman Catholic College now stands,³¹⁹) by the guides Cornelius and John (*Isaac* written above John) Oakley and James Williams, and requested to accompany the combined French and American armies as a guide to Morrisania." This I had agreed to do when I was up at Appleby's, General Washington's Headquarters some days previously. I dressed in haste and followed the Oakley's and Webbers to where a gate led to an adjacent farm house. This very spot is now designated by the gate which conducts to Dr. Powell's house and buildings. Here we found Washington, Rochambeau, the Duke of the French horse and other officers setting abreast on horseback and facing the the (sic) highway. General Washington spoke kindly and directed them to furnish me with a horse.

The guides enquired if there were any Refugees in the neighbourhood. I told them of two, vizt: Sergeant Hilliard and James Travis* (*there is a star behind the name and in the margins is written: "Sometimes written Travers.) who were to be found on the route we should take to West Farms, but added that Hilliard must be surprised before he got on horseback, for if once in his saddle they would not overtake him. They were very anxious to capture Hilliard and his horse, and asked and obtained permission." The chase ended with Hilliard getting away and Washington and Rochambeau continued their route toward West Farms past Major Bearmore's old headquarters and onto "the Fordham road leading to Delancy's Mills" past the homes of Cornelius Leggett Robert Hunt into West Farms Village. "About a mile and a half or so below Delancy's bridge ... we turned west and arrived at a spot which commanded a full view of part of Long Island Sound." Next they retraced there steps about half a mile and followed the road to Morrisania coming

³¹⁸ Washington's troops camped some three miles south of Corsa's home in Van Cortland Park.

³¹⁹ i.e., St. Joseph Seminary on Seminary Ave/Valentine Street near Tibbett's Brook Park. See Samuel B. Hawley, "General Washington's Headquarters on Valentine's Hill, Yonkers." *The Quarterly Bulletin of the Westchester County Historical Society* Vol. 7 No. 1, (January 1931), p. 33; the picture of the marker attached to the site form is reproduced *ibid.*, No. 4, p. 117.

See also the article by Dudley F. Valentine, a great-great-grandson of Thomas, "Valentine Hill." *The Quarterly Bulletin of the Westchester County Historical Society* Vol. 5 No. 4, (October 1929), pp. 97-99.

I could not locate this marker from the New York State website:

CAMPING GROUND

FOR AMERICAN AND BRITISH
FORCES DURING THE REVOLUTION.
WASHINGTON USED NEARBY
VALENTINE HOMESTEAD FOR
HEADQUARTERS FREQUENTLY.

Location: SEMINARY AVE.& MILE SQUARE RD.

from the East by Governor Morris' house. "The moment we attained these grounds and came in sight of the enemy, the British opened fire upon us from their Forts at Montresors Island, Harlem, and Snake Hill and from their vessels of war at anchor in Harlem river. The fire was very heavy and was renewed when we approached Mill Brook."

Baron Closen, who accompanied Rochambeau, recorded that while Lauzun's Legion veered east to Williamsbridge at Valentine's Hill, the rest marched on to Kingsbridge close to the destroyed Ft. Independence on Tedard's Hill, just east of Kingsbridge. In the afternoon, Washington and Rochambeau took a closer look at Morrisania.³²⁰ That night the French troops encamped between the ruins of Fort Independence (**SITE 17**) along Giles Place in the Bronx and the Bronx River. The center of their camp was located on the summit of Gun Hill at the intersection of Gun Hill Road and Bainbridge Avenue.³²¹ It was 9:00 p.m. when Rochambeau and his aides finally had a quick dinner in "a wretched house" before they settled down to sleep, "clad as we were, on the ground."³²² The "wretched house" was the home of Isaac Valentine, today's Valentine-Varian House on Bainbridge Avenue and 208th Street.³²³ (**SITE 18**)

It was but 4:00 a.m. on the 23rd when the aides were in the saddle again and "went to call for General Washington." By 6:00 a.m. the two generals set out for Frog's Neck and the second day's reconnaissance. Just where Rochambeau's aides "went to call for" Washington, i.e., where he had spent the night, is unclear. In a letter of 2 September 2000 to me, Mr. Ultan wrote: "Washington stayed with his troops, encamped along the ridge that forms the Riverdale neighborhood today, and in Van Cortlandt Park. He slept in the Van Cortlandt House."³²⁴ (**SITES 19 and 20**) Some time during the 1960s there was indeed a plaque³²⁵ placed in front of the Van Cortlandt House with this inscription:

³²⁰ The northern end of Manhattan Island was fortified by a line of eight redoubts, beginning with No. 1 on Spuyten Duyvill Hill to No. 8 on University Heights. Forts 1, 2, and 3 on Spuyten Duyvill Hill overlooking the Kings Bridge and into upper Manhattan and Fort Washington were already abandoned. There is still a good view from Fort No. 1, Henry Hudson park. Fort No. 2 also still exists, unoccupied (for now) but surrounded by private homes. The site of No. 3 is occupied by private homes. Fort No. 4 on Kingsbridge Heights is protected by a NYC park. Forts 5, 6, and 7, were also abandoned already in 1781. Only No. 8 was operational and occupied by British troops at the time of the Grand Reconnaissance.

³²¹ This marker listed on www.nysm.nysed.gov/srv/largemarkers/index.html could not be found. It reads:

FORT INDEPENDENCE
ONE OF FORTS BUILT IN 1776
BY AMERICANS TO COMMAND THE
VALLEY BELOW. GENERAL
RICHARD MONTGOMERY HAD A
FARM NEARBY, IN 1772.

Location: CLAFLIN TERRACE ON WALK EAST OF RESERVOIR OPPOSITE FORT INDEPENDENCE AVE.

³²² Acomb, *Closen*, p. 100.

³²³ The history of the Valentine-Varian house is described in loving detail in Lloyd Ultan, *Legacy of the Revolution. The Valentine-Varian House*. (New York, 1983).

³²⁴ I am grateful to Mr. Lloyd Ultan, The Bronx Borough Historian, for this advice. In a phone conversation on 4 May 2001, Mr. Ultan confirmed this information though he could not provide proof just then. Since it is beyond any doubt that the Continental Army camped in the vicinity of the Van Cortlandt House that

VAN CORTLANDT MANSION
BUILT IN 1748 BY FREDERICK VAN CORTLANDT.
HESSIAN HEADQUARTERS IN REVOLUTION.
WASHINGTON AND ROCHAMBEAU WERE HERE.

Mr Judd Levin, who has spent years trying to locate Washington during the night of 22-23 July 1781, and who generously shared his research files with me, has collected an extensive a collection of primary and secondary sources on this subject, but none of them place Washington at Van Cortlandt on July 22. Neither do any of the unpublished sources I have used. This, of course does not mean that he did not spend the night there, and it would have made perfect sense for him to be as close to his troops as possible, but until additional information comes to light the question needs to be left open.

By nightfall the reconnaissance was over and the camp at Philipsburg was reached around midnight. Having lost but a single man, a dragoon of Washington's bodyguard,³²⁶ Washington and Rochambeau had achieved their objective.³²⁷ Closen's comment: "I admire the American troops tremendously! It is incredible that soldiers composed of men of every age, even of children of fifteen, of whites and blacks, almost naked, unpaid, and rather poorly fed, can march so well and withstand fire so steadfastly."

But Closen told only part of the truth. Lauzun's men together with Waterbury's Connecticut State Troops had orders to "scour the Necks of Morrisania and Frogs" for Refugees, and scour they did! Encouraged by the bad example set by American troops,³²⁸ French troops, especially Lauzun's hussars, engaged in disreputable practices. Brissot de Barneville recorded that the house of de Lancey, "where no one but his mistress was at home at the time, was pillaged as well as several other houses around Morrisania, especially by the mounted troops," i.e., the hussars.³²⁹ The Abbe Robin reported how "These Americans, so soft, so pacific and benevolent by nature, are here transformed into monsters, implacable, bloody and ravenous."³³⁰ Blanchard accused his fellow countrymen of "having pillaged a great deal and committed some disorders of which, up

night, and since it would be perfectly logical for Washington to have stayed at the house, I have decided to include it as a site in this report.

³²⁵ The plaque inscription and location is again taken from *Historical Area Markers of New York State* (New York, 1970) listed on the web under www.nysm.nysed.gov/srv/largemarkers/index.html. It could not be located during a visit to the mansion. I am grateful to Ms Laura Correa, Director of the Van Cortlandt House Museum, for her kind assistance during my visit there.

³²⁶ Clermont-Crèvecoeur in Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 37

³²⁷ The only casualty on the French side seems to have been the horse of comte de Damas, which was shot under him by a cannon ball as he tried to ford a stream. William Derbyshire, born 1770, of Philipsburg, who lived in British-occupied New York on July 22, 1781, was watching Washington and Rochambeau when "a French officer's horse was shot. The officer, dismounting in the water, coolly took off the saddle, bridle, and holster and waded back, all the time under fire." McDonald Papers Vol. 6, p. 997, and Acomb, Closen, p. 100. There could easily have been another casualty in the person of Baron Closen who lost his hat during that same encounter with Refugees near Morrisania in the afternoon of July 22 and retrieved it under a hail of bullets. Acomb, *Closen*, pp. 99-100.

³²⁸ Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 22, pp. 416-17.

³²⁹ Barneville, "Journal," p. 268.

³³⁰ Gallatin, "Garde-Suisse," p. 681.

to this time, there had not been the least example."³³¹ Gaspard de Gallatin thought the Legion guilty of "a rapine and a pillage ordinary in troops not restrained by severe discipline."³³² The comte de Charlus, in command of the Second Battalion of grenadiers and chasseurs stationed at DeLancey's Mill to maintain contact with Lauzun's Legion at Williamsbridge, wrote his father: "The American army set a cruel example for our grenadiers; if I had not had a hundred blows with the flat of the sabre meted out in my battalion, if I had not placed sentinels every twenty-five paces and had the roll called every half-hour, I don't think I could have managed. ... I had no idea war was waged this way. The English have unfortunately adopted it and the Americans make reprisals; but we hope by the force of our discipline to prevent it from happening with us."³³³

With the Grand Reconnaissance over, activities in the Franco-American camp quieted down considerably; both armies confined themselves to foraging, reconnaissance, and to gathering supplies. "These foraging expeditions," so Berthier, covered an area between the camp and Long Island Sound extending from Rye, Mamaroneck, east Chester, and Chester to a point as close as possible to King's Bridge (... and) were always supported by a detachment of 1,500 men and a troops of hussars."³³⁴ Much of the bread consumed at Philipsburg came from ovens at Sands Mills and from those in the camp. Quoting Robert Bolton's *The history of the several towns, manors, and patents of the county of Westchester, from its first settlement to the present time* (New York, C.F. Roper, 1881) LeViness wrote that on "the fields east of the Odell house the remains of seven huge ovens used by Rochambeau's men while encamped there could clearly be discerned. These were about six feet long and two and one-half feet wide, built mostly underground and made of cobblestone. They were destroyed when the Sunningdale golf course was laid out."³³⁵ But much bread was still transported overland from Hartford, and most of the cattle slaughtered at Philipsburg came from Connecticut as well: between July 5 and August 11, the Champion brother alone delivered 927 oxen and 356 sheep to Philipsburg!³³⁶ John Tompkins remembered that "They slaughtered their cattle at a place between our house and the road in front, near which, and close to, the lane which now leads from our house to the road they built a round house of stone which has recently been removed by me. I don't know for what purpose they used it." The "round house" may have been a storage house for some of the grain, flour, and even hay for the cattle shipped from Connecticut as well.³³⁷ Mostly, however, they were waiting as to what their leadership would decide when the attack on New York would begin.

³³¹ Blanchard, *Guerre*, p. 84; Deux-Ponts, Cromot du Bourg, and Lauberdière all report similar incidents.

³³² Quoted in Kennett, *French Forces*, p. 120.

³³³ Charlus letter of 29 July 1781 as quoted in Kennett, *French Forces*, p. 120.

³³⁴ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 249. For other examples of such foraging expeditions in force see Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 38, note 52.

³³⁵ J. Leonard LeViness, "Hartsdale in the Revolution." *The Westchester Historian* Vol. 47 No. 3, (Summer 1971), pp. 65-68, p. 68.

³³⁶ Chester M. Destler, *Connecticut: The Provisions State*. (Chester, 1973), p. 55.

³³⁷ For a bill of loading kindly provided by Eugene Frechette of Plainfield, CT, see the attached photocopy. The copies of bills of exchange drawn on the French forces were found in the microfilm edition of the Papers of Henry Knox, reel 6.

SHIPPED by the Grace of GOD, in good Order and Condition, by *Col. James*
Madewell unto *the Company of Adventurers*
in and upon the good Ship called the *Hats* whereof *John Hall* is Master, under GOD,
for this present Voyage, and now riding at Anchor in the Port of *London*
and by GOD'S Grace bound for *the West Indies*
to *be laden* with *seven hundred & eighty eight bushels of Rye and four*
hundred and twenty three bushels of Indian Corn

The Property of her Most Christian Majesty
and of her Duchy

788 Rye
423 Corn

Shipp'd by Col. Madewell
unto the Company of Adventurers
at the Port of London

being mark'd and number'd as in the Margin, and are to be delivered in like good Order and Condition,
at the aforesaid Port of *London* (the Danger of the Seas and Enemy excepted)
unto *John Carter* or his Assigns, or to *his Assigns*, he or they paying Freight for the said Goods and Customary

In Witness whereof the Master or Putter of the said Ship hath affirmed to 3 Bills of Lading, all of
this Tenor or Date, the one of which, if 2 Bills be accomplished, the other 2 to stand void. And
so GOD send the good Ship to her desired Port in safety. AMEN. Dated in *London*
August 2 1781

John Hall

N^o. 85.
SECONDE.

1787

Escadre commandée par M. le Comte de BARRAS.

VI-17

A Newport le 2 juillet 1787, pour la somme de 22600⁰⁰ tournois.

Monsieur

(1768)

à trente jours de vue, il vous plaira payer sur cette seconde de change, la première, troisième & quatrième ne l'étant, à M^r Jonathan Mather ou ordre, la somme de deux mille six cent livres tournois valeur reçue dudit sieur en Fournitures & Remplacemens faits à l'Escadre du Roi commandée par M. le Comte de BARRAS, pendant la relâche qu'elle a fait à Newport ainsi qu'il est constaté par les Marchés, États & Reçus, signés & visés de qui de droit; & déposés entre les mains de

Vu

Barras

A Monsieur
Monsieur BOUTIN, Trésorier
général de la Marine.
A PARIS.

Votre très-humble & très-obéissant
serviteur *de la Roche* Major de l'Escadre.

1784
Guerre Département d'Amélie Pour 2560

Exercice 1781

N. 1193

A Newtown le 29 juin 1781

Commissaire
Jan n. 181
Dunlop

Monsieur vous eûtes trois mille sept cent cinquante livres
à M^{rs} Wadsworth et Caraco
ou Ordre la somme de deux mille cinq cents cinquante livres
Valeur reçue de M^{rs} Wadsworth et Caraco
de la quelle je vous rendrai compte sur les dépenses de la Guerre
de ce Département en m'y remettant la présente acquittée
Pour la dite somme de deux mille cinq cents cinquante livres

par tromme
Paulus

A Monsieur
Monsieur de Serilly
Trésorier Payeur Général des
Dépenses de la Guerre.
Paris

Je prie M
Trésorier de la Guerre à
d'acquiescer la Présente.

NEW YORK OR THE CHESAPEAKE ? FRANCO-AMERICAN STRATEGY IN THE SUMMER OF 1781

9.1 The Conference at Wethersfield

Reviewing the results of the Grand Reconnaissance, Lauberdière noted in his *Journal* that given the size of the garrison, estimated at 16,000 by the young comte, the strength of the fortifications, the necessity of naval superiority, and the weakness of the combined Franco-American army, "should all have made the Americans and their commanding officer turn away from the idea of a siege." But the decision was not Lauberdière's to make. He would have to wait with Washington and Rochambeau for news from Admiral de Grasse. Both men were aware that without additional troops, American or French, and at least temporary naval superiority, any attack on New York was doomed to fail. The combined strength of their armies outside New York was less than 10,000 men and there was little hope of additional American troops joining that late in the campaign. Arrayed against them were a wide variety of British, German, and American regular and irregular units in and around the city. As the summer was slipping away without a word from de Grasse, Washington was getting nervous. On 26 July, 41-year-old Colonel Jonathan Trumbull Jr., Washington's private secretary, wrote to his father, the governor of Connecticut: "The Genl is exceedingly anxious & finds himself in a most perplexing & ridiculous scituation, not being able to determine on any fixed plan of operation, from the uncertainty of his expectations & prospects. I wish the states would reflect that the first of August is already nearly come, & not one encouragement made by them yet fulfilled."³³⁸ But "[B]etween the 12th and 18th" of August, so Trumbull, the "Plan of Operation was totally changed."³³⁹ Why? What was the *old*, and what was the *new*, plan of operations?

After months of disappointment, everything started to fall into place for the Franco-American alliance in the summer of 1781, so much so that even some contemporaries suspected a grandiose plan to have brought about the decisive victory at Yorktown later that year. Frequently, and for obvious reasons, it has been assumed that the campaign was planned at Wethersfield in May 1781. Cast in bronze the claim is even made on a plaque at the entrance to the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford. In this interpretation the six-week sojourn of the Franco-American army before New York in July and August of 1781, was but part of an intricate scheme to deceive Sir Henry Clinton into thinking that he was the target of attack but that it was really Cornwallis that Washington and Rochambeau were after all along. The two generals never intended to attack New York, so the story goes, but were marking time until the arrival of de Grasse from the West Indies. The massing of French and American troops before New York was but Phase One in a two-phase plan agreed upon at Wethersfield that would take the allies to Yorktown. The plan was so secret that only Rochambeau, Washington, and de Grasse knew about it.

³³⁸ *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Fifth Series* Vol. 10, (Boston, 1888), pp. 256-257. Washington had offered Trumbull the position as private secretary to succeed Alexander Hamilton on April 16, 1781, and written to Trumbull on that occasion that he would be in his "highest confidence and estimation from the nature of the office." The appointment is announced in General Army Orders of June 8.

³³⁹ "Minutes of Occurrences respecting the Seige and Capture of York in Virginia, extracted from the Journal of Colonel Jonathan Trumbull, Secretary to the General, 1781." *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* Vol. 14, (April 1876), pp. 331-228, p. 331. The "Minutes" begin with August 12, 1781. Jonathan's letters to his father, the governor, contain little information for our study. A number of them can be found in the *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Seventh Series* Vol. 3, (Boston, 1902).

"Thus," so American historian Lee Kennett, "it would seem, was a legend born."³⁴⁰ And like so many legends, this one too refuses to die, even though, attractive as may be to contemporaries already, the theory does not hold up in the light of events. At Wethersfield, Washington had urged an attack on New York, and Rochambeau, though never in favor of such a plan, agreed to march his troops to White Plains. The decision to abandon the siege of New York and to march south was forced upon Washington on August 14, 1781, when de Grasse's letter of March 28 reached Rochambeau, informing him that he was sailing for the Chesapeake. When Rochambeau told the American general that he would march to Virginia, Washington had no choice but to go along.

What then were the parameters within which Washington and Rochambeau had to work in May of 1781? They had but two options: 1) a siege of New York that would hopefully culminate in a successful attack on the center of British power in America, and 2) a march to the south to destroy Cornwallis' regiments, thereby liberating the southern colonies from a British occupation that had begun with the conquest of Savannah by British troops under Sir Henry Clinton in December 1778. Sir Henry Clinton in New York was as aware of these options as was everyone else. The wildcards in either plan were Lord Cornwallis, who was marching almost at will across the southern states, and de Grasse, upon whose cooperation the success of either operation depended. But de Grasse stood neither under Washington's nor under Rochambeau's command, and the time of his arrival was as uncertain as a guess as to where Cornwallis might be at any given moment. The question was: which one of these two options would be pursued?

Ever since the arrival of his son in Boston on May 6, 1781, Rochambeau had known what his resources for the summer campaign would be. He was free to draw up his own plans, possibly in cooperation with de Grasse, who he knew was on his way to the Caribbean and might be able to provide naval support in North American waters. But here already is the first problem with the *secret plan*. Ségur had ordered Rochambeau NOT to inform Washington of the arrival of a naval force off the North American coast in July or August.³⁴¹ De Grasse's cooperation was crucial for the success of any plan, but unless Rochambeau lied in his letter to Ségur of June 1, he did not tell Washington, who could not let on that he knew about de Grasse after all, though not from Rochambeau!³⁴²

Once he had heard about the arrival of Admiral Jacques Melchior, comte de Barras, the replacement for the deceased Admiral de Ternay, and the vicomte, Washington was anxious to meet with Rochambeau. Rather than in Hartford, bustling with legislators assembled for their annual meeting, Washington suggested the village of Wethersfield a few miles south of the Connecticut capital. The day was to be May 21,³⁴³ but just as Rochambeau was about to leave, British vessels appeared off of Newport and forced

³⁴⁰ Kennett, *French Forces*, p. 107.

³⁴¹ Rochambeau's instructions from the marquis de Ségur, Minister of War, of March 9, 1781, and from the marquis de Castries, the Naval Minister, of March 21, are printed in Doniol, *Histoire*, Vol. 5, pp. 466-470. The other item in the instructions he was to keep secret from Washington was that in case the American army would disintegrate Rochambeau should prepare to evacuate to the Antilles or to Santo Domingo. On the other hand, the 1781 instructions firmly placed Rochambeau's troops under Washington's command.

³⁴² Vergennes to La Luzerne, 9 March 1781, quoted in Dull, *French Navy*, p. 239, and Rochambeau to Ségur of 1 June 1781 in Doniol, *Histoire*, Vol. 5, pp. 480/481.

³⁴³ Washington, *Diaries*, Vol. 2, p. 213.

Barras to remain behind. Since he wanted to have a general officer who spoke English with him, Rochambeau asked the chevalier de Chastellux to accompany him.

Few French or American eyewitness accounts of the Wethersfield Conference have survived. None of Rochambeau's seven aides who left diaries, journals, or letters -- his son,³⁴⁴ Baron Closen,³⁴⁵ Axel von Fersen,³⁴⁶ Mathieu Dumas,³⁴⁷ Cromot du Bourg,³⁴⁸ the marquis du Bouchet,³⁴⁹ and the comte de Lauberdière³⁵⁰ -- mention Wethersfield on their itineraries. Though it is unthinkable that the two generals rode to Wethersfield alone, we do not know who their aides were at the conference.³⁵¹ On the American side, the papers of Washington's private secretary Alexander Hamilton contain no information on the conference,³⁵² neither do the papers of Henry Knox,³⁵³ while the papers of Brigadier Louis le Bègue Duportail do not seem to have survived.³⁵⁴ We are primarily dependent upon the diary of Washington as far as the conference is concerned. It states: "22^d (Tuesday). Fixed with Count de Rochambeau upon plan of Campaign."³⁵⁵

In celebration of the event, Washington, Rochambeau, Trumbull and Wadsworth had dinner that night at Stillman's Tavern (no longer standing), and the next day, "23^d Count de Rochambeau set out on his return to Newport, while I prepared and forwarded dispatches to the Governors of the four New England States calling upon them in earnest and pointed terms, to compleat their Continental Battalions for the Campaign."³⁵⁶

But what was the plan of campaign? Similar to the proceedings at Hartford the previous September, Rochambeau wrote his questions in column form on the left-hand side of a sheet of paper. Once they had been discussed, Washington wrote his answers in a column on the right-hand side of the page to be translated by Chastellux.³⁵⁷ In response to Rochambeau's queries, Washington, for political and military reasons, was pushing, as he had for the past year, for an attack on New York which, he argued, would have the added advantage of forcing Clinton to transfer troops from Cornwallis's army, thereby "creating a diversion," in the parlance of the times, for Lafayette.³⁵⁸ But Washington, who had been told that Ségur's instructions placed the French troops under his command, left no doubt that his primary objective was New York. "It is General Washington's opinion

³⁴⁴ See Rochambeau, *Journal*, pp. 218/19.

³⁴⁵ See Acomb, *Closen*, p. 79.

³⁴⁶ See Fersen's letter of 3 June 1781, in his *Lettres*, p.117.

³⁴⁷ See Dumas, *Memoirs*, pp. 50/51.

³⁴⁸ Cromot du Bourg, "Diary," pp. 211/12.

³⁴⁹ See du Bouchet's *Journal*, esp. pp. 212/13.

³⁵⁰ Lauberdière, *Journal*, p. 50.

³⁵¹ Chastellux does not comment on the conference in his *Travels*.

³⁵² See *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton* Harold C. Syrett, ed., (New York, 1961), Vol. 2, pp. 640-647.

³⁵³ The Knox Papers contain a single letter from Wethersfield dated 20 May 1781, in which Knox informed his wife of his safe arrival.

³⁵⁴ I have been unable to locate a body of primary source material originating with Duportail.

³⁵⁵ Washington, *Diaries*, Vol. 2, p. 217.

³⁵⁶ Washington, *Diaries*, Vol. 2, p. 218. Washington's "Circular to the New England States of May 24, 1781, is printed in Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 22, pp. 109/11.

³⁵⁷ The original minutes of the conference survive in the Rochambeau papers in the Paul Mellon Collection at the University of Virginia. They are attached to this report as printed in Keim, *Rochambeau*, pp. 381-384. An abbreviated version in Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 22, pp. 105/06.

³⁵⁸ See GW to Rochambeau, April 8 and 10, in Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 21, pp. 435/36 and pp. 441/442.

that the plan of the campaign is for the French army to march from Newport toward the North River as soon as possible, and that consequently it will be advisable for the Count de Barras (agreeable to his instructions in that case provided) to seek the first favorable moment of removing the squadron under his command to Boston."³⁵⁹

Now that Washington had had his say, Rochambeau floated a different idea. "Should the squadron from the West Indies arrive in these seas, an event that will probably be announced by a frigate beforehand, what operations will General Washington have in view after a union of the French army with his own?"

If Rochambeau was trying to sound out Washington, the American did not play his game: Washington had known for weeks that de Grasse would be coming north. His source: the chevalier de Chastellux. From Newport on May 12 -- the vicomte had landed in Boston on May 6, Rochambeau had read the dispatches and written to Washington on the 8th, Washington received Rochambeau's letter concerning his instructions from Paris on the 13th -- and again from White's Tavern in Andover, Connecticut, on May 21, the night before the Wethersfield Conference, Chastellux had informed Washington of Ségur's secret instructions and of the possibility of de Grasse coming north.³⁶⁰ Knowing that Rochambeau was not sharing all his information (but keeping the secret to himself), Washington's reply confirmed what he had said earlier. In a table dated "Weatherfield, May 22, 1781" and compiled for the conference, he set the strength of the Continental Army at 10,700 men. After deductions for the various theatres of war, he estimated the strength of his troops at 8,250; he even thought it "probable" that 2,000 more would join "if New York shd. be the declared, or apparent object" of the attack. If Rochambeau was not totally honest with his American counterpart, Washington in turn knew that his numbers rested on creative book-keeping: 8,000 men was more than twice the number of men in winter quarters in May 1781! But if one added Rochambeau's 5,000 men and the 3,000 to 5,000 men that Washington hoped de Grasse would bring, to the 8,000 he claimed he would have available, and if one accepted the number of 7,500 regular and irregular troops in New York as presented at Wethersfield as realistic, the minimum 2:1 ratio of attacking vs defending forces required for any successful attack, was reached.³⁶¹

Washington, of course, accepted the premises of his proposal. He held it "advisable to form a junction of the French and American armies upon the North River as soon as possible, and move down to the vicinity of New York, to be ready to take advantage of any opportunity which the weakness of the enemy might afford. Should the West India fleet arrive upon the coast, the force thus combined may either proceed in the operations against New York or may be directed against the enemy in some other quarter, as

³⁵⁹ Washington pointed out correctly that the decision that Barras sail for Boston was not theirs: the order was included in Ségur's instructions to Rochambeau that Barras had brought earlier that month.

³⁶⁰ Chastellux presumably received his information from Rochambeau. His letters are in the Washington Papers in the Library of Congress and available at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gwhtml/gwhome.html>. Washington wisely decided not to show Chastellux' notes to Rochambeau.

³⁶¹ Washington's table is printed in Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 22, pp. 102-103. Clinton's effectives in early June numbered almost exactly 10,000. Sir Henry in turn estimated the combined Franco-American forces at 20,000. Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 22, p. 133, note 95. On June 2, Washington wrote Rochambeau this remarkable note that "my calculation was founded upon probability and not upon any assurances from the States that they would furnish the Men, I beg your Excellency will not consider that Estimate [as official] or definitive." Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 22, p. 154.

circumstances shall dictate. The great waste of men, which we have found from experience in the long marches to the southern States, the advanced season in which such a march must be commenced, and the difficulties and expense of land transportation thither, with other considerations too well known to Count de Rochambeau to need detailing, point out the preference which an operation against New York seems to have in the present circumstances over an attempt to send a force to the southward."

In his diary, he summarized Wethersfield in these words: "That the French Land force (except 200 Men) should March as soon as the Squadron could Sail for Boston -- to the North River -- and there, in conjunction with the American, to commence an operation against New York (which in the present reduced State of the Garrison it was thought would fall, unless relieved; the doing which wd. enfeeble their Southern operations, and in either case be productive of capital advantages) or to extend our views to the Southward as circumstances and a Naval superiority might render more necessary and eligible." Then follows a list of reasons such as "the insurmountable difficulty and expence of Land transportation -- the waste of Men in long Marches (especially where there is a disinclination to the service -- objections to the climate &ca)" that made an attack on New York preferable to any other objective for the campaign of 1781.³⁶²

Rochambeau's *Mémoire de la Guerre en Amérique*, written in November 1781 for transmittal to Versailles, too states that Washington considered New York his prime objective: "General Washington throughout this conference urged an offensive with the capture of New York as the principal objective. He thought that this one blow would cripple the English position in America. He could recall the various detachments that had been sent South, and he believed, along with the American harbor pilots, that the bar of the port was not impossible even for the largest ships.³⁶³ He considered an expedition to Chesapeake Bay as a secondary objective on which he did not want to waste resources when he was not sure that he had enough resources for his primary objective."³⁶⁴

In his *Memoirs* he wrote: "General Washington, during this conference, had scarcely another object in view but an expedition against the island of New York, and which he persisted in considering the most capable of striking a death-blow to British domination in America. He was aware of the enemy's forces having been thinned at this place by the detachments which had been drafted from its garrison, and sent to the south, ... He considered an expedition against Lord Cornwallis, in Chesapeak Bay, as quite a secondary object, to which there was no necessity of diverting our attention until we were quite certain of our inability to accomplish the former."³⁶⁵

³⁶² Washington, *Diaries*, Vol. 2, pp. 217/18. It is only natural that the issue of the war in the south should have been raised; almost weekly Washington was receiving desperate pleas for help from Virginia Governor Thomas Jefferson, but it is hard to read a decision to march to Virginia into these lines.

³⁶³ Rochambeau had pointed out that a French 64-gun-ship had a draught of 27 feet as opposed to 22 feet for a comparable British vessel. D'Estaing had made soundings in 1778, which were know to de Grasse. In 1778, American pilots had refused to guide the ships across the sandbars.

³⁶⁴ Claude C. Sturgill, ed., "Rochambeau's *Mémoire de la Guerre en Amérique*" *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* Vol. 78, (January 1970) pp. 34- 64, p. 51.

³⁶⁵ *Memoirs of the Marshal Count de Rochambeau relative to the War of Independence of the United States*. M.W.E.Wright, ed. and transl. (Paris, 1838), p. 45.

Dumas in his memoirs wrote: "Count de Rochambeau and Washington met on the 20th of May at Westerfield (sic), near Hartford, in Connecticut, to confer ... on the operations which it was most advisable to undertake, whether in the north, against New York, or in Virginia, against the army of Lord Cornwallis. General Washington thought that New York should be immediately attacked, by which a more decisive blow would be given to the English power. ... M. de Rochambeau, on the contrary, judged that it was better to operate in Chesapeake Bay, where the French fleet might act more promptly, and with greater facility."³⁶⁶ Rochambeau's nephew and aide-de-camp the comte de Lauberdière was even more emphatic in his *Journal*: "Le général n'avait d'autre objet en vue, n'avait d'autre desir que le siège de New York -- the general (i.e., Washington) had no other object in view, no other desire but the siege of New York."³⁶⁷ That was not what Rochambeau wanted, but in the spirit of Franco-American cooperation he promised his full cooperation once the decision to prepare for an attack on New York had been made.

New York was the prime object of the plan for the summer, had to be in May 1781. At the time of the conference, Washington did not even know where Cornwallis was! He had had no intelligence from the South since May 5, when he received a letter from Lafayette informing him that Cornwallis had marched from Wilmington on April 25 with about 1,500 men. On May 20, the day before the two generals sat down to discuss their options, Cornwallis had integrated the British forces in Virginia into his own near Petersburg, a fact not known in New Windsor until June 4. Based on a letter by Lafayette of June 3, Washington informed Rochambeau on June 13, that the British forces were somewhere between Richmond and Fredericksburg and "at full liberty to go wherever they pleased." No one could predict where Cornwallis would be in August or in September, and as long as Cornwallis remained far inland, de Grasse would not be able to help, no matter when, and with how many ships, he would appear in the Chesapeake!

Next Washington informed his friends in and out of Congress that New York had been selected as the target. Convinced that there were no more than 8,500 regulars and about 3,000 militias in the city, he informed the chevalier de la Luzerne, French minister to the United States, on May 23, 1781, "of the intended march of the French army towards the North River. ... I should be wanting in respect and confidence were I not to add, that our object is New York. The Season, the difficulty and experience of Land transportation, and the continual waste of men in every attempt to reinforce the Southern states, are almost insuperable objections to marching another from the Army on the North River."³⁶⁸

On the 27th he informed Congress that "Upon full consideration of Affairs in every point of view, an operation against New York has been deemed preferable to making further detachments to the southward."³⁶⁹ On the 28th he asked Henry Knox, his chief of artillery, and Duportail, his chief engineer, and Quarter-Master General Timothy Pickering "to give estimates of their wants for the intended operation against New York."³⁷⁰ Since both Knox and DuPortail had been at the Wethersfield Conference and, as he wrote in his May 28 notes to the two officers, "are perfectly acquainted with the

³⁶⁶ Dumas, *Memoirs*, Vol. 1, pp. 50/51.

³⁶⁷ Lauberdière, *Journal*, fol. 50.

³⁶⁸ Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 22, p. 103.

³⁶⁹ Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 22, p. 120.

³⁷⁰ Washington, *Diaries*, Vol. 2, p. 220.

measures which have been concerted with the Count de Rochambeau," such requests would have been nonsensical unless, of course, the three men were also in the dark!³⁷¹

On May 29, Washington wrote General John Sullivan a letter that contained a full discussion of the decisions taken at Wethersfield and thought the attack on New York "promised the fairest prospect of success."³⁷² Similarly he informed Lafayette, commanding officer in Virginia, on May 31, that "an attempt upon New York with its present Garrison (which by estimation is reduced to 4500 Troops and about 3000 irregulars) was deemed preferable to a Southern operation."³⁷³ And finally, he wrote to Nathaniel Greene in North Carolina on June 1, that at Wethersfield "it was determined to make an attempt upon New York."³⁷⁴ Surely he would have let his lieutenants in the south know if a move in their direction was in the offing!

If the theory that Washington had planned a march to Virginia at Wethersfield while pretending to lay siege to New York were true, Washington's actions between May 23 and May 31 would mean that he had in rapid succession lied, 1) to Congress, 2) to La Luzerne, 3) to Lafayette, 4) to Sullivan, 5) to Knox, 6) to Duportail, 7) to Pickering, and 8) to Greene, not to mention to himself in his diary! This hardly fits the image of a man who could not tell a lie. And that Rochambeau, in collaboration with Washington, played the game of deception as well with his staff, even though there was no need for it. Because Versailles would not have been Versailles if secrets could have been kept: on May 26, 1781, Washington recorded in his diary: "Received a letter from the Honble Jno. Laurens Minister from the United States of America at the Court of Versailles -- informing me ... that a Fleet of 20 Sail of the Line was on its departure for the West Indies 12 of which were to proceed to this Coast where it was probable they might arrive in the Month of July."³⁷⁵ The secret Rochambeau was trying to keep was confirmed.

More importantly, on 3 June 1781, thirteen letters, including all four of Washington letters -- to La Luzerne on May 23, to Congress on May 27, to Sullivan on May 29, and to Lafayette on May 31 -- were intercepted by Ensign John Moody, convincing Clinton that he was the target of the 1781 campaign.³⁷⁶ General James Robertson confirmed that Rochambeau had not been completely open with Washington: "Washington seems at the time of writing 31st of May to know nothing of any french reinforcements being on the sea to join him."³⁷⁷ But Clinton had more evidence. On May 27, Rochambeau had informed

³⁷¹ Washington to Knox in Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 22, p. 126, and to du Portail, *ibid.*, p. 127.

³⁷² Washington's letter is printed in *Writings*, Vol. 22, p. 132.

³⁷³ Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 22, p. 143.

³⁷⁴ Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 22, p. 146.

³⁷⁵ Washington, *Diaries*, Vol. 2, p. 220. Laurens' unpublished letter was dated March 24, two days after de Grasse had sailed from Brest. The letter is available <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gwhtml/gwhome.html>. The crucial section is written in cipher. "Upon the whole my expectations are very moderate - the naval dispositions were made before my arrival five ships of the line for the East Indies with troops -- twenty commanded by de Grasse for the W Indies -- twelve of which are to proceed to America they will probably arrive at our coast in July." The next line is in plain English again: "We have no news yet of their depart."

³⁷⁶ See General Robertson's letter to Lord Amherst of 12 June 1781 in *The Twilight of British Rule in Revolutionary America: The New York Letter Book of General James Robertson 1780-1783* Milton M. Klein and Ronald W. Howard, eds., (Cooperstown, 1983), p. 202-204. Washington's embarrassment became evident when he assured Rochambeau on June 3 that the enemy would get "no material information from my letters." They were not written to be intercepted. Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 22, p. 155.

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 203. Washington, of course, had to keep the secret.

La Luzerne via Washington of the decisions arrived at in the Wethersfield Conference. In this letter of May 27, from Newport, Rochambeau told la Luzerne that he had informed Washington of his instructions though he "suppressed the article concerning M. de Grasse because I was ordered to keep it to myself but I was obliged in the meantime to talk about the issue speculatively. . . . I also suppressed all articles concerning what to do in the case that his (i.e., Washington's) army disintegrated which I also could not lay before his eyes." Nevertheless, the time had come to "entreprendre sur New York," to try, or make an attempt, upon New York. As far as the conference at Wethersfield was concerned, Rochambeau simply included a copy of the proceedings, with his questions in the right-hand column and Washington's responses on the left.³⁷⁸

This note also fell into British hands on 3 June but had to be deciphered in London. By August 2, it was back, confirming Clinton's conviction that he would be attacked. There is still more. On 1 June, shortly after his return from Wethersfield, Chastellux, again behind Rochambeau's back, had written to La Luzerne indicating, so Closen, "that finally, despite M. de Rochambeau's ill humor with the help of M. du Portail, he had succeeded in persuading General Rochambeau to besiege New York."³⁷⁹ This letter was to be forwarded to Philadelphia via Washington's headquarters but intercepted as well on June 3 by Clinton's patrols. Clinton sent Rochambeau the original with a note "that he ought to be on guard against his associates."³⁸⁰ Rochambeau's *Mémoires*, which are often held up as proof for the secret plan theory, contain these sentences about the affair:

"But what completely deceived the English general, was a confidential letter written by the Chevalier de Chatellus to the French representative at Congress, where in he boasted of having artfully succeeded in bringing round my opinion to concur with that of General Washington; stating, at the same time, that the siege of the island of New York had been at length determined upon, and that our two armies were on the march for that city, and that orders had been sent on to M. de Grasse to come with his fleet and force his way over the bar of Sandyhook to the mouth of the harbour of New York.

The English officer who had charge of every branch of the spying department sent me a copy of the intercepted missive and, by so doing, his intention had not been most assuredly to set my wits at ease. I sent for the Chevalier de Chatellus; showed him the letter, and then threw it in the fire, and left him a prey to his own remorse. Of course, I did not endeavour to undeceive him, and, in the sequel, we shall see to what extent this general officer had been made the confidant of the real project which I proposed to the Count de Grasse when I returned to Newport."³⁸¹

³⁷⁸ The decoded message is catalogued in the Shelburne Papers in the Clements Library: "Shelburne 35/66: Rochambeau to Luzerne, May 27, 1781. Enclosing a report of the conference with deBarras and Washington at Weathersfield. 2 pp. Deciphered copy." And "Shelburne 35/66: The Weathersfield Conference, May 16-23, 1781. 8 pp. Deciphered copy." The decoded message is in French, the translation is mine.

³⁷⁹ Closen, *Journal*, p. 110.

³⁸⁰ The words are Clinton's as quoted by Closen. On 2 June 1781, Washington informed Rochambeau that his letter to La Luzerne would be forwarded at once as one of 13 letters. Clinton's copy of Chastellux' letter which is printed in Randolph G. Adams, *The Burned Letter of Chastellux* Franco-American Pamphlet Series 7 (New York, 1935). In it the chevalier talks about "the incredible ignorance of M. Rochambeau on everything which concerns this country" and described him as "a man who understands nothing."

³⁸¹ Rochambeau, *Memoirs*, p. 47.

Three points are important to note: 1) Chastellux, who had served as Rochambeau's translator at the conference and knew as well as anyone what had transpired, correctly reported the decision arrived at in Wethersfield: the preferred object of the campaign was the siege of New York. Clinton was "deceived," but only from hindsight because Chastellux himself did not know what Rochambeau had already suggested to de Grasse on May 28. And neither did Washington: Rochambeau's correspondence with de Grasse contradicts every piece of evidence emanating from Washington. 2) There is not one word about de Grasse sailing for New York, or anywhere else for that matter, in that letter though Chastellux knew about de Grasse, as his letters to Washington show.³⁸² If Rochambeau had told Chastellux of his secret instructions, which he would have been allowed to do, concerning de Grasse, he would also have told him that this was to be kept secret. Chastellux could count in Washington to not inform Rochambeau, but he did not know if La Luzerne knew. As it was, La Luzerne, who did know about de Grasse's instruction to sail north, but also withheld the information from Washington, was upset for more than one reason with what Chastellux had done. La Luzerne was a strong advocate of a southern strategy and on 20 May urged Barras and Rochambeau to adopt a southern strategy at the upcoming conference at Wethersfield rather than plan for an attack on New York.³⁸³ 3) Rochambeau wrote that he proposed "the real project" to de Grasse only after his return to Newport! His "real project was different from the one discussed at Wethersfield with Washington, du Portail, Knox, and Chastellux. On May 28, the very same day that Washington asked Knox, Du Portail, and Pickering "to give estimates of their wants for the intended operation against New York," Rochambeau wrote de Grasse a letter which suggested a very different strategy for the summer of 1781. This is the letter which, so Rochambeau's aide-de-camp the Baron von Closen, the general "had written to the minister (la Luzerne) by the same courier, where he told him the true *plan of the Chesapeake campaign* (sic) which had been sent to M. de Grasse by the *Concorde*, [which] could not be decoded."³⁸⁴ This passage too has been cited as evidence for a secret plan, but Closen is of course mistaken: Rochambeau's letter of May 27, to la Luzerne was, as we have seen, intercepted, decoded, and reported back to Clinton by August 2, 1781, leaving him plenty of time to adjust his plans if he had chosen to do so. Which he did not, and did not have to, because Rochambeau's letter talked about "entreprendre sur New York," to try, or make an attempt, upon New York.

9.2 The Washington-Rochambeau Correspondence with Admiral de Grasse

Born into an old noble family in southern France in 1722, de Grasse, the final member of the victorious triumvirate of 1781, had he entered the Naval Academy in Toulon at age 11 and spent his whole life on the oceans of the world. Returning to American waters in 1779, he commanded a squadron under comte d'Estaing at Grenada in July and was commanding officer of the French fleet in the Caribbean after d'Estaing had left for Europe following the aborted siege of Savannah. His health failing, the 58-year-old admiral sailed for France in late 1780 as well. His stay would be short. On March 22,

³⁸² This is one of numerous inconsistencies in Rochambeau's *Memoirs*, a reminder of how careful historians have to be when using personal memoirs as a historical source.

³⁸³ Dull, *French Navy*, p. 240.

³⁸⁴ Acomb, *Closen*, p. 111. Three days later, on 1 June, Rochambeau sent Ségur the same information. See Doniol, *Histoire*, Vol. 5, p. 481.

1781, Louis XV promoted de Grasse to Rear Admiral, and sent him back to the West Indies with 20 ships of the line, three frigates and 156 transport. Four days later, on 26 March, the comte de Barras sailed from France on the *Concorde* to replace Ternay had died on 15 December 1780.

On April 28, de Grasse's convoy, re-enforced by six ships of the line from Martinique, had arrived off the harbor of Port Royal on the island of Martinique. British Rear Admiral Samuel Hood was waiting for him, but in a stroke of that good fortune that would shine on the Franco-American alliance all year, Hood had but 18 ships against de Grasse's 26. Hood's superior, Admiral George Rodney had captured the Dutch island of St. Eustatius in February. A booty estimated at over £ 3.000.000, some 75 million livres, almost six times the 12.7 million livres France spent on Rochambeau's expedition! fell into British hands. Wanting to protect his loot, Rodney had withdrawn four of Hood's ships, giving de Grasse the superiority he needed to get his convoy safely into Port Royal on May 6. Following his conquest of Tobago on 2 June, de Grasse sailed for St. Domingo, where four more ships of the line joined his fleet on July 16. Now began the "most perfectly executed naval campaign of the age of sail."³⁸⁵ As de Grasse was sailing for St. Domingo, Rochambeau and Barras learned via a Martinique newspaper enclosed in a letter from Washington from New Windsor dated 7 June 1781 of the admiral's safe arrival off Port Royal. In the same letter, Washington pointed out a newspaper paragraph with the news "très extraordinaire:" five men of war and 42 transports had separated from de Grasse's convoy and were headed for Rhode Island.³⁸⁶

A closer look at these dates and the events of the next three days points out additional impossibilities in the *secret plan* theory. It was on June 7, two weeks after Wethersfield, that Rochambeau and Washington learned of de Grasse's arrival in the Caribbean via a newspaper account. Washington still did not know, at least not officially, for another three days, that de Grasse had instructions to co-operate with Rochambeau. There still had been no correspondence whatsoever between Port Royal and Newport and/or New Windsor. De Grasse was completely in the dark about Franco-American plans, and would be until July 16, when he finally received Rochambeau's letter of May 28! By that time the Franco-American army had been outside New York for 10 days already.

But did Rochambeau's letter of May 28 to de Grasse, contain "the real plan" for 1781, namely a march to the south rather than a joint enterprise against New York, and if so, did Washington know, and approve of, its contents?

On May 28, two days after his return to Newport, Rochambeau summed up for de Grasse the decisions arrived at in Wethersfield: "Il a requis ensuite la marche du corps français à la rivière du Nord, pour, conjointement avec son armée, menacer et peut-être attaquer New York, pour procurer une diversion aux États du Sud ... Then he asked for the march of the French forces to the North River to threaten, and maybe attack New York in cooperation with his army in order to create a diversion for the southern states" -- just what Washington had written in his diary.³⁸⁷

³⁸⁵ Dull, *French Navy*, p. 239.

³⁸⁶ Those were of course the 660 replacements which arrived in Boston on 11 June 1781.

³⁸⁷ Rochambeau's letter of 28 May 1781 is printed in Doniol, *Histoire*, Vol. 5, p. 475.

But in the same letter, Rochambeau also wrote these lines: "There are two points at which an offensive can be made against the enemy: Chesapeak and New York. The southwesterly winds and the state of defense in Virginia will probably make you prefer the Chesapeak Bay, and it will be there where we think you may be able to render the greatest service, whereas you will need only two days to come from there to New York. In any case it is essential that you send, well in advance, a frigate to inform de Barras where you are to come and also General Washington."

In a post-script to this letter, dated 31 May 1781, Rochambeau informed de Grasse that, contrary to his instructions from Ségur and the agreement arrived at in Wethersfield, it had been decided at a war council on board Barras's flagship that day that he would not sail for Boston with the siege artillery (stored at Providence), but remain in Newport.³⁸⁸ Next Rochambeau needed to inform Washington of this change of plans. This he did -- but only as far as Barras' fleet was concerned. Fearing that the American might be upset, the Council of War asked Lauzun to carry the news to New Windsor. Lauzun arrived in New Windsor in the evening of 3 June. It is doubtful that the news "put him in such a rage that he refused to answer it,"³⁸⁹ but Washington's response of 4 June did call for adherence "to the plan which was fixed at Weathersfield," i.e., "a serious menace against New York. This your Excellency may remember was a principal inducement for our undertaking that operation in preference to the other which was spoken of," namely a march to the South.³⁹⁰ In a separate letter to Admiral Barras he took "the liberty, still to recommend the measure of removing His Majesty's fleet to Boston, as a port more safe in all possible contingencies than Newport."³⁹¹ Rochambeau called another conference on *la Neptune* with Barras on June 8, but the council decided again that the fleet should stay in Newport rather than sail for Boston (as naval minister de Castries had ordered Barras to do upon Rochambeau's departure from Newport) but be ready to depart at short notice.³⁹²

Neither in his letter of May 28 nor in that of May 31 did Rochambeau mention what he had had written to de Grasse or that he written at all! Washington never saw that letter and did not hear of its contents until June 10.

³⁸⁸ The minutes of this conference are printed in Doniol, *Histoire*, Vol. 5, pp. 477-479. Once again he stressed the need of additional troops for the attack on New York. When due to contrary winds the *Concorde* had not yet left by June 6 (she would not leave until June 20), Rochambeau added another note and a *mémoire* from chief intendant de Tarlé of 4 June, in which he had informed Rochambeau that his funds would run out by 20 August, and that the funds expected in the convoy of replacements would run out by 20 October. Rochambeau asked de Grasse to try and borrow the 1.2 million livres suggested by Tarlé in Santo Domingo or Martinique. The correspondence is in Doniol, *Histoire*, Vol. 5, pp. 476-477.

³⁸⁹ Lauzun, *Memoirs*, p. 200. Lauzun blamed Chastellux for planting the idea in Barras's head. In the end it was Rochambeau who claimed credit for this change of plans.

³⁹⁰ Washington's letter to Rochambeau of 4 June 1781 is in Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 22, pp. 156-158.

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 158-159. It was Washington who wanted the French fleet in Boston, and to deduce from the results of the two councils of war in Newport that the decision to leave the siege artillery in Newport indicates that Washington never seriously contemplated an attack on New York is standing history on its head. A look at a map shows that the distance from Newport to Boston is more than three times as far by sea as it is by land. Transport by sea is usually faster than by land, but not in this case where prevailing winds and currents go opposite the intended direction. Ségur apparently had been unaware of this when he issued his instructions. In his November 1781 *Mémoire* Rochambeau argued that once the fleet and the artillery were in Boston, it would take a month to get them to New York - or anywhere else - a month he would not have once the siege began. Sturgill, *Mémoire*, p. 51. Rochambeau makes the same point in his *Memoirs*, p. 48. See also Kennett, *French Forces*, p. 106.

³⁹² The minutes of this second conference are printed in Doniol, *Histoire*, Vol. 5, pp. 484-486.

On June 10, almost 2 1/2 weeks after Wethersfield, Rochambeau laid his cards on the table, or so he thought. The *Sagittaire*, which had escorted the replacements to New England, had sailed into Boston with a letter from de Grasse to Rochambeau written on the high seas on 29 March 1781. This was the first correspondence from de Grasse to reach Rochambeau, the first firm news that de Grasse was really on his way, written eight weeks before the Wethersfield Conference. (It took seven weeks before de Grasse would even read Rochambeau's letter of May 28, with news of the conference on July 16.) De Grasse's letter of 29 March makes it clear that he knew nothing of a plan, open or secret, no matter how many phases, or where he was supposed to be at what time. De Grasse rather informed Rochambeau that he would be in Santo Domingo by the end of June and could be in American waters by July 15. But he needed to know campaign plans for 1781 and asked for American pilots.³⁹³ Admonishing Washington to keep this news absolutely secret, Rochambeau informed the American on June 10 of his letter of May 28 paraphrased his correspondence with de Grasse. After discussing the situation in Virginia, Rochambeau informed Washington that he had told de Grasse "that the only means which seems practicable to your Excellency is a diversion upon New York which you propose as soon as the circumstances will allow." But he also told Washington that he had suggested to de Grasse that "it would be a great stroke to go to Chesapeake Bay in which he can make great things against the naval force that will be there." He then asked for a quick response in case Washington wanted to send mail to de Grasse as well.³⁹⁴

The next day, June 11, Rochambeau thanked de Grasse for his letter of 29 March and informed him that since May 31, i.e., in 12 days, he had received "four letters from General Washington to speed up my march to the North River, which he considers militarily and politically under the current circumstances absolutely necessary and urgent. The second council of war which he had ordered, on the safety of the squadron, was held the 8th and I left on the 10th to come here where I am going to gather as many recruits as I can from the convoy, (with) the money, and leave in 5 or 6 days to go and join the General, and try by threatening New York with him to create a diversion for the benefit of Virginia. I do not need to hide from you, Monsieur, that these people here are at the end of their rope, that Washington does not have half the troupes that he counted on having, and that I believe, though he covers himself about that, that he currently has no 6,000 men, that M. de la Fayette has no 1,000 men regular troops and militias to defend Virginia, and ... that is therefore of the utmost importance that you take on board as many troops as you can, that 4 or 5 thousand men would not be too many, either to help us to destroy their establishment in Portsmouth in Virginia near Hampton Roads, where until now they have always kept 1,500 men while the others operate in the countryside, and all their flotillas with which they go out in the rivers to harass poor M. de Lafayette in a most unfortunate manner; or to force the Hook and to make yourself master of Sandy Hook with your land forces, which should enable your squadron to cross the sand

³⁹³ De Grasse's letter of 29 March 1781 is in Doniol, *Histoire*, Vol. 5, p. 488. That same day de Grasse wrote to to la Luzerne: "Comme je ne connais pas la position de l'armée française, ni celle des vaisseaux de M. de Ternay, je leur demande de m'instruire au Cap-Français, le plus promptement possible, de leurs vues et de leurs projets, et de m'envoyer des pilotes pratiques, pour qu'au moment de mon arrivée l'armée puisse opérer avec succès, tant par la surprise de mon apparition, que par les forces que je compte y conduire."

³⁹⁴ Rochambeau's letter to Washington of June 10, is printed in Doniol, *Histoire*, Vol. 5, p. 487. An English translation, which is quoted here, is printed in Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 22, p. 206, note 91. Here, as well as at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gwhtml/gwhome.html> the letter is wrongly dated as June 12.

bar; we are certain that the *Sandwich* in September and the *London* recently entered and left here, finally, to help us afterward to lay siege to Brooklyn, assuming that we would be able to establish ourselves with 8,000 men on this point of Long Island, and to keep 5 or 6 thousand on the River of the North to cut off King Bridge."

Washington's response, now that he knew *officially* what he had known privately for a month already, was to thank Rochambeau (tongue in cheek?) on June 13, for "the very interesting news ... which you can be certain I will keep very secret!" Next he reminded Rochambeau, and de Grasse, who was to receive a copy of the letter, of the decision of Wethersfield to join forces on the Hudson for an attack on New York and urged haste:

"I am so fully convinced that your Excellency will make no unnecessary delay in your march, that I have only occasion to repeat my former request, that it may be commenced as soon as circumstances will admit. My last accounts from the Marquis de la Fayette were of the 3d. of June. The British Army, in very considerable force, were then between Richmond and Fredericksburg; their destination was uncertain, but from their superiority they were at full liberty to go wherever they pleased. The inclosed Copy of a letter from the president of Congress to me will give your Excellency the latest intelligence from South Carolina.

Your requisitions to the Count De Grasse, go to every thing I could wish. You cannot, in my opinion, too strongly urge the necessity of bringing a Body of Troops with him, more especially, as I am very dubious whether our force can be drawn together by the time he proposes to be here. Now *4000* or *5000 Men* in addition to what we shall certainly have by that time, would almost beyond a doubt, enable us, with the assistance of the *Fleet* to carry our object. ... Your Excellency will be pleased to recollect that *New York* was looked upon by us as the only practicable object under present circumstances; but should we be able to secure a *naval superiority*, we may perhaps find others more practicable and equally advisable."

Then next sentences show that, though prepared to let de Grasse make the final decision, Washington would rather have him come to New York first and then to the Chesapeake in pursuit of a British fleet:

"If the *Frigate* should not have sailed, I wish you to explain this matter to the Count de Grasse, as, if I understand you, you have in your communication to him, confined our views to *New York* alone. And instead of advising him to run immediately into *Chesapeak*, will it not be best to leave him to judge, from the information he may from time to time receive of the situation of the *enemy's Fleet* upon this *Coast*, which will be the most advantageous quarter for him to make his *appearance* in. In the letter which was written to the Minister from Wethersfield, in which he was requested to urge the Count to come this way with his *whole Fleet*, *Sandy Hook* was mentioned as the most desirable point. Because, by coming suddenly there he would certainly *block* up any *fleet* which might be *within*; and he would even have a very good chance of *forcing* the *entrance* before dispositions could be made to *oppose* him. Should the *British Fleet* not be there, he could follow them to *Chesapeak*, which is always accessible to a superior force."³⁹⁵

³⁹⁵ Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 22, p. 208-209. Words in italics are in the French navy cipher in the original.

Knowing that the navy took neither orders from him nor from Rochambeau, Washington had left it up to de Grasse to decide where he would drop anchor: at Sandy Hook, where Washington wanted him to go, or in the Chesapeake, which Rochambeau seemed to prefer. On Monday, 18 June, Rochambeau set out for Hartford with the Bourbonnais, and on Wednesday, 20 June, the aptly named *Concorde*, which from now on would provide shuttle service from New England to de Grasse, sailed from Newport with seven pilots and to appraise de Grasse of Franco-American, or better: Rochambeau's and La Luzerne's? plans. Because what it did not carry was Washington's letter of June 13! Rochambeau had received it and read it, but rather than include a copy he had paraphrased it for now; a copy of the original would go with the next frigate!³⁹⁶

Instead the *Concorde* carried a copy of La Luzerne's letter of May 20 to Rochambeau and Barras (quoted above). In it, la Luzerne argued that it was "imperative to take into the Chesapeake all the naval forces of the king, along with whatever land forces the generals judge suitable." Barras had included the letter "almost as an afterthought," but it would become of critical importance.³⁹⁷

In addition it carried a second letter by La Luzerne of 4 June informing de Grasse that Washington and Rochambeau planned an investiture of New York that would become a full-scale attack if Sir Henry Clinton's defenses should prove breachable. La Luzerne informed de Grasse of his opposition to Washington's wish of sailing directly to Sandy Hook off New York harbor and strongly hinted that he would rather have de Grasse sail to the Chesapeake. "It is you alone who can deliver the invaded states (i.e., Virginia and the Carolinas) from the crisis which is so alarming that it appears to me there is no time to lose and that for their existence it is necessary to do all you can by your instructions."³⁹⁸ Upon reading these letters upon his arrival at Cape François on 16 July 1781, he informed Barras and Rochambeau in a letter of 28 July 1781 that he would sail for the Chesapeake on 13 August. But he would only stay until 15 October.³⁹⁹

It can not be over-emphasized that in July 1781, as the Franco-American army was probing the defenses of New York, the fate of the campaign was in de Grasse's hand! The decision where the fleet would sail, irrespective of what Washington or Rochambeau wanted or had planned, was de Grasse', not theirs!

De Grasse' decision not to sail for New York involved considerable risks: it was based upon ignoring, or at least selectively reading, Washington's June 13 letter to Rochambeau and on reading between the lines of La Luzerne's and Rochambeau's letters. If the Franco-American army remained before New York rather than march to Virginia, the campaign of 1781 would end in failure, and like d'Estaing, he would return from America

³⁹⁶ This remarkable letter is available on the web at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gwhtml/gwhome.html>.

³⁹⁷ Kennett, *French Forces*, p. 109.

³⁹⁸ La Luzerne to de Grasse, 4 June 1781; quoted in Dull, *French Navy*, p. 243.

³⁹⁹ De Grasse's letter of 28 July is printed in Doniol, *Histoire*, Vol. 5, pp. 520-522. The letter indicates that de Grasse read Rochambeau's letter of May 28 only upon his arrival at Cap Français on July 16. On July 28, the *Concorde* sailed for Rhode Island to inform Rochambeau and Washington that de Grasse would go to the Chesapeake, and on 4 August de Grasse set sail too. Rather than head for the open seas, where he risked early detection, he took the "vieux Canal," never before taken by French naval forces along the northern coast of Cuba toward Havannah and then sailed straight north between Florida and the Bahamas.

in disgrace. But if it worked out, and Cornwallis was caught, the last operational British army in North America would be made prisoners of war. De Grasse decided to take the risk. Concurrently he made another bold gamble. Rather than detach ships to protect the homeward-bound convoy from the Carribean, he entrusted it to the care of a single 64-gun vessel. The risk was rewarded: the *Actionnaire* left St. Domingo with 126 merchantmen on 24 October and made it safely to Brest on December 7, 1781. In another stroke of good fortune, Sir Brydges Rodney, Britain's most capable sea commander, sailed home on August 1 pleading ill health; more likely he wanted to keep an eye on his share of the loot from St. Eustatius after it had reached England -- which of course it never did.

The stage was set when de Grasse raised anchor with his 28 ships of the line and supporting frigates at Cap Français on August 5 and headed north. They were bursting with passengers: some 3,000 men of the infantry regiments Gâtinais, Agenais, Touraine under the comte de Saint-Simon, a hundred artillery men, 10 *canons de campagne*, a few siege guns and mortars, and 100 hussars of Lauzun's First Legion of the *Volontaires Etrangers de la Marine*, some 3,300 men altogether. Along the way de Grasse dispatched the frigate *Aigrette* to Havanna to pick up 1.2 million livres which Rochambeau had requested. It took all of five hours to collect these funds from public and private sources and the next day the *Aigrette* on her way again.⁴⁰⁰ Unbeknownst to Washington or Rochambeau, de Grasse's fleet anchored in the Chesapeake Bay on 31 August 1781.

Once the *Concorde* had sailed out of Newport harbor on June 20, Washington and Rochambeau could do nothing but proceed with the plan as agreed upon at Wethersfield. The French troops duly crossed Connecticut and set up camp at White Plains on July 6. The Continental Army came down from New Windsor and joined them. The *Concorde* had not yet reached Cap Français and Santo Domingo when Rochambeau once again probed Washington for a "plan définitif" on July 19. Following after their return from the Jersey shore, Rochambeau, still following the pattern established at Hartford and Wethersfield, posed Washington a series of questions written in column form on the right-hand half of a sheet of paper. Washington responded in writing on the left-hand side. When Rochambeau asked point-blank whether preparations for a march to the south should not be made, Washington was still stalling. Unless a whole series of conditions were not met, "l'entreprise contre New-York et ses environs doit être notre objet principal."⁴⁰¹ Summing up the discussion, he wrote: "Upon the whole I do not see what more can be done than to prosecute the Plan agreed to at Weathersfield, and to recommend it to the Count de Grasse to come immediately to Sandy Hook, and if possible possess the Harbour of N York at the Moment of his Arrival, and then from a full View and Consideration of the Circumstances which exist, form a definitive plan of Campaign upon the surest Grounds."⁴⁰² In the privacy of his headquarters in the Appleby House he confided to his diary:

"20th. Count de Rochambeau having called upon me, in the name of Count de Barras, for a definite plan of Campaign, that he might communicate it to the Count de Grasse -- I could not but acknowledge, that the uncertainties under which we labor -- the few Men

⁴⁰⁰ Dull, *French Navy*, p. 245. The *l'Aigrette* rejoined de Grasse's fleet on August 17.

⁴⁰¹ The full text of Rochambeau's questions and Washington's answers is in Doniol, *Histoire*, Vol. 5, pp. 514-516. It is added in the French original as an appendix to this report.

⁴⁰² Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 22, pp. 395-397, only gives Washington's answers; the quote on page 397.

who have joined (either as Recruits for the Continental Battns. or Militia) and the ignorance in which I am kept by some of the States on whom I mostly depended -- especially Massachusetts from whose Govr. I have not received a line since I addressed him from Weathersfd. The 23d. of May last -- rendered it impracticable for me to do more than to prepare, first, for the enterprize against New York as agreed to at Weathersfield and secondly for the relief of the Southern States if after all my efforts, and earnest application to these States it should be found at the arrivl. of Count de Grasse that I had neither men, nor means adequate to the first object."⁴⁰³

To prepare for the "first object," French and American troops conducted the Grand Reconnaissance on July 21-23. De Grasse was still pondering his options in the Caribbean. Once he had made up his mind it still took de Grasse's letter of 28 July more than 2 1/2 weeks on the *Concorde* to reach Newport on August 11, and another three days to get to White Plains on the 14th. During those 3 1/2 weeks, Washington all but gave up hope that he would acquire the "means adequate to the first object." On 27 July, Duportail submitted a plan for the siege of the city. But no matter how he looked at it, the French-born general put the minimum number of troops needed (besides a French fleet in the harbor) at 20,000 -- almost twice the effectives available.

Washington knew that Duportail was right when he recorded on August 1, that "every thing would have been in perfect readiness to commence the operation against New York, if the States had furnished their quotas of men agreeably to my requisition." But they had not, and so he "could scarce see a ground upon wch. to continue my preparations against New York; especially as there was much reason to believe that part (at least) of the troops in Virginia were recalled to reinforce New York and therefore I turned my views more seriously (than I had done before) to an operation to the Southward" if ever so reluctantly. On August 2, he wrote to Governor Trumbull: "I leave your Excellency to judge of the delicate and embarrassed situation in which I stand at this moment, unable to advance with prudence beyond my present position, while perhaps in the general opinion my force is equal to the commencement of operations against New York; my conduct must appear, if not blamable, highly mysterious at least." Nothing could be further from the truth, however, and unless he received supplies in men and materials immediately, he was afraid "that the campaign will waste fruitlessly away" though he still harbored "hope that our force will still be sufficient to carry our intended operations into effect."⁴⁰⁴

But rather than Washington and Rochambeau it was Clinton in New York who received reinforcements. Much to their dismay, Washington and Rochambeau had to learn on 3 August that the garrison of Pensacola had sailed into New York harbor on July 13 and 14. It had been paroled under the condition only of not fighting against Spaniards: French and Americans were fair game.⁴⁰⁵ To make matters worse, a convoy of 23 sails brought 2,400 English and German recruits on 11 August.⁴⁰⁶ No wonder Washington was getting distraught!

⁴⁰³ Washington, *Diaries*, Vol. 2, p. 240.

⁴⁰⁴ *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Fifth Series* Vol. 10, (Boston, 1888), p. 251.

⁴⁰⁵ Acomb, *Closen*, p. 103.

⁴⁰⁶ Mackenzie, *Diary*, Vol. 2, p. 585.

9.3 14 August 1781: The Day that Shook the World

As New York became less of an option Washington began to consider other prospects, though he could not bring himself to give up preparations for the siege "while there remained a hope of Count de Grasse's bringing a land force with him, and that the States might yet put us in circumstances to prosecute the original plan."⁴⁰⁷ His hope was dashed when de Grasse's letter of 28 July reached White Plains around noon on Tuesday, August 14. De Grasse was sailing from Santo Domingo "pour se rendre en toute diligence dans la baie de Chesapeak, lieu qui me paraît indiqué par vous, Monsieur le Comte, et par MM. Washington, de la Luzerne, et de Barras comme le plus sûr à opérer le bien que vous vous proposez -- to render himself in all diligence to the Chesapeake Bay, the place which seems to have been indicated to me by you, M. le comte, and by MM. Washington, de la Luzerne, and de Barras as the surest place to carry out the good which you propose."⁴⁰⁸ He wanted "to have every thing in the most perfect readiness to commence our operations in the moment of his arrival as he should be under a necessity from particular engagements with the Spaniards to be in the West Indies by the Middle of October."⁴⁰⁹

The moment of truth had come. The comte de Lauberdière, Rochambeau's aide and, so it seems, an eye-witness to the crucial meeting between Washington and Rochambeau, recorded it thus in his *Journal*. As soon as he had the dispatch from de Grasse in hand, "M. de Rochambeau went out to search for General Washington to inform him of this satisfactory and important missive. The general, who always only had New York in his heart, did not appear very satisfied, not only because the expedition to the Chesapeake did not appear to him important (*capitale*), but because he thought that the reduction of New York would end the war. He believed that this grand enterprise was possible and knowing the almost insurmountable hostility of the troops of the Northern states to march south he didn't think he could count on a single one (soldier). M. de Rochambeau forcefully and in knowledge of the facts fought all these objections and told him among other things *that matters were too far advanced to reverse them, that he was determined no matter what to march with the French troops, that united with the troops that had been promised him from the islands he would be quite large in numbers, that to prove to him (i.e., Washington) that he didn't care about his own glory and that he had none but the common good in view he begged him urgently (or earnestly i.e., il le pria instamment) to go himself to Virginia, where one would find the M. de la Fayette with two thousand men, that one could call out the militia, that one should try by all means and ways to get as large a corps together as possible, and that he would always serve with the greatest pleasure under him*. General Washington gave up and occupied himself with nothing else but how to win over the troops and how to take with him as many as possible."⁴¹⁰

French chief engineer Desandrouins, always a member of the innermost circle around Washington and Rochambeau, recorded a similar scene. Among the fragments of his journal of the war in America are these lines: "General Washington had his head so full of the reduction of New York that he never wanted to consent to any other movement of his, or of M. de Rochambeau's, army. Moreover, when M. de Rochambeau received via

⁴⁰⁷ Washington, *Diaries*, Vol. 2, p. 249.

⁴⁰⁸ Doniol, *Histoire*, Vol. 5, p. 521. He set sail on 6 August and anchored off Cape Henry on 31 August.

⁴⁰⁹ Washington, *Diaries*, Vol. 2, p. 254.

⁴¹⁰ Lauberdière, *Journal*, fol. 87-88. The cursive text is underlined in the original.

the *Concorde* the news that Admiral Grasse was going to the Chesapeake Bay, a broken-hearted (*désolé*) Washington wanted to send M. du Portail to that admiral to get him to return (for an attack) against New York. But the French general represented to him that the English had received 3.000 men reinforcements and were inattackable in that place."

Brushing aside Washington's objections, e.g., that Cornwallis might be gone before they reached Virginia, Rochambeau pointed out that de Grasse had come to Virginia at his request and told Washington that "for this reason he could not excuse himself from marching immediately with the French troops." Washington was free to follow his own counsel, but Rochambeau did invite Washington, "to place himself at our head and to make that part of his army follow him which he thought he could draw away from New York." When Washington expressed his fear that the army might revolt if asked to march south, Rochambeau responded that at the very least the soldiers from Rhode Island, the Canadian regiment commanded by Colonel Tigen (i.e., Hazen), and the greater part of the Congressional troops would follow the French, and he added that if he needed access to the funds of our army to get his (army) moving he was ready to provide that access. In fact he offered him 50,000 *écus*. Finally Washington gave way. But nothing was more convincing than the offer made him by our general to place himself under his orders. One can see that the most decisive operation of the whole war is due to the obstinacy and good judgement of M. de Rochambeau. I have all this information from him personally, and I am writing them down the moment after I have heard them from his own mouth."⁴¹¹

If these journals suggest the possibility of the French going at alone, the journal of the vicomte, Rochambeau's son, is even more explicit. Before the march to Virginia could begin, "there were still some very great difficulties to overcome; I mean the determination which General Washington showed in wishing to make an attack upon New York. This was impracticable, because the entrenched garrison greatly outnumbered the besiegers. It was therefore necessary to fool him and to seem to adopt his plans but to form others. So we pretended to be moving toward him to attack New York by land. A frigate was sent to the West Indies, to Monsieur le Comte de Grasse, to get him to come to America during the winter season; but General Washington urged on him the plan of attacking New York while the French general (i.e., Rochambeau), who felt the impossibility of this, wrote to the Admiral to come to Chesapeake Bay with all the land soldiers he could bring and as much ready cash as it would be possible to borrow at Havanah." When de Grasse' letter arrived in camp on August 14, "the moment had now come to enlighten General Washington and to persuade him to operate in the South."

"My father sent for the Brigadier General Duportail, told him all of his ideas, which he completely approved, and asked him to use all of his influence with the American commander to make him adopt them. He gave himself to this with zeal and enthusiasm; but, seeing the latter's indecision and the obstacles, which he created, he guessed that pride had much to do with his refusal.⁴¹² General Rochambeau, sacrificing his to the good which should result from this maneuver, proposed to the American general ... to come and command the expedition himself. From then on the obstacles were removed, the march south was resolved upon, and definitely planned."⁴¹³

⁴¹¹ Gabriel, *Desandrouins*, pp. 344-346.

⁴¹² Duportail may have been present at the meeting as well but this is not confirmed in any source.

⁴¹³ Vicomte de Rochambeau, *Journal*, pp. 218 - 223.

The son, the aide-de-camp, and the chief engineer all agree on four points:

- 1) As late as August 14, Washington was determined to try an attack against New York
- 2) Rochambeau was going to march south to Virginia to meet up with de Grasse
- 3) Washington was free to come along or stay outside New York
- 4) Once he was assured of over-all command, Washington agreed to lead the expedition

Washington himself recorded the events of August 14, the day of the crucial meeting with Rochambeau, this way in his diary: "Matters having now come to a crisis and a decisive plan to be determined on, I was obliged, from the shortness of Count de Grasse's (sic) promised stay on this Coast, the apparent disinclination in their Naval Officers to force the harbour of New York and the feeble compliance of the States to my requisition for Men, hitherto, and little prospect of greater exertion in the future, to give up all idea of attacking New York; instead thereof to remove the French Troops and a detachment from the American Army to the Head of Elk to be transported to Virginia for the purpose of co-operating with the force from the West Indies against the Troops in that State."⁴¹⁴

"I was obliged ... to give up all idea of attacking New York." Washington was not going to have his way. On 22 August he wrote to Governor Trumbull from King's Ferry. "I feel myself unhappy in being obliged to inform your Excellency that the circumstances in which I find myself at this late period have induced me to make an alteration of the main object which was at first adopted, and which has hitherto been held in view, for the operations of this campaign. It gives me pain to say that the delay of the several States to comply with my requisitions of the 24th of May last ... has ... lead to this alteration." As he had feared, and as had happened so often before, the states had not lived up to their obligations. That was not new. What was new for Washington though was the painful realization that even though nominally the commander in chief, he was the militarily weakest link in the triumvirate with Rochambeau and de Grasse and they all knew it. If the French did not cooperate, there was nothing he could do: "Other circumstances, it is true, have had their weight in this determination; ... the fleet of the Count de Grasse, with a body of French troops on board, will make its first appearance in the Chesapeake."⁴¹⁵

Though Rochambeau, La Luzerne, and de Grasse were "forcing Washington's hand," the knowledge that de Grasse was on his way to the Chesapeake with all the ships and troops he had been able to collect had at last ended all uncertainty about a definite plan for the campaign.⁴¹⁶ Both generals realized, reluctantly in the case of Washington, that here was their opportunity to turn the campaign of 1781 around.

Fortunately the tactical situation in the south had changed as well: Cornwallis had done exactly what Washington and Rochambeau would have wanted him to do. In late June, Cornwallis had briefly occupied Williamsburg; on July 19, he began his march to Yorktown and Gloucester, where he started digging in on August 2, 1781. This was known in the Philipsburg on August 14, when the decision to march south was made. Everything was falling into place. De Grasse would be there within the month and in the Battle off the Capes would put paid to all British attempts to rescue Cornwallis. But if

⁴¹⁴ Washington, *Diaries*, Vol. 2, p. 254.

⁴¹⁵ The letter to Trumbull is printed in *Collections of MA Historical Society* Vol. 10, p. 254.

⁴¹⁶ James Flexner, *George Washington in the American Revolution (1775-1783)* (Boston, 1967), p. 427.

Cornwallis was going to be the new target, a decision overturning months of planning would have to be made, and fast! It was, for if Washington had learned anything in his years as Commander in Chief of the Continental Army it was that he had to be flexible.

From now on, Lafayette had only one assignment: to make sure that Cornwallis would not leave the trap he had unknowingly wandered into. On August 15, the day after the decision to march south was made, Washington wrote to Lafayette from Dobbs's Ferry, that "you will immediately take such position as will best enable you to prevent their retreat thro' North Carolina." That same August 15, Rochambeau informed Barras in Newport that the arrival of 2,400 German recruits in New York on the 11th and, even more importantly, the expected arrival of de Grasse in the Chesapeake "vont nous obliger à marcher le plus tôt possible à la Tête de l'Elk dans ladite baie."⁴¹⁷ His aide-de-camp Axel von Fersen, who took these letters over the 220 miles to Newport in 36 hours (!), wrote to Count Creutz, the Swedish ambassador to France, from Newport at 8:00 on the 17th: "We expect the comte de Grasse at any moment; he is supposed to pull into the Chesapeake Bay to land his 3,000 troops under the command of M. de Saint Simon. We will march immediately to Virginia with our army to join up with him and to chase the English from that part of the country if we can. The escadre which is here goes to join M. de Grasse." These were the French plans, though Fersen too did not whether the Americans were going to march south with them or not: "I don't know whether the army of General Washington will withdraw behind West Point."⁴¹⁸

On the 16th, Rochambeau informed Ségur that with a British garrison of 11 to 12,000 men in New York "il n'y a plus rien a faire contre cette place," i.e., "that nothing could be done any more against that place." In the hope that "le lord Cornwallis n'est pas encore décampé de Portsmouth et n'a pas évacué toute la Virginie," Washington would take 2,000 of his men and would march with the French to Virginia.⁴¹⁹ That day, Jeremiah Wadsworth wrote to his wife from Philippsburg: "My dear, I am well in Camp. Count Pherson will call on his return he must not come to this place but to King's Ferry where he will find or hear of the French army. Keep This [to] your selfe as it is a secret."⁴²⁰

When news that Cornwallis was indeed digging in at Little York near Williamsburg reached Franco-American headquarters later that August 16, two day after de Grasse's

⁴¹⁷ Rochambeau's letter to Barras is printed in Doniol, *Histoire*, Vol. 5, p. 524. Concurrently Washington informed Lafayette of the decision to march for Virginia and ordered him "to prevent if possible the Retreat of Cornwallis towards Carolina." Washington, *Diaries*, Vol. 2, p. 254. Washington's letter to Lafayette is in Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 22, p. 501-502. In it he wrote: "You will be particularly careful to conceal the expected arrival of the Count, because if the enemy are not apprised of it, they will stay on board their transports in the Bay, which will be the luckiest Circumstance in the World."

⁴¹⁸ Fersen, *Lettres*, pp. 118-119. Cromot du Bourg suspected that something important was going on when on August 15 "the Count de Fersen was sent to Newport with the replies, which up to this time had been carried by an American dragoon." Cromot du Bourg, "Diary," p. 305.

⁴¹⁹ Rochambeau's letter to Ségur is printed in Doniol, *Histoire*, Vol. 5, p. 526. Rochambeau's numbers were low: on August 15, Mackenzie recorded the strength of the British army in New York as 12,506 enlisted men of all ranks total fit for duty out of a total strength of 15,397. Mackenzie, *Diary*, p. 588.

⁴²⁰ Jeremiah Wadsworth to Mrs. Wadsworth, August 16, 1781. Jeremiah Wadsworth Papers, Connecticut Historical Commission, Hartford, CT. The next day, Lauzun recalled the hussar posts stationed between Hartford and Newport and asked David Trumbull in Lebanon to pay their bills and to send them on to Kings Ferry. *Ibid.*, David Trumbull Papers. Courier service between Hartford and Litchfield was provided by the Second Continental Light Dragoons, and between Washington's Headquarters at New Windsor or later at White Plains by Timothy Pickering's Quartermaster Department.

letter had reached White Plains,⁴²¹ the campaign should have gained additional hope and focus -- had it not been for General Washington! Even as the Franco-American army prepared for its march south, Washington still seems to have considered Cornwallis as but one objective. In a new twist that must have taken Rochambeau and de Grasse by surprise, he wrote on August 17, that "it has been judged expedient to give up for the present the enterprise against New York and to turn our attention towards the South, with a view, if we should not be able to attempt Charles town itself, to recover and secure the States of Virginia, North Carolina and the country of South Carolina and Georgia. ... For this purpose we have determined to remove the whole of the French Army and as large a detachment of the American as can be spared, to Chesapeak to meet Your Excellency there."

Charlestown?! Washington proposed this plan as an alternative in case Cornwallis could not be found in Virginia, but he was serious when he did so. "We would beg leave to take up so much of your Excellency's time, as to point out to you the vast importance of Charles town and what advantages the enemy derive from the possession of it. It is the Centre of their power in the south. By holding it, they preserve a dangerous influence throughout the whole State, as it is the only port and the only place from whence the people can procure those Articles of foreign produce which are essential to their support, and it in great measure serves to cover and keep in subjection the State of Georgia. ... We are not sufficiently acquainted with the position of Charles town ... to enter into a proper mode of attacking it, or of the probability which we should have of succeeding. For these we will refer your Excellency to Brigadier Genl. Du portail Commander of the Corps of Engineers in the service of the United States, who will have the honor of presenting this. That Gentleman having been in Charles town as principal Engineer during the greater part of the seige, and in the Environs of it as a prisoner of War a considerable time afterwards, had opportunities of making very full observations, which he judiciously improved." It was for this purpose of getting troops as far south as quickly as possible that he asked de Grasse in the same letter to send "all your frigates, transports and Vessels proper for the conveyance of the French and American Troops" to head of Elk.⁴²²

Fortunately Cornwallis remained in Virginia, and Rochambeau, who had signed the Charleston proposal together with Washington, once again sent his own separate missive of the same date to de Grasse, setting the record straight. In it he wrote: "We will begin our march immediately to assist you and to take advantage of the time that you will be at this coast. It seems that Lord Cornwallis persists in his determination to not abandon

⁴²¹ Washington, *Diary*, Vol. 2, p. 255.

⁴²² Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 23, pp. 7-11. A French translation of the August 17 letter to de Grasse is printed in Doniol, *Histoire*, Vol. 5, pp. 528/529. It took all of eleven days to inform de Barras of the change in plans and to get him to cooperate in the campaign. De Grasse had left it open for de Barras to join him: de Grasse had once been de Barras' junior in the service and under the eighteenth-century code of honor could have refused to serve under de Grasse. Much to the consternation of Washington and Rochambeau, Barras briefly floated the idea of an independent attack on Penobscot, but was quickly convinced to drop his plan. Heeding Rochambeau's request, De Barras also swallowed his pride for the greater good and slipped out of Newport with nine ships, including seven ships of the line, loaded with troops, supplies, and the siege artillery, on the night of August 24/25. He arrived in the Chesapeake two weeks later, right after de Grasse had drawn Graves' fleet south and away from the bay entrance.

Virginia; one must try, jointly, to make him repent quickly -- il faut tâcher, à frais communs, de l'en faire vivement repentir."⁴²³

The next day, the first elements of the combined armies were on their way south, and it was now, and only now, that deception began. Again Dr. Thatcher: "The real object of the allied armies the present campaign has become a subject of much speculation. Ostensibly an investment of the city of New York is in contemplation - preparations in all quarters for some months past indicate this to be the object of our combined operations. The capture of this place would be a decisive stroke, and from the moment such event takes place, the English must renounce all hopes of subjugating the United States. But New York is well fortified both by land and water, and garrisoned by the best troops of Great Britain. The success of a siege must depend entirely on the arrival and cooperation of a superior French fleet, The enemy have a garrison on Staten Island, which is separated from Long Island only by a strait of two miles wide. The capture of this garrison would be a brilliant affair, and would essentially facilitate our operations against New York. General Washington and Count Rochambeau have crossed the North river, and it is supposed for the purpose of reconnoitering the enemy's posts from the Jersey shore. A field for an extensive encampment has been marked out on the Jersey side, and a number of ovens have been erected and fuel provided, for the purpose of baking bread for the army.⁴²⁴ From these combined circumstances we are led to conclude that a part of our besieging force is to occupy that ground. But General Washington possesses a capacious mind, full of resources, and he resolves and matures his great plans and designs under an impenetrable veil of secrecy, and while we repose the fullest confidence in our chief, our own opinions must be founded only on doubtful conjectures. ... Our situation reminds me of some theatrical exhibition, where the interest and expectations of the spectators are continually increasing, and where curiosity is wrought to the highest, point. Our destination has been for some time matter of perplexing doubt and uncertainty; bets have run high on one side that we were to occupy the ground marked out on the Jersey shore, to aid in the siege of New York, and on the other, that we are stealing a march on the enemy, and are actually destined to Virginia."⁴²⁵

Secrecy was vital, and in both armies as few of officers as possible were informed of the new plan. Boats were built ostensibly for the purpose of crossing over to Staten Island from the Jersey Shore, ovens were built in Chatham, contracts for foodstuffs to be delivered in New Jersey were issued, letters were written and sent via the most dangerous routes with the full intent that they be captured,⁴²⁶ and different rumors as to the purpose of the troop movement were spread. And even though "some were indeed laughable enow",⁴²⁷ they achieved their purpose of confusing (some of) the British for a few days.

⁴²³ Doniol, *Histoire*, Vol. 5, p. 527. Washington dropped the scheme soon thereafter.

⁴²⁴ On the ovens at Chatham see John T. Cunningham, *Chatham at the Crossing of the Fishawack* (Chatham, N.J., Chatham Historical Society, 1967), pp. 35-37. The ovens were not dismantled until 1835.

⁴²⁵ Thatcher, *Journal*, p. 269.

⁴²⁶ One such example is given in Lossing, *Field Book*, Vol. 1, p. 781.

⁴²⁷ Trumbull, "Minutes," p. 332,

But the only one who was deceived for long was Sir Henry in New York, who, it seems, wanted to be deceived.⁴²⁸ Because the intelligence service (in the modern meaning of the term) his adjutant Major John André had built up since the summer of 1780 kept him well apprised of developments on the American side. André's execution was only a temporary set-back; his successor Major Oliver de Lancey, son of the loyalist general, with a staff that included, among others Major Frederick Mackenzie and Captain George Beckwith, expanded and refined the system considerably. Clinton's spies had penetrated deep into the heart of the American camp: on August 16, two days after Washington and Rochambeau had read de Grasse's letter and all but a handful of high-ranking officers were ignorant of the change in plans, one of Clinton's spies informed Colonel Beverly Robinson that the French admiral was on his way north with 28 ships of the line. Clinton read the letter on August 17 -- when no French or American soldier had even taken down his tent yet! -- but the Royal Navy did not set sail from New York to meet the challenge until August 31, a full two weeks later!⁴²⁹

Clinton never had to wait more than 24 hours to know where the enemy armies were located, and some of his subordinates such as Mackenzie suspected on 21 August already -- the French had not even reached the Hudson yet -- that the combined armies were on their way south: "I think it probable that if M. de Grasse does come, he will endeavor to go into Chesapeak. In this case their design is the destruction of Lord Cornwallis's Army." The next day he wrote: "I am strongly of opinion that the design of the enemy is against Lord Cornwallis. Should M. de Grasse come to America, and take possession of the Chesapeak with a Superior fleet, it will be impossible for us to give Lord Cornwallis any assistance."⁴³⁰ The ovens in Chatham briefly confused the diarist, but by the 29th Mackenzie accurately predicted Franco-American plans. By 2 September "there seems to be no doubt but the enemy intend turning their utmost force against Lord Cornwallis." But that very 2 September the deciphered copy of Rochambeau's report to La Luzerne of May 27 arrived in New York, confirming Clinton's fears that he would be attacked rather than Cornwallis. Time was running out for Clinton.

When word of the arrival of de Grasse's fleet in the Chesapeake Bay reached New York in the evening of September 3 -- Washington and Rochambeau would not find out until two days later in the afternoon of September 5! -- Mackenzie worried that unless the French were beaten by the Royal Navy under Admiral Graves, "there will hardly be a

⁴²⁸ This is not the place to discuss why Clinton did what he did in July and August 1781. In justification of his actions Clinton would later write that the intercepted letters "gave me to understand that the enemy had in a grand conference come to a resolution of attacking New York with all the force they could collect." Quoted in Kennett, *French Forces*, p. 107. Suffice it to say that some of his subordinates such as General Robertson were baffled by the inactivity displayed by the Commander in Chief who was usually well informed of Franco-American plans. When Clinton suspected on 2 September that he was no longer the target of attack, it was too late: the Continental Army had already marched through Philadelphia. For Clinton's point of view see *The American Rebellion: Sir Henry Clinton's Narrative of his Campaigns, 1775-1782, with an Appendix of Original Documents*. William B. Willcox, ed., (New Haven, 1954).

⁴²⁹ See Roger Kaplan, "The Hidden War: British Intelligence Operations during the American Revolution." *William and Mary Quarterly* Vol. 47, No. 1 (January 1990), pp. 115-138.

⁴³⁰ Mackenzie, *Diary*, p. 595.

possibility of relieving" Cornwallis.⁴³¹ But Clinton still did not make a move: It was not until September 6 that he finally convinced himself that Cornwallis was in grave danger.

By then it was too late. Colonel Ludwig Johann von Wurmb, commanding officer of the Hessian Jäger in New York, wrote to War Minister Friedrich Christian Arnold Freiherr von Jungkenn in Kassel on September 7: "May the almighty God favor our fleet that it will defeat the enemy so that we can come to the assistance of Lord Cornwallis; otherwise our situation will look bleak."⁴³² Two days earlier, around 9:30 a.m. on September 5, the look-out on the frigate *Aigrette* cruising off Cape Charles reported approaching sails from east-north-east. By the end of the day, de Grasse had drawn Graves' ships far enough south to allow Barras' fleet to slip into Chesapeake Bay with the siege artillery. The Battle off the Virginia Capes had inflicted enough damage on Graves' ships to send him back to New York a few days later. Cornwallis was trapped.

What defeated the British in 1781 was, so Kaplan, Clinton's "own weak leadership,; division of command of land and naval forces and the resulting disunity of effort; third-rate naval commanders; and Cornwallis's almost total independence,"⁴³³ not to mention his unwillingness, and that of the British naval commanders, to trust the intelligence they were receiving from their spies. What did not defeat was any ingenious plan or strategy on the part of Washington or Rochambeau, because the march to Yorktown had not been planned in May 1781 at Wethersfield. No one could know in May where Cornwallis would be in September; as a matter of fact, Washington did not even know where Cornwallis was at the time of the Wethersfield Conference! He had had no intelligence from the South since May 5, when he received a letter from Lafayette informing him that Cornwallis had marched from Wilmington on April 25 with about 1,500 men.⁴³⁴ On 20 May, the day before the two generals sat down to discuss their options, Cornwallis had integrated the British forces in Virginia into his own near Petersburg, a fact that was not known in New Windsor until June 4.

At Wethersfield, Washington had presented his views and preferences, i.e., an attack on New York, and Rochambeau had made his counter-proposal, i.e., a march to the south. As Washington was preparing to carry out his plan, Rochambeau, Washington's nominal subordinate, went along, albeit reluctantly. "The Comte de Rochambeau had arranged with General Washington a plan of campaign that could only be directed towards one of the two points occupied by the English: New York or the Chesapeake Bay," Berthier wrote in his journal on 7 June 1781. There was no secret there. And if the exact plan of operations was "being kept secret,"⁴³⁵ it was a secret to the French and American armies, but not to Clinton and the British leadership in New York. When Clinton read Washington's letters that had been intercepted on June 3, he held genuine information in his hands. What Clinton could not know was that his opponents were at odds with each other over what the target of the 1781 campaign was going to be.

⁴³¹ Ibid., p. 611. Mackenzie provides a good synopsis of the rumors and conjectures circulating in British-occupied New York. For rumors among the French see Robin's letter of August 15 in Robin, *Travels*, p. 39.

⁴³² Wurmb's letter is in the Jungkenn Papers in the Clements Library, Ann Arbor.

⁴³³ Kaplan, "Hidden War," p. 134

⁴³⁴ Washington, *Diaries*, Vol. 2, p.209. The next time he heard from Lafayette was on June 4, when the Frenchman informed Washington of the junction of Cornwallis with Arnold at Petersburg. Ibid., p. 223.

⁴³⁵ Rice and Brown, *American campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 246.

Though hints of a southern alternative crop up ever so often in his correspondence in June, they become less frequent in July.⁴³⁶ Almost despondent in early August, his "eyes were fixed on New York, but he had not yet succeeded in convincing Rochambeau that New York was the all-important objective. Rochambeau was more interested in Virginia."⁴³⁷ The weeks after Wethersfield do not present a pretty picture: intrigue and back-stabbing in the French camp, distrust of the American ally in Versailles, and less than honest cooperation in America. We see a General Washington with an army considerably weaker than its ally, dependent upon the weak cooperation of the states, looking toward New York, while Rochambeau, de Grasse, and la Luzerne were looking south. By the evening of 14 August, Washington had to agree to a march to Virginia.

But despite these tensions so many things went right for the Americans and the French that summer, and so much went wrong for the British, that even contemporaries wondered whether it had not all been planned all along. And so "was a legend born."

Years later Rochambeau would write about the Wethersfield Conference: "General Washington wrote immediately the result of this conference to General Sullivan, a member of Congress. His letters were intercepted; it is believed, and all the papers repeated the report, that he spoke in these letters of the projected attack on the New York islands, with a view only to mislead the enemy's general, and that consequently, he was very glad that the letters had fallen into the hands of the latter."

But that is not what happened: "There is no need of such fiction to convey to posterity the glory of this great man. His wish was then to attack New York, and we should have carried the plan into execution if the enemy had continued to draft troops from that station and if the French navy could have been brought to our assistance."⁴³⁸

But Clinton sent no more troops to the south, the French navy did not come north. Everything worked out differently but well nevertheless.

Shortly after Cornwallis' surrender, a French naval officer on *le Sagittaire*, which had brought reinforcements for Rochambeau's troops in June, had remained in American waters in the summer of 1781, and had sailed to Virginia with Barras, wrote that "the intercepted letters of Washington which talk about an attack on New York are passing as fictitious and maybe destined to be intercepted and to deceive. Nothing ever was more real than that project (=New York): Washington never wanted a project to the South. Behold how people write history!"⁴³⁹

⁴³⁶ See his letters of June 13, of June 21 to the Board of War, of June 28 to Knox, of July 30 to Lafayette, all in Washington, Writings, vol. 22, and the entry in his diary for August 1, 1781.

⁴³⁷ Arnold Whitridge, "Rochambeau in America: 'Old Papa' opts for Yorktown." In: *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité: The American Revolution and the European Response*. Charles W. Toth, ed., (New York, 1989), pp. 311- 330, p. 318.

⁴³⁸ Rochambeau. *Memoirs*, p. 46.

⁴³⁹ Charles Rulon, "Document inedit sur le siège de Yorktown en 1781 (Amérique), par un officier Français du corps expéditionnaire." *Annales de la société d'histoire et d'archéologie de l'Arrondissement de St.-Malo de l'année 1967*, pp. 193-199, p. 199.

"This month must decide the fate of America," Wurmb had written on the 7th. It did. On 28 September began the siege of Yorktown and on 19 October, the 3rd anniversary of Saratoga, Lord Cornwallis surrendered to Washington, Rochambeau, and de Grasse. America had won her independence, but on the banks of the York, not the Hudson River.

THE MARCH FROM PHILIPSBURG TO POMPTON, AUGUST 18-26, 1781

10.1 The March of the Continental Army to Stony Point

Between August 14 and 18, when the French artillery departed from Philipsburg for North Castle/Mount Kisco, the staffs of both armies worked feverishly to prepare for the march. It had been decided that the whole of the French army would march south; of the Continental Army Washington would take the Light Infantry under Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander Scammel. Two light companies each of New York and Connecticut, the New Jersey Line, two regiments of the New York Line, Moses Hazen's Canadian regiment, the First Rhode Island, and Lamb's Artillery would also go, some 2,000 men in all.⁴⁴⁰ The rest of the Continental Army would remain in Westchester County under the command of General Edward Heath. On the 17th he proposed a route for the French army to follow. Leaving Philipsburg on Saturday, August 18, and reaching Trenton on Thursday the 29th, Washington explained "I have named no halting day because we have not a moment to loose."⁴⁴¹ On the 19th, "the Jersey Line and Hazen's Regt." received orders to move "to the heights between Chatham and Springfield" and was immediately ferried from Dobbs Ferry (**SITE 21**) across the Hudson to Sneed's Landing.⁴⁴²

Unencumbered by heavy artillery or baggage, the Continental Army was to form the left flank of the column. Leaving their camp in the morning of the 19th, it marched west on Secor Road, south on Sawmill River Road and west again on Ashford (the old the Dobbs Ferry Road) but then, to the surprise of some of its officers and men, veered north to Tarrytown on US Route 9. Going past Sleep Hollow Church (**SITE 7**) and Ossining in the evening of the 19th, they were following the same route that had taken them to Philipsburg seven weeks earlier. Next they crossed the Croton at New Bridge near the Van Cortlandt Manor House (**SITE 6**) and followed the Old Albany Post Road (SR 9A) to Westchester Avenue at Fort Lafayette (**SITE 23**) and Verplanck's Point/King's Ferry. (**SITE 24**) Arriving around 10:00 a.m. on August 20, they began to cross immediately.⁴⁴³ By sunrise on August 21, the Americans were across in Stony Point (**SITE 25**), and while the advance guard under Scammel marched on to a camp near Kakiat,⁴⁴⁴ the remainder of the army helped "some of the french Artillery"⁴⁴⁵ to cross during August 21.⁴⁴⁶

⁴⁴⁰ The artillery had departed from West Point on Sunday, 15 July, and arrived at Philipsburg on July 27. The American numbers, ca. 2,000 officers and men, are based on the monthly strength report for July -- unfortunately no strength reports for August seem to have survived. Not all of them marched to King's Ferry, however. The units that marched north along the Hudson were the First Rhode Island, 298 officers and men (plus 180 sick or detached in the July strength report), the First New York at 438 (plus 129) and Col. Lamb's 1st and 2nd Continental artillery, 368 officers and men (plus 174) plus Lt.-Col. Scammel's Light Infantry at 214 (plus 143). That puts Washington's troops to around 1,400 men. If we add the two New Jersey regiments and Moses Hazen's Canadians which set over to New Jersey on the 19th, we get the 2,000+ men figure usually cited for Washington's army. All numbers are taken from Charles H. Lesser, *The Sinews of Independence. Monthly Strength Reports of the Continental Army* (Chicago, 1975).

⁴⁴¹ Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 23, p. 7.

⁴⁴² Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 23, p. 25, and *Diaries*, Vol. 2, p. 255.

⁴⁴³ Washington, *Diaries*, Vol. 2, p. 256. The artillery rested near Ossining, but it is unclear where the rest of the Continental Army bivouacked for the night.

⁴⁴⁴ Scammel remained in this camp, the exact location of which is unknown, until the 25th.

⁴⁴⁵ Washington, *Diaries*, Vol. 2, p. 256.

⁴⁴⁶ These four markers listed on the New York State website could not be located:

FRANCO-AMERICAN ARMY
EN ROUTE TO CAPTURE
CORNWALLIS AT YORKTOWN, IN
VIRGINIA, CROSSED KING'S
FERRY IN AUGUST, 1781.

Location: IN STONY POINT PARK

KING'S FERRY
BELOW THIS HILL IS LOCATED
THE WESTERN TERMINUS OF
HISTORIC KING'S FERRY OF
THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION,
1776-1783.

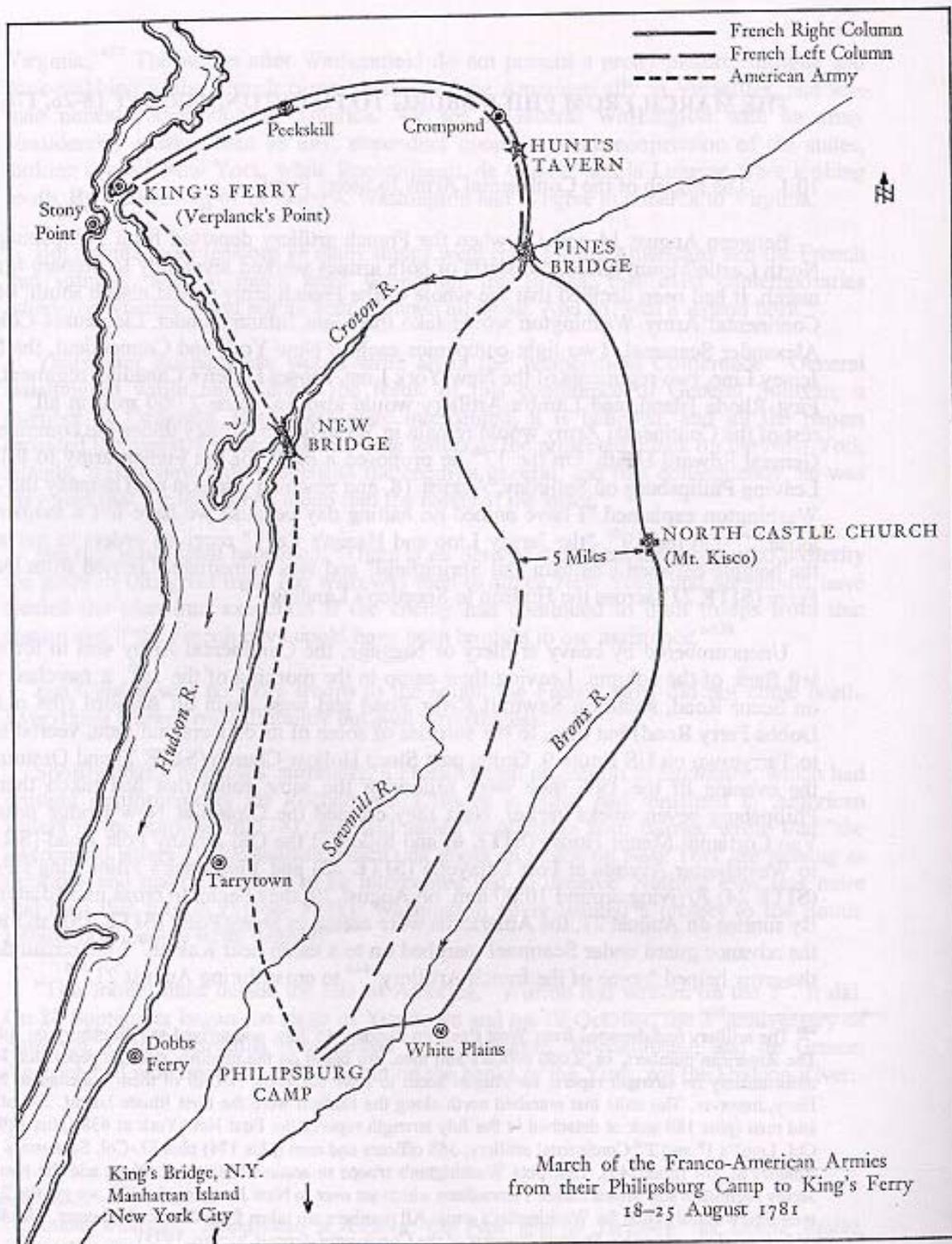
Location: IN STONY POINT PARK

KINGS FERRY
IMPORTANT RIVER CROSSING
IN COLONIAL DAYS AND THE
REVOLUTION. USED BY FRENCH
AND AMERICAN ARMIES ON
MARCH TO YORKTOWN IN 1782 (sic!)

Location: KINGS FERRY RD., NEAR VERPLANCK

POST HANNOCH HOUSE
OWNER OPERATED KINGS FERRY
1664. COLONEL LIVINGSTON'S
HEADQUARTERS, 1781. WASHINGTON
PRESENTED MEDALS TO CAPTORS
OF ANDRE HERE IN 1782

Location: KINGS FERRY RD., 1 MI. W. OF US 9



10.2 The March of the French Army to Stony Point

The French artillery, which had left only at 11:00 a.m. on the 18th as the center column, was scheduled to reach King's Ferry on the 21st. Progress was painfully slow and due to the rain, bad roads, and overloaded carts, it made only four miles that day. Berthier, who led the column, had to rent oxen which met up with the artillery at their bivouac only at 4:00 a.m. on the 19th. Departing "from their camp at Isaac Tompkins' they (or at least their artillery) retreated by the Allaire road where in several places they made cause ways of rails over low places for the passage of the cannon."⁴⁴⁷ The causeways were but a foretaste of what was to come. Following the old Pines Bridge Road, more or less today's SR 100A to SR 100 to SR 141, Bedford Road, through Elmsford, Hawthorne, Thornwood, Pleasantville to Chappaqua, they veered left/north via South Greeley Street to Quaker Street (SR 120) and Seven Bridges Road, which led them to Pines Bridge, where the artillery finished crossed the Croton at 2 a.m. on the 20th and camped "200 paces beyond on the opposite bank."⁴⁴⁸ (SITE 26) The modern bridge is a bit to the west of where the eighteenth-century bridge, now covered by the reservoir, would have been. But the French had to ford the river anyway: "We crossed the Croton, quite a pretty river with a fine wooden bridge which was, however, in ruins."

Once across the Croton, the artillery spent August 20 in bivouac just north of the crossing "working to repair the broken gun carriages."⁴⁴⁹ On the 21st the column left for Peekskill marching north on Hanover Street to modern-day Yorktown past the Underhill House (at Hanover Street and California Road) where Major André had had his last breakfast in freedom almost a year earlier, to where Hanover Street becomes Commerce (SR 35), past Hunt's Tavern, until a bit further north SR 35 turns west and becomes SR 202, Crompond Road, toward Van Cortlandtville and Peekskill. Since Berthier found the march too long to complete that day, he ordered most of the artillery to bivouac 2 miles east of Peekskill on the 21st near Locust Avenue. It was only on the 22nd that the crossing of the artillery and heavy baggage could begin.

The French infantry, which had departed Philipsburg on August 19 as a right-hand column, had retraced the route it had brought them to Philipsburg in the first days of July.⁴⁵⁰ Following SR 22 to 128 to Mt. Kisco, it had veered left/north on Main Street to Crow Hill Road and on to Pines Bridge, where it was to cross the Croton. But it too was

⁴⁴⁷ Interview with Jackson Odell, September 7, 1846. McDonald Papers Vol. 4, p. 499.

⁴⁴⁸ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol.1, p. 254. See also Frances Cook Lee, "The Washington - Rochambeau March and Encampment." *The Westchester Historian* Vol. 57 No. 4, (Fall 1981), pp. 76-79. A marker listed on the New York State website with this inscription could not be found:

PINES BRIDGE

OLD CROTON RIVER CROSSING

IMPORTANT BRIDGE HEAD

GUARDED BY AMERICAN TROOPS

DURING THE REVOLUTION

Location: NYS 100, NO. SIDE OF BRIDGE OVER CROTON RESERVOIR

⁴⁴⁹ Berthier in Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 254.

⁴⁵⁰ The French forces leaving Philipsburg numbered close to 4,000 NCOs and enlisted men plus some 400 officers and at least 500 domestics. Once across the Hudson, the French marched in the same order of two infantry regiments and their artillery components forming one brigade that they had used on the march from Newtown/Ridgefield to Philipsburg in July 1781. Berthier recorded "Lauzun's Legion, the artillery horses, and the army wagon train formed a column numbering 1,500 horses, 800 oxen, 220 wagons."

held back by the bad condition of the roads and bivouacked "in the mud all night in the pouring rain."⁴⁵¹ "There were so many impediments, such as the bad weather that we had had for several days, the poor communications, the abominable roads, the large number of wagons, etc., that the army reached North Castle," their 15th camp, or rather bivouac, "only during the night" of August 19/20.⁴⁵² Despite the bad weather and the darkness, Private Flohr recorded that they had "quite a few visits from the inhabitants, among whom were here and there a few Germans already."⁴⁵³ The 20th was an unplanned rest day south of the Croton in North Castle as the infantry waited for its wagons.⁴⁵⁴ Only on the 21st could the infantry ford the Croton at Pines Bridge and, following the route taken by the artillery and baggage of the center column, reach its 16th camp, some 8 miles away near Hunt's Tavern where it spent the night of August 21/22. (**SITE 27**) The tavern stood on the north side of Crompond Road near the intersection with Hallock's Mill Road, east of the Crompond and Mohansic Lakes; their camp was along the north side of Baldwin Road between SR 202 and Hallocks Mill Road.⁴⁵⁵

"The grenadiers and chasseurs" who left only on August 20 on the route taken by the center column, "were forced to bivouac six miles from Philippsburg, because so many broken-down vehicles obstructed the way."⁴⁵⁶ The next day, August 21, it too crossed the Croton and marched on to Hunt's Tavern where it joined up with the rest of the infantry for the night of August 21/22. From Hunt's Tavern, the men took the Crompond Road, more or less SR 202, westward to Peekskill on the 22nd. From there it was south on South Street to SR 9A and Westchester Street until the banks of the Hudson were reached near Fort Lafayette. Here the infantry went into its 6th camp in the State of New York and the 17th camp since departure from Newport (**SITE 28**) while the artillery finished crossing the Hudson.⁴⁵⁷ Along the way they passed the home of Daniel Birdsall, one of the founders of Peekskill (1764). Located on Main Street, the house doubled as an inn for such luminaries as Washington, who occasionally used it as his headquarters. On 29 June 1781, Commissary Blanchard, sent ahead by Rochambeau to prepare for the arrival of his troops and to establish a hospital there, had had dinner with Washington in the Birdsall House (**SITES 29 and 30**).⁴⁵⁸

The first elements of the artillery had reached the crossing at Verplanck's Point in the late afternoon of August 21 and began to cross immediately.⁴⁵⁹ Those components that

⁴⁵¹ Berthier in Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 254. Rochambeau was extremely upset about the slow pace and the supply problems and "had a very lively scene with the intendant upon this subject." Blanchard, *Journal*, p. 127, and Laubardière, *Journal*, fol 90.

⁴⁵² The location of this bivouac is unknown. There is no map in Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*.

⁴⁵³ Flohr, *Reisenbeschreibung*, fol. 40.

⁴⁵⁴ So according to Berthier and Closen; Flohr on the other hand wrote that he marched 8 miles on the 20th to "Bätgards=tawern," where so many locals came to greet the French that "the General gave a ball."

⁴⁵⁵ John T. Martino, *Yorktown at War 1775-1783*. (Yorktown, 1996), pp. 24 -33.

⁴⁵⁶ Acomb, *Closen*, p. 106.

⁴⁵⁷ See W.H.H. MacKellar, "Peekskill's Part in the Drama of the American Revolution." *The Quarterly Bulletin of the Westchester County Historical Society* Vol. 7 No. 4, (October 1931), pp. 152-161.

⁴⁵⁸ A few days later, Washington changed his plans and ordered the French forces to Philippsburg. See Charles E. Winslow, "Washington at the Birdsall House." *The Quarterly Bulletin of the Westchester County Historical Society* Vol. 8 No. 4, (October 1932), pp. 159-161. For Blanchard's account of his dinner with Washington see Blanchard, *Journal*, pp. 115-117.

⁴⁵⁹ See William Wait, "Verplanck's Point in Revolutionary History." *The Quarterly Bulletin of the Westchester County Historical Society* Vol. 8 No. 4, (October 1932), pp. 145- 159, esp. p. 156.

had bivouacked 2 miles east of Peekskill in the vicinity of Locust Avenue on the 21st, crossed the Hudson upon arrival on the 22nd without stopping; so did Lauzun's Legion. To get the artillery across, Washington had ordered that provisional ferries be constructed by fastening planks to the decks of two boats lying parallel in the water. That way, a fully loaded wagon, or two pieces of artillery, or 60 to 80 men could cross the river at a time. Lauberdière noted with surprise that horses and oxen swam across the river. Despite strong winds and a choppy sea, the wagon train followed on the 23rd, and on the 24th the First Brigade finally set across the Hudson as well.

Once across the river it marched south on Route 9W to its camp near the home of Jeshua Hett Smith, (**SITE 31**) where Benedict Arnold and Major John André had had their last meeting before Arnold's treason. Here Washington established his headquarters from August 21 to 25.⁴⁶⁰ As the First Brigade, including Rochambeau, left its 18th camp in Haverstraw (**SITE 32**) north of Cedar Pond Brook in Stony Point Village about three miles from the Ferry on the 25th, the Second Brigade crossed the Hudson and occupied this campsite from August 25 to August 26. It was only at mid-night August 25/26, four days behind schedule, that the last wagons and the rear-guard of the army crossed over to Stony Point and without resting joined the Second Brigade in its march to Suffern.⁴⁶¹

While his troops were crossing the Hudson, Rochambeau did not want to miss the opportunity of seeing the fortress at West Point. (**SITE 33**) Accompanied by Washington and two of his aides, e.g., Lauberdière and the comte de Vauban, he left Peekskill by boat around 8:00 a.m. on the 23rd for a one-day visit.⁴⁶²

During the march from Philipsburg to Peekskill the French received some painful reminders of how far north the Neutral Zone extended. On 1 November 1845, Samuel Chadeayne of Yorktown told McDonald that "The French army when they retired from White Plains (in 1781 probably) left some sick soldiers in North Castle Church and a surgeon of one of the French regiments went down daily to see them, returning at night to his quarters in York Town some where north of the Croton and near Pines Bridge. On his return from one of these visits he was waylaid by James Totten, James Tillot and two others at a place not more than a mile from Pines Bridge in a straight line to the south. They took him to a retired spot in a wood, robbed him of his money, gold watch and clothes, and then sat down under a tree and played a game of "all fours" (sic) to determine who should kill him. The poor Frenchman could not talk English but appeared to comprehend what was going on, and resigned himself to his destiny. When the game was over he advanced of his own accord to a tree and clasping the tree in his arms motioned to them to come forward and tie him, which they did, and straightway the appointed man put him to death. One of them (Totten?) soon after appeared below at Morrisania, dressed in the Frenchman's clothes, and openly boasted of the deed, but

⁴⁶⁰ Blanchard visited Washington here on the evening of August 21; Rochambeau met with him for breakfast on the 22nd. The house was torn down in February 1980. A brief history of the house can be found in "The Treason House is demolished." *South of the Mountain*. Vol. 24 No. 2, (April-June 1980), pp. 14-17. It is unknown where Rochambeau made his headquarters during the crossing days; he may have stayed with Washington in the "Treason House."

⁴⁶¹ Berthier in Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 255. His journal ends with August 26.

⁴⁶² For another description of West Point see Lauberdière, *Journal*, fol. 91-93. Cromot du Bourg went by land via Continental Village. His description of West Point is in his "Diary," pp. 307-308. A description of the American hospital in West Point as seen by Blanchard on August 20 is in his *Journal*, pp. 130-132.

received a sharp reproach from Colonel DeLancey. "Totten," he said, "you think you have accomplished an honorable and brave exploit in taking the life of a poor French doctor who made no resistance. You are a disgrace to the Refugees, and I want to see you no more. Take my advice and withdraw from this place, for rely upon it if (245) you don't the rebels will spare no effort or expense to hang you." He thereupon wisely took the proffered advice and withdrew. The Tottens, (James and G [sic]) went to Nova Scotia, but returned and died here."⁴⁶³

Jabud June told an almost identical story: "I lived during the Revolutionary war in the west part of the town of Bedford. ... The French doctor was ambuscaded and taken by James Totten of North Castle (cousin of Gilbert, the Captain), James Tillett and two others not far from Pines Bridge. After taking his horse, watch, money &a they kept him one or two hours in an obscure place in the woods where they had conducted him, amusing themselves at his expence (sic) like a cat that has secured her victim. The poor Frenchman could not talk not (sic) English, but begged hard for his life by signs. Next the three play a game of cards to decide who would shoot the doctor. The lot fell on James Tillet to pull the trigger. Tillet, so June, returned from Nova Scotia after the war."and became a Methodist preacher but was always despised for the murder. He made a full confession of all the affair and expressed great contrition."⁴⁶⁴

The almost identical details in these reminiscences and the identification of the men involved makes it all but certain that the incident happened. But unlike the French hussar lieutenant shot by Vincent I have not been able to identify of the doctor killed by Tillett.

We do know, however, that Blanchard had established a hospital on a farm at North Castle on 6 July.⁴⁶⁵ On the 16th he set up two more hospitals in churches in Peekskill, and was ordered to remove the North Castle hospital to Peekskill/Van Cortlandtville as well.⁴⁶⁶ One of the churches used as a hospital was Old St. Peter's Church in Van Cortlandtville,⁴⁶⁷ where Jean Bonnair of the Saintonge and Jean-Joseph Paquay of the Soissonnais died and were buried in September 1781; another six, incl. an officer, were buried there in September and October 1782 when Blanchard re-opened the hospital during the return march on September 16. (**Sites 34 and 35**) It may well have been during

⁴⁶³ McDonald Papers Vol. 1, p. 242

⁴⁶⁴ McDonald Papers Vol. 5, p. 558. In the interview with Nathaniel Hyatt of New Castle, Vol. 6, p. 968, Henry Weeks, James Tillett and James Totten are identified as the kidnappers of the French doctor. Tillett shot the doctor; Totten was only 17 at the time. Rochambeau reportedly offered 1,000 guineas for the capture of the kidnappers. Josham Carpenter of North Castle, told McDonald on 30 October 1847 (Vol. 5, p. 771) the same story of the killing of the Frenchman a little south of Pines Bridge, with identical names of the Americans. Again Tillet is identified as the murderer. The Frenchman however is identified as a "Forage master" with a "(?)" after the identification. David Higgins of Bedford, age 80, finally, told McDonald in 1848 (Vol. 6, p. 795) this. "When the French army was at North Castle Church, a waiter, a Frenchman, went to the North toward Kisco to buy vegetables etc. when the Refugees waylaid and killed him. The French were very angry and wanted to shoot Obadiah Akerley who concealed the Refugees in his home. ... It may be the same case as the French surgeon." But it may also be the man mentioned by Robin, *Travels*, p. 40, who reports in a letter dated September 1, 1780, that the Refugees "have lately hanged a Secretary belonging to one of our Commissaries."

⁴⁶⁵ Blanchard, *Journal*, p. 120.

⁴⁶⁶ For a description of his activities outside New York in the summer of 1781, see his *Journal*, pp. 113-34.

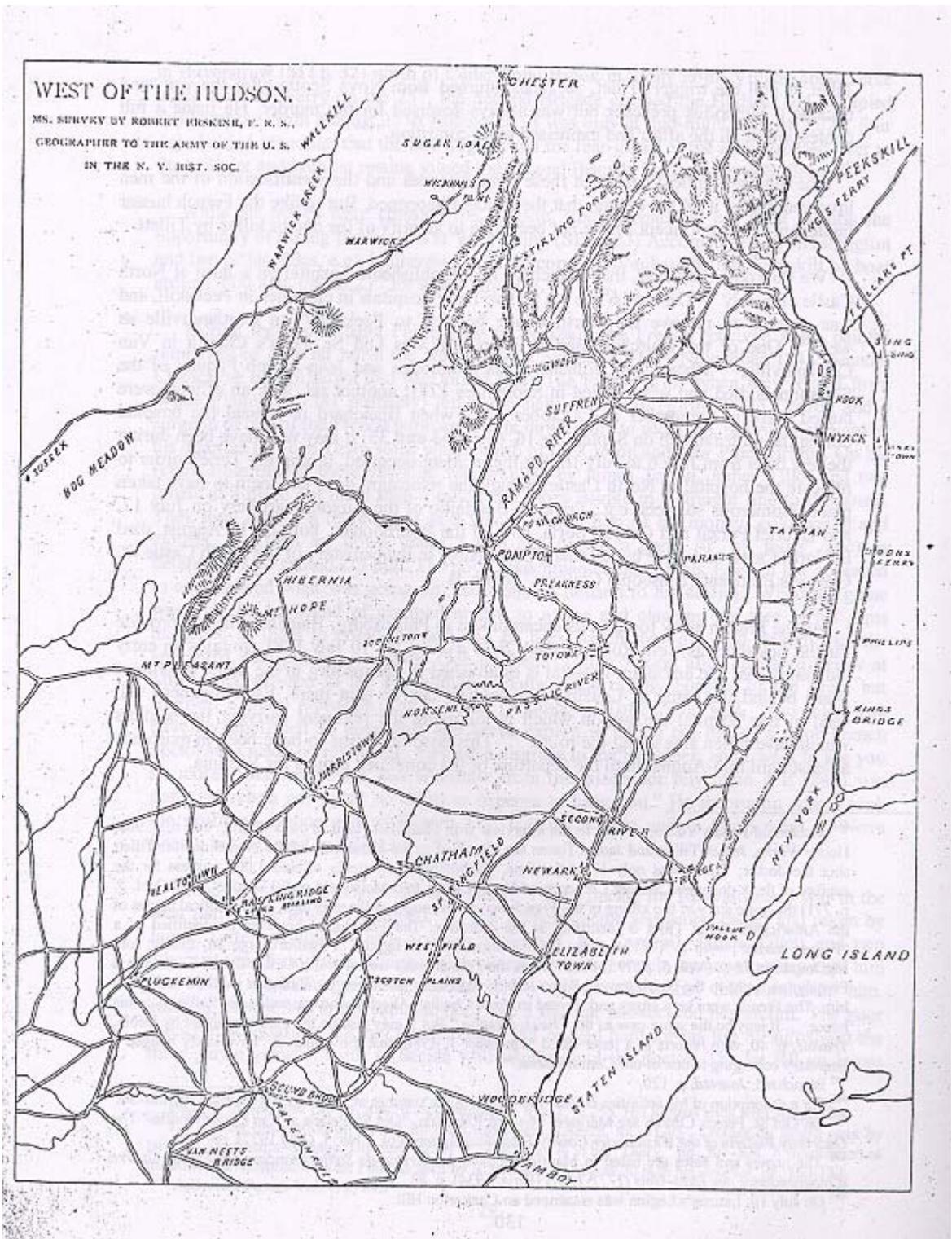
⁴⁶⁷ On Old St. Peter's Church see Margaret McCord Robinson, "Old St. Peter's at Van Cortlandtville." *The Quarterly Bulletin of the Westchester County Historical Society* Vol. 3 No. 3, (July 1927), pp. 3-4.

the few days from July 6 to July 16 that the incident occurred, prompting Tarlé's order to relocate the hospital in North Castle, though the relocation does not seem to have taken place. Numerous soldiers, e.g., François Boudaille of the Auxonne artillery on July 17, and Gabriel Porzat and Gabriel Sorla, both of the Bourbonnais, both on 19 August, died in North Castle and were buried there, presumably in the cemetery of the North Castle St. George's Protestant Episcopal Church.⁴⁶⁸ (Site 3)

As the French army took up its encampment in Philipsburg, Blanchard had to provide for the sick there as well. Rochambeau's *livre d'ordre* for 10 July 1781 contains an entry indicating that "an ambulant hospital is established in Philipsburg in the home of Gilbert Ward behind the camp of Lauzun; sick soldiers can be sent there. Each regiment will send to this hospital the wagon which is following the regiment carrying the soldiers which have fallen sick along the route."⁴⁶⁹ This hospital seems to have been in existence at least until mid-August until the departure of the combined armies for Virginia.

⁴⁶⁸ The names and dates are listed in Maurice Bouvet, *Le Service de Santé Français pendant la Guerre d'Indépendance des États-Unis (1777-1782)* (Paris, 1934), p. 83.

⁴⁶⁹ On July 10, Lauzun's Legion was encamped on Chatterton Hill.



10.3 The March from Stony Point

Around 4:00 a.m in the morning of Saturday, August 25, the Continental Army marched to "three miles beyond Suffrans"⁴⁷⁰ over the Mahwah Bridge following what was known then as the "Upper Road" via Kakiat (the "English Church" at New Hempstead). Here the sappers, miners, baggage carts, artillery park -- the right-hand column of the Continental Army under the protection of the Rhode Island Regiment and Lauzun's Legion -- began its march to Andrew Hopper's House and encamped for the night. On the 26th this column marched to "5 Miles beyond Pompton on the road to the two Bridges at the fork of Posaic," and on "27. Back of the Mountain to Chatham."⁴⁷¹ In his diary, Washington wrote similarly that this column "proceeded to Chatham by the way of Pomton and the two bridges" across the Passaic River."⁴⁷² In modern terms this means that this column under the command of Colonel John Lamb, continued south on Central Highway to the intersection with West Ramapo Road (SR 202) and followed it east to SR 45. Next it followed SR 45 south to Kakiat Corners into New Hempstead where it turned right/east onto New Hempstead Road (Old SR 202) which becomes Union Road at Brick Church Road. Following Brick Church Road it turned south onto SR 306 to Viola Road, where it went east until it reached SR 202 to Suffern. Here it followed the Ramapo Valley Road across the New Jersey State line.

General Lincoln's command "compos'd of the light Troops, and York Regiments (if Courtlands should get up to you in time) and four light pieces with the Baggage of these sevl. Corps" accompanied the train of the Continental Army through Suffern and about one mile into New Jersey. Here it turned south on SR 17 (or Franklin Turnpike SR 507?) and marched to "within 3 miles of Paramus (i.e., Hohokus)." On the 26th, so Washington's letter, it proceeded to "two Miles below Acquakenach Bridge, (and on the) 27th. to Springfield." Once Lincoln arrived in Springfield, i.e., August 27, the New Jersey Line and Moses Hazen's Canadian regiment, encamped on the heights between Chatham and Springfield since the night of the 19th, were break camp and join forces with Lincoln.⁴⁷³

The First Brigade of the French army followed one day behind the Continental Army, i.e., left its camp at Haverstraw on Sunday, August 25 for Suffern, its 19th camp.⁴⁷⁴ While some of the officers stayed at John Suffern's Tavern, (**Site 36**), the men of the First Brigade and the wagon train camped west of the Mahwah River on the west side of Washington Avenue to about half-way to the bridge on August 25. (**Site 37**) Flohr called "Suffrantz a little town in a very pleasant area where everyone would have liked to stay. In that area males are very welcome since one did not meet many of them, when one entered into a house there the first thing they did was ask whether one did not want to stay with them they would hide you until the French were gone, one also encountered everywhere Hessian soldiers who had deserted and also very many Hannoverians."

The next day, August 26, the Second Brigade occupied the same ground while the First Brigade crossed the "romepags, a small rivulet ... which forms the boundary

⁴⁷⁰ See John Austin Stevens, "The Route of the Allies from King's Ferry to the Head of Elk." *Magazine of American History* Vol. 5 No. 1, (July 1880), pp. 1-20.

⁴⁷¹ Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 23, p. 42.

⁴⁷² Washington, *Diaries*, Vol. 2, p. 256.

⁴⁷³ These instructions are contained in a letter by Washington to Lincoln dated August 24 from Kings Ferry and are printed in Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 23, pp. 41-42.

⁴⁷⁴ For the route see John Scott, "The Washington-Rochambeau Historic Route Across Rockland County to Yorktown, Virginia." *South of the Mountain* Vol. 25 No. 4, (October-December 1981), pp. 4-14.

between the States of New York and the Jerseys," about a mile beyond the campsite on the way to Pompton.⁴⁷⁵ Here the French army entered its 20th camp. As the Franco-American armies made their way from New York into New Jersey, a good mile to the north-west of Suffern, American troops, stationed there since 1776, continued to guard the approaches into the Ramapo at Sidman's Bridge. **(SITE 38)**

As the French forces marched through Philadelphia, the *Freeman's Journal* of 5 September 1781 reported that "the appearance of these troops far exceeds any thing of the kind seen on this continent, and presages the happiest success to the cause of America." That success came six weeks later before Yorktown where the Continental Army in close cooperation with their French allies on land and on sea forced Lord Cornwallis to surrender on October 21, 1781, the 3rd anniversary of Saratoga, the victory that had convinced France that the American rebellion was viable. The surrender of Cornwallis and his British and German troops meant the victory of that rebellion. Washington and his army did not tarry at Yorktown but the French spent the winter and spring of 1781/ 82 in and around Williamsburg. Ten months after their arrival, on July 1, 1782, Rochambeau's forces broke camp and began their march back to New England.

THE VICTORIOUS ARMIES RETURN

11.1 The Return March to Crompond, September 13 - 24, 1782

The Continental Army left Virginia for New York almost as soon as the siege of Yorktown was over. By 20 November, the troops were already at Head of Elk, from where they marched through Philadelphia, Trenton, Princeton, and Morristown to Suffern and on 7 December crossed the Hudson at King's Ferry. Next, so Dr. Thatcher, the troops moved into huts "erected the last winter by some of the Massachusetts troops, a short distance from the banks of the Hudson, and called New Boston; they afford us a very convenient and comfortable accommodation."⁴⁷⁶ On 1 April 1782, Washington moved into headquarters in the Jonathan Hasbrouck House in Newburgh to await the outcome of peace negotiations in Paris. **(Site 39)** The Continental Army too remained stationary in its quarters until August 31, when it marched to a new encampment with "its right resting on Fort Verplank's Point or Fort Lafayette"⁴⁷⁷ to wait for the French troops marching north from Virginia. **(Sites 23 and 28)**

The French forces had spent the winter of 1781/82 in and around Williamsburg. Ten months after their arrival, on July 1, 1782, Rochambeau's forces broke camp and began their march back to New England. Organization and schedule of the march was almost identical to that of the previous year. Until Fredericksburg was reached, the infantry marched again in four divisions a day apart; thereafter they marched in brigades:

- 1) The Bourbonnais under the command of the marquis de Chastellux
- 2) The Royal Deux-Ponts under comte Christian de Deux-Ponts

⁴⁷⁵ Lauberdière, *Journal*, fol. 95.

⁴⁷⁶ Thatcher, *Journal*, p. 301.

⁴⁷⁷ Lauberdière, *Journal*, fol. 190. The Continental Army encamped there until October 28. See Thatcher, *Journal*, p. 334.

- 3) The Soissonnais under the vicomte de Vioménil
- 4) The Saintonge under the comte de Custine.

This time, the siege artillery and 150 men of the Auxonne artillery remained at West Point, Virginia, as did 400 men, 100 each from each regiment as a garrison at Yorktown and of course the sick. Because of the excessive July heat, the troops began their march at 1:00 a.m., marching through the night. Baltimore was reached on July 24, a week later the first units reached Philadelphia. On September 13, the French First Brigade crossed into New York and encamped in Suffern (camp 35 of return march; **Sites 36 and 37**) on the east side of Washington Avenue. Flohr thought that the locals "who sat on horses just like English cavalry and who were all females expected us with great desire. They came in order to buy out (the contracts of) soldiers because the men were very rare (i.e. few in number) there at the time because everyone old and young had to join the colors the fathers as well as the sons and in truth very many had perished and most women had already lost their husbands. But in our army this was denied them without much ado and the beautiful girls had to go home again all sad and did not take any men with them."⁴⁷⁸

Following the route (in reverse) it had taken the previous year, it marched the next day through Kakiat to Haverstraw, its 36th camp, where it rested for the next three days from September 14 to 16, at the same spot it had camped in August 1781. Rochambeau established his headquarters in the Smith House.⁴⁷⁹ (**Sites 31 and 32**). The Second Brigade camped for two days, September 15 and 16, a bit further south along Railroad Avenue in West Haverstraw. On the 16th, Rochambeau crossed the river to inspect the camp laid out to the left of the Americans with the Saintonge forming the far left of the allied camp, along the road to Crompond/Yorktown Heights.⁴⁸⁰ As Rochambeau's forces crossed the Hudson on September 17, an army review showed this strength:⁴⁸¹

REGIMENT	PRESENT OFFICERS AND MEN	ABSENTEES	TOTAL
Bourbonnais	758	214	972
Soissonnais	768	228	996
Saintonge	799	195	994
Royal Deux-Ponts	798	172	970
Auxonne Artillery	312	190	502
Mineurs	0	22	22
Ouvriers	476	80	556
	3,911	1,101	5,012

⁴⁷⁸ Flohr, *Reisenbeschreibung*, fol. 128/129.

⁴⁷⁹ Acomb, *Closen*, p. 239.

⁴⁸⁰ "General headquarters was established at Peekskill Landing: the ovens for supplying the army were also built there. The administration and hospitals were housed in Peekskill Meeting-house." *Ibid.*, p. 241.

⁴⁸¹ These data again based on Keim, *Commemoration*. Of the absentees 477 were on special assignments and 631 were in the hospital. Since the 700 men ship garrison as well as the 660 men reinforcements had joined Rochambeau at Yorktown, the troop contingent is about 1,000 men larger than on the march south, when the army had stood at about 3,400 officers and men. Since neither the siege artillery, the sick or Lauzun's Legion made the march to Boston, Rochambeau left Crompond with about 3,700 men.

As it had the previous year, Lauzun's Legion was covering the flank of the French army. Encamped near Paramus on September 13, it rested on the 14th before it took up a post near Kakiat on September 15, now as the rear-guard of the army. Here it remained on the 18th when it rode to Stony Point and crossed the river that day as well.⁴⁸²

Once across, the troops marched past the Continental Army encamped close to the ferry landing via King's Ferry Road and the Albany Post Road to camp 37 of the return march. Camp 37 was established on the same spot where the Continental Army had encamped in July 1781 on its way to the Philipsburg encampment.⁴⁸³ (**Sites 5 and 40**) From September 17 to 23, 1782, the French forces, with Lauzun's Legion nearest the Hudson, occupied the hills along the north side of Crompond Road between Washington Street and Lafayette Avenue. They were from west/Peekskill Bay to the East: Drum Hill overlooking South Street, part of the old Post Road in 1781, Oak Hill, a one-time Continental Army camp and site of the hanging of convicted spy Daniel Strang in 1777, and the Villa Loretto Hills.⁴⁸⁴

On the other side of the river, so Clermont-Crèveœur, "we found 8,000 of the American army. Now they were all uniformed and well groomed. We were struck with the transformation of this army into one that was in no way inferior to ours in appearance. Their officers too were well turned out."⁴⁸⁵ Verger described the American camp thus: "The whole color-line of the American camp was bordered by a very beautiful arbor, decorated with various designs and coats of arms (which were very well executed) representing the different regiments. The American soldiers do not stack their arms in piles like ours but simply lean them against three posts set up in the form of a scaffold before their tents, which they erect on one line. From there we marched 4 miles to our camp at Peekskill. This was on top of an arid mountain surrounded by wilderness."⁴⁸⁶

On the 20th the French army passed in review before General Washington, and then, on the 22nd, Clermont-Crèveœur and his fellow officers "went to watch the maneuvers of the American army and were truly impressed. This proves what money and good officers can do to make good soldiers."⁴⁸⁷ Dr. Thatcher described the scene thus: "The whole army was paraded under arms this morning in order to honor his Excellency Count Rochambeau on his arrival from the southward. The troops were all formed in two lines, extending from the ferry, where the count crossed, to head-quarters. A troop of horse met and received him at King's ferry, and conducted him through the line to General Washington's quarters, where, sitting on his horse by the side of his excellency, the whole

⁴⁸² All information on Lauzun's route is taken from Lauberdrière's *Journal*.

⁴⁸³ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 2, p. 186, based on a note written on a map of the Peekskill camp drawn by Rochambeau's aide-de-camp Cromot du Bourg.

⁴⁸⁴ I am grateful to Peekskill City Historian John Curran for information about the location of the camp and the images on the Site Form. See John Curran, *The Attack at Peekskill by the British in 1777* (Peekskill, 1998), pp. 91-93, and Chester A. Smith, *Peekskill, A Friendly Town: Its Historic Sites and Shrines: A Pictorial History of the City from 1654 to 1952* (Peekskill, 1952), pp. 46, 125, and 148.

⁴⁸⁵ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, p. 78. Lauberdrière estimated the distance between the French camps in Stony Point and Peekskill at 7 miles.

⁴⁸⁶ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 165, with more descriptions of the American camp. Flohr too was much impressed with the decorations in the American camp.

⁴⁸⁷ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 78. These reviews took place on Washington Hill on land behind St. Mary's Cemetery.

army marched before him, and paid the usual salute and honors. Our troops were now in complete uniform, and exhibited every mark of soldierly discipline. Count Rochambeau was most highly gratified to perceive the very great improvement, which our army had made in appearance since he last reviewed them, and expressed his astonishment at their rapid progress in military skill and discipline. He said to General Washington, "You have formed an alliance with the King of Prussia. These troops are Prussians." Several of the principal officers of the French army, who have seen troops of different European nations, have bestowed the highest encomiums and applause on our army, and declared that they had seen none superior to the Americans."⁴⁸⁸

On September 22, the day of the review, the duc de Lauzun, the comte de Ségur, son of the war minister, together with a large group of French officers returned from France with orders from court.⁴⁸⁹ Before the two armies parted, Washington had the opportunity to decorate a number of French officers. Ségur had brought a number of crosses of the Order of St. Louis. Rochambeau asked Washington to do the honors and the American gladly attached the insignia of the military order to chests of the French officers.⁴⁹⁰

11.2 The Camp at Crompond/Yorktown, September 24 – October 22, 1782

Once the two allies had completed their fare-wells,⁴⁹¹ the French troops departed on the 24th of September "in a single column" for an eight-mile march to Crompond/Yorktown where they entered their 38th camp of the march from Virginia around Hunt's Tavern, where they would remain until October 22 (SITE 27). Rochambeau set up his headquarters with Captain Samuel Delevan (Site 41) on Hallock's Mill Road between Route 202 and Saw Mill River Road) at the center of the French infantry camp.⁴⁹² Only Lauzun's Legion encamped on a hill about 2 to 3 miles to the south near Hanover Farms from where it could patrol the Croton and the crossing at Pines Bridge.⁴⁹³

To keep the army occupied and to improve the water supply for his men, Rochambeau had them alter the course of south branch of Hallock's Mill Brook running north and crossing under Route 202/Crompond Road just south of the police station.⁴⁹⁴ (Site 42) The project benefited both the French troops as well as Mr. Hallock, the owner of the mill

⁴⁸⁸ Thatcher, *Journal*, p. 322. See also Verger's description of the review in Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 2, p. 166 and note 154. The "Prussian" influence was in large degree due to the work of Baron Steuben, the Prussian-born Inspector-General of the Continental Army, whom many French officers, including the vicomte de Rochambeau, Lauberdière, Closen, and Verger held responsible for this marked improvement. The Continental Army was between 5,500 and 6,000 men strong at the time.

⁴⁸⁹ The group had sailed on the *Aigle* and the *Gloire*, which had been pursued into the Delaware Bay by British frigates. The *Gloire* escaped but the *Aigle* was captured by the Royal navy. For a brief account of the affair see Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, vol. 1, pp.79/80.

⁴⁹⁰ Lauberdière, *Journal*, fol. 194.

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⁴⁹² On where Rochambeau stayed during the month in Crompond see Cortland Pell Auser, "Le Comte at Crompond: October, 1782." *The Westchester Historian* Part 1: Vol. 36 No. 2, (April, May, June, 1960), pp. 39-40, Part 2: Vol. 36 No. 3, (July, August, September 1960), pp. 65-67.

⁴⁹³ Acomb, *Closen*, p. 243.

⁴⁹⁴ See Acomb, *Closen*, p. 257. The story of the canal is also covered in Lauberdière, *Journal*, fol. 194.

fed by the stream, which was located at the present site of Hallocks Mill Pond.⁴⁹⁵ Late in the evening before their departure from Crompond, so Lauberdière in his journal, Rochambeau's staff, including he himself, was rudely awakened by his host Delevan, who was also the local sheriff, and who wanted to serve Rochambeau with an arrest warrant taken out by Hallock, owner of the mill-race which had been so greatly improved by the free labor of the men of the Soissonnais who had camped on his land, since the damages done by the troops had not yet been paid. Rather than get angry, Rochambeau ordered that damages be paid the man based on an impartial estimate. The respect for individual and property rights displayed by Rochambeau in this widely publicized affair reportedly helped save his life at least once during the French Revolution.⁴⁹⁶

Following this one-month rest at Crompond, Rochambeau regrouped his troops into brigades and ordered them to get ready to march. His instructions from Versailles indicated that in case the British were to evacuate either Charleston or New York, he was to take the army to Santo Domingo to await further orders. While a British evacuation of New York seemed remote, the evacuation of Charleston seemed imminent and eventually took place in December.

11.3 The March from Crompond to Boston, October 22 - December 25, 1782

On October 22, the First Brigade, consisting of the Bourbonnais and Royal Deux-Ponts, broke camp and began the march to Connecticut. Crossing the Croton and marching past Hait's (or Haight's) Tavern in Somers and the home of Joseph Purdy (**Site 43**), the First Brigade set up its 39th camp of the return march that night near the home of loyalist General De Lancey in North Salem.⁴⁹⁷ (**Site 44**) Or, in modern terms, it followed Route 202 toward Somers, turned onto Route 116 toward Salem Center and followed that route until it reached its camp after a 13-mile march.

Continuing down SR 116 to Wallace Road on October 23, the First Brigade crossed over into Connecticut where it marched north on Ridgebury Road and through Ridgebury to its 40th camp at Danbury while the Second Brigade broke camp in Crompond and marched to North Salem. Concurrently Lauzun's Legion retraced its steps to Peekskill, crossed the Hudson once again and began its march via Suffern to Wilmington and winter quarters while the Continental Army too entered into what would be its final encampment. Dr. Thatcher recorded that on "At reveille on the 26th instant, the left wing of our army, under the command of General Heath, decamped from Verplank's point and marched to the highlands; took our lodging in the woods, without covering, and were exposed to heavy rain during a night and day. Thence we crossed the Hudson to West Point, and marched over the mountain called Butter hill; passed the night in the open field

⁴⁹⁵ Martino, *Yorktown*, p. 32. I am grateful to Mr. Martino for his assistance. He also informed me that some 25 years ago the mill stones from Hallock's Mill could still be seen near the pond.

⁴⁹⁶ Descriptions of this event can be found in almost all journals, including Rochambeau's *Memoirs*. See also Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 167, with a list of accounts, incl. the use of the event in Rochambeau's favor during the French Revolution, Acomb, *Closen*, pp. 257-259, and in Lauberdière, *Journal*, fol. 196/197.

⁴⁹⁷ De Lancey's home serves today as the North Salem Town Hall. See Fred C. Warner, "Famous Landmark restored. Restoration of North Salem's Town Hall." *The Westchester Historian* Vol. 34, No. 1, (January-March 1958), pp. 10-12.

and the next day reached the ground where we are to erect log huts for our winter-quarters, near New Windsor."⁴⁹⁸ (Site 45)

In Danbury the regiments camped near the intersection of Center and South Streets, their 40th camp on the way back from Yorktown. The following day, the 24th, they marched on to Newtown, where they occupied the same campsite as the previous year. Those officers who could renewed acquaintances from the previous year: Desandrouins, for example, lodged with a man named John "Trobrige, a very good man but poor."⁴⁹⁹ On the 25th, the Second Brigade joined the first brigade at Newtown, which crossed the Stratford River on "Carleton's Bridge" on the 26th and marched on through Woodbury. The 42nd camp at Breakneck was where the army had camped the previous year.

"On the 27th," so Closen, "we re-crossed the same Stratford River on a wooden bridge, like Carleton's, At Barnes' Tavern (camp 43) the troops occupied the same campsite as the previous year, and, so Flohr, had their first ball in Connecticut. On the 28th it was on to Farmington (camp 44), where campsite lay more toward the center of the village as compared to the previous year. On 29th, the First Brigade arrived in East Hartford and was joined by the Second Brigade the next day. Their campsite (camp 45) was that which only the Soissonnais had occupied the previous year. The troops remained here from October 30 through November 4.

In East Hartford, Rochambeau announced to the troops that they were to march to Boston and embark for the West Indies while he would return to France. To accelerate the march "the artillery obtained permission to march, from now on, one day in advance of the 1st Brigade, for convenience, and set out early on its way" on October 30. (1) The artillery was halfway through its march when a courier from Admiral de Vaudreuil informed Rochambeau that the ships would not be ready for embarkation by November 15. The artillery returned to East Hartford but after four days left again for Bolton (on November 3, 1782). On November 4, it was followed by the First Brigade. At camp 47 from November 5-7 at Windham the two brigades joined "in frightful weather." In the morning of the 7th, Rochambeau, anxious to reach Newport, rode ahead. After "breakfast at Canterbury," so Closen, they pushed on through Plainfield "to dine at Voluntown, where we found the artillery already parked. We did not go any further that day. ... The state of Rhode Island begins 3 miles from Voluntown."

The First Brigade, now commanded by baron de Vioménil, broke camp in Windham, and marched to its next camp, camp 48, in Canterbury. By now it was early November, and winter was upon New England. Clermont-Crèveœur could not "express how uncomfortable we were while camping in a country where the cold was already very intense. We were frozen in our tents. And the tents were frozen so stiff that, after the pegs and poles were removed to take them down, they stood alone. So you can judge how cold it was." On November 8/9, 1782, Rochambeau's troops pitched their tents for the last time in Connecticut in the 49th camp in the fields east of Dorrance Tavern on the north side of the road to Rhode Island. Over the next two days, the infantry brigades followed the

⁴⁹⁸ Thatcher, *Journal*, p. 334.

⁴⁹⁹ Gabriel, *Desandrouins*, p. 356. At Newtown he again staid with the same family he had lodged with the previous year. The family insisted on providing lodging and showed him gratitude and "toutes sortes d'amitiés," a clear sign of grass-roots friendship that had developed via personal contact.

artillery into Rhode Island where they reached Providence on November 10 and 11. Closen, who had always spoken highly of Connecticut, summed up his experiences thus: "We have, on the whole, been treated wonderfully well wherever the army has marched."

Three weeks later, on 1 December 1782, Rochambeau said farewell to his troops in Providence. Accompanied by his son and the comtes de Vauban and de Lauberdière, he set out for Newburgh in a heavy snowfall to say his farewell to Washington. Traveling via Angel's Tavern, the group either spent the first night at Dorrance' Tavern just across the border in Connecticut or possibly at the White Horse Tavern in Andover. Canterbury, Windham, Bolton, Harford, Farmington, Litchfield, a community of 70 or 80 homes, were the next stops along the route until Moorhouse Tavern in Dutchess County in New York was reached on December 6. From there it was but a day's journey to Newburgh and Washington' headquarters. Rochambeau was pleased to renew his acquaintance with Mrs. Washington, while some of his officers had the honor to meet her for the first time.⁵⁰⁰ After a seven-day stay, Rochambeau pressed on to Philadelphia on the 14th, where he received the thanks of Congress. On January 14, 1783, the *Emeraude*, with Rochambeau on board and British frigates in hot pursuit, sailed for France. Three weeks earlier, on Christmas Eve 1782, the bulk of his army had departed from Boston harbor for the Caribbean. Though neither Rochambeau nor his troops knew it, Preliminaries of Peace had been signed in Paris on November 30, 1782, in which "His Britannic Majesty acknowledges the said United States ... to be free Sovereign and independent States."

⁵⁰⁰ This brief description of the journey is based on Lauberdière's *Journal*, fols. 209-214. Lauberdière is not clear where the group stayed the first night. For more details, and rather unflattering description of Mrs. Washington by the young comte, see my "America the Ungrateful." *American Heritage* Vol. 48, No. 1, (February/March 1997), pp. 101-106.

CONCLUSION

"We wouldn't have a country if it weren't for [the French]," McCullough claimed in his interview with *American Heritage*. And though it is usually fruitless to speculate about "what if's," a look at the facts shows that French support was indeed vital for the success of the American Revolutionary War.

In February 1762, French foreign minister Choiseul had declared that he had "only one foreign policy, a fraternal union with Spain; only one foreign policy for war, and that is England."⁵⁰¹ He thought that war might come within five years. It took thirteen years, but the shots fired at Lexington and Concord had hardly been heard in Paris when French financial and military aid began flowing to the rebellious colonies via Beaumarchais. Almost 100 volunteers, some more useful than others, provided crucial expertise for American artillery, engineering, and map-making. The victory at Saratoga was won with French guns and French powder. A few months later, in February 1778, France became the first foreign country to recognize the United States as an independent nation; military action beginning later that year occupied British forces from Gibraltar to India and from Senegal to the Caribbean, keeping them from the American theatre of war. In the spring of 1780, the comte de Rochambeau brought over 5,000 officers and men across the ocean and forced the surrender of Lord Cornwallis fifteen months later. Yet the presence of Rochambeau's forces on the American mainland had consequences well beyond its small numbers: they decided the outcome of the war.

In July 1780, Rochambeau had arrived with over 5,000 officers and men; the ships that left Boston on Christmas Eve 1782 carried about 1,000 fewer men. About 700 men remained behind, the last of which returned to France in November 1783. A few days later, on January 8, 1783, Rochambeau and a small entourage of officers sailed from Annapolis for France. A final transport of 85 sick soldiers left Baltimore on October 5, 1783. The *expédition particulière* had come to an end.⁵⁰² During the 30 months that the 492 officers and 6,038 men of the *expédition particulière* had been in, or on their way to and from America, about 600 men (including 70 in the six months following the return in 1783) died, though only about 75 of them from battle or battle-related wounds. Another seven were executed. Some 316 men, of whom only 26 were native Frenchmen, deserted, including 80 men recruited in America.⁵⁰³ 140, including 30 "American" recruits, were discharged. 31 officers, but only 14 enlisted men, retired with military pensions in the New World. To put these figures into perspective: within six months of returning to France, Rochambeau's units discharged 832 men whose enlistment had expired!⁵⁰⁴

⁵⁰¹ Quoted in Eccles, "French Alliance," p. 148.

⁵⁰² Noailles, *Marins*, pp. 407-408.

⁵⁰³ Some of these deserters seem to have found America not to their liking: In July 1785, French consul Martin Oster wrote from Virginia that he had granted passports to 13 of them to return to France under an amnesty granted by the king earlier that year. J. Rives Childs, "French Consul Martin Oster reports on Virginia, 1784-1796" *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* Vol. 76, (1968), pp. 27-40, p. 37.

⁵⁰⁴ All figures are taken from the various articles published by Sam Scott cited above. More than 1/4 of all desertions in the French forces occurred during the last three months before departure.

Unlike German or German-speaking soldiers from Alsace or Lorraine, French soldiers rather risked the dangerous transatlantic voyage than stay in America. Despite officially fostered friendship and numerous addresses of gratitude -- *the Boston Gazette and Country Journal* claimed in its issue of December 9, 1782, that the "Behaviour of these Troops ... sufficiently contradicts the *infamous Falsehoods* and *Misrepresentations* usually imposed on the World by *perfidious Britons* -- Franco-American relations had always remained tenuous at best. The allies simply never trusted each other. Axel von Fersen informed his father in November 1782 that "the time we have passed with them (the Americans) has not taught us to love or esteem them." Even an enlisted man such as Flohr felt the mistrust in an alliance held together only by a common enemy. For mid-December 1782 he reported in his journal: "Since we continued to remain there (in Providence) for some additional time, the Americans never felt quite at ease but continued to believe that the French wanted to make continued use of that area (i.e. permanently occupy it) since they didn't seem to want to move on at all, and thanked us a second time for the aid we had provided." Such fears, as we know, were unfounded, but their continued existence even after the victory was won and after all that France had done in support of American independence, shows how deep-seated and long-living they were!

Because Rochambeau's troops were not the only French forces to fight in America before, or after, Yorktown. In fact they represent only a fractions of the total number of Frenchmen fighting for American Independence, which historians have estimated at 18,000 soldiers and 31,000 sailors. At Yorktown alone, some 14,000 Frenchmen, including 5,200 Marines in reserve, joined 5,800 American Continentals and 3,000 Virginia militias against 6,000 British and their German allies. It was French expertise in siege warfare, not to mention the French siege artillery brought by Rochambeau's forces, which eventually forced the surrender. The French contribution to American victory becomes even more obvious when we look at the role of the French navy. It was Admiral de Grasse' fleet which kept the Royal Navy from making contact with Cornwallis when it sailed out to meet the challenge in the Battle of the Capes in early September 1781. Without the French fleet, British Admiral Graves might just have succeeded in rescuing Cornwallis from Yorktown. The Continental Navy would have been unable to stop him: in 1781, the Royal Navy had about 140 ships of the line, the French had 67 capital ships, Spain had 58, the Dutch 19, and the United States had none.

French expenditures for the war were enormous: Robert D. Harris sets the total French cost for the war for the years 1776-1782 at 928.9 million livres (as opposed to 2,270.5 million livres for the British), with another 125.2 million to be added for the year 1783! At the same time the total ordinary income of the French crown stood at 377.5 million livres for the year 1776. More than half of the cost of the war had to be funded by loans, and by the end of 1782 the total constituted debt of the French monarchy had reached 4,538 million livres. Even if most historians agree today that these additional outlays for the war were not the primary cause of the French Revolution, there can be no doubt that an extra billion livres in expenditures, and annual expenditures of some 207 million livres just to service the debt, did nothing to enhance the financial situation of the French monarchy between 1783 and the outbreak of the revolution in 1789.⁵⁰⁵

⁵⁰⁵ All figures from Harris, "French Finances," pp. 233-258. For a refutation of claims that a transfer of the ideology of the American Revolution played a significant role in the French Revolution of 1789 see the articles by Samuel Scott cited above.

Most of these funds were spent on the navy: the annual naval budget rose from 33 million livres in 1775 to 169 million in 1780 and peaked at almost 200 million livres in 1782.⁵⁰⁶ During these same years, however, the army budget increased only marginally from 93.5 million in 1775 to 95 million in 1783.⁵⁰⁷ Expenditures on the American war were minimal within the overall French war effort. According to Claude C. Sturgill, "all of the monies directly appropriated for the entire cost" of Rochambeau's little army amounted to exactly 12,730,760 livres or a little over 1% of the total cost of the war!⁵⁰⁸ In addition the American rebels received 18 million in loans, to be repaid after the war, as well as outright subsidies of about 9 million from the foreign affairs department and other aid for a total of about 48 million livres spent in support of the American Revolution.

For France, the American struggle for independence was never more than a side-show, a convenient "excuse" for resuming the century-old struggle against British supremacy in Europe and on the oceans of the world. But the financial figures are just one indication for the marginality of the *expédition particulière* within the French war effort. A look at the number of personnel involved also helps to place Rochambeau's army in perspective. In 1780, the budgeted strength of the French line infantry, cavalry, and light troops stood at some 130,000 officers and men: the 6,000 men of Rochambeau's troops formed but a small fraction of the total French military strength. In 1776, France had stationed 19 battalions of infantry in her Caribbean possessions; in the course of the war she sent another 29 battalions there for a total of 48 battalions. Rochambeau brought all of 8 infantry battalions with him in 1780. At Yorktown, Rochambeau suffered not even 200 casualties in dead and wounded: between March and December 1781, the French navy operating in the Caribbean suffered over 5,000 casualties, the equivalent of almost the entire force under Rochambeau's command. In the disastrous defeat in the Battle of the Saints in April 1782, Admiral de Grasse suffered over 3,000 casualties, more than fifteen times what Rochambeau had lost before Yorktown.

What did France have to show for all her exertions? The answer is: not much if anything, not least because of the actions of her American allies. Not that she had wanted any territorial gain: in article 6 of the alliance of February 6, 1778, Louis XVI had "renounce[d] for ever the possession of the Islands of Bermudas as well as of any part of the continent of North america which [had been French] before the treaty of Paris in 1763." Besides taking revenge on Britain for that treaty, Vergennes had wanted exclusive fishing rights off Newfoundland, or at the very least keep the British out. But when the time came to negotiate the peace settlement, he found out to his dismay that Franklin and his fellow commissioners had made peace without him in clear violation of article 8 of their 1778 agreement. "Neither of the two Parties shall conclude either Truce or Peace with Great Britain, without the formal consent of the other *first* (my emphasis) obtain'd."

But that was exactly what Franklin and his colleagues had done when they signed the Preliminaries of Peace in November 1782, thereby forcing the French hand. Franklin told Vergennes that his negotiations with Britain behind Vergennes' back were "a mere breach of etiquette," but the Frenchman was under no illusion that if he would not agree to end the war on British and American terms, the Americans would sign a separate peace treaty

⁵⁰⁶ Dull, *Navy*, pp. 346/47.

⁵⁰⁷ Sturgill, "French War Budget," p. 182, and Sturgill, "Money," p. 24.

⁵⁰⁸ Sturgill, "Observations," p. 183.

with Britain, leaving the French to continue the war by themselves. France did not even gain the exclusive fishing rights she had wanted. In article 3 of the preliminaries the United States and Great Britain had agreed "that the People of the United States shall continue to enjoy unmolested the Right to take Fish of every kind on the Grand Bank, and on all the other Banks of Newfoundland; Also in the Gulph of St Laurence, and at all other Places in the Sea where the Inhabitants of both Countries used at any time heretofore to fish." An embittered Vergennes wrote to the Chevalier de la Luzerne, French representative in Philadelphia, that if "we can judge the future by what passes presently before our eyes we shall be paid badly for what we have done for the United States of America, and for having assured them of that title."⁵⁰⁹

In the short run it seemed as if Vergennes' prediction would come true. The alliance of 1778 had been an alliance of convenience, which had served its purpose once American independence had been won. In 1793, now President, Washington abrogated the 1778 treaties in light of the events of the French Revolution and the French declaration of war on Austria. The United States must not, and would not, get drawn into European affairs, the "foreign entanglements" of Washington's Farewell Address.

Seven years later, in December 1800, the United States rather unceremoniously cancelled the "Perpetual Alliance" of 1778 and subsequent agreements altogether since they were not "able to agree at present" as to what the treaties implied. The Monroe Doctrine of 1823 reaffirmed American isolationism, and for the remainder of the century America looked west, to the Pacific Ocean, rather than east across the Atlantic.⁵¹⁰

Events in Europe in the second decade of this century forced the United States to look to the Old World and to abandon her isolationist stance, at least temporarily. It was then that Vergennes too was proved wrong. In 1783, Count de Aranda, Spanish Ambassador to France, had written to Louis XVI that in America a "federal republic is born a pygmy but a day will come when it will be a giant, a colossus, formidable for this country."⁵¹¹ That day came in 1917. Almost 135 years after France had helped ensure American independence, America "paid her debt to Lafayette," first in 1917/18, and again in 1944, when American troops under General Dwight D. Eisenhower helped liberate France.⁵¹²

France honored General Eisenhower and his men with a *Voie de la Liberté* tracing their route from the beaches of Normandy to Paris and victory. The 225th anniversary of the American Revolutionary War is the time for America to finally honor the comte de Rochambeau and his men, French, German, Irish, Dutch, Swiss and Swedish, White, Black, and Red, with a *Voie de l'Indépendance*, the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route tracing their steps from Newport to Yorktown and victory.

⁵⁰⁹ Quoted in Eccles, "French Alliance," p. 161.

⁵¹⁰ During the 1860s because of the attempts by Emperor Napoleon III of France to place Maximilian on the throne of Mexico, France and the United States came to blows over the enforcement of the Monroe Doctrine. It is one of the ironies of history that the French 99th Regiment of Infantry, the successor regiment to the Royal Deux-Ponts, whose standard then, as well as today, had the name "Yorktown" embroidered on it, would fight against American troops in Mexico in support of Emperor Maximilian of Habsburg.

⁵¹¹ Ibid., p. 162.

⁵¹² At least the United States did not forget the ill-fated Louis XVI. On the bicentennial of the execution of the king in 1993, the United States' government laid a wreath at his tomb; the French government on the other hand very pointedly ignored the occasion.

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EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY CURRENCIES AND EXCHANGE RATES

German Currency:

1 Gulden (= fl; gold, after circa 1500 silver) = 60 Kreuzer

1 fl rhein.	= 15 Batzen	= 60 Kreuzer	= 240 Denar	= 480 Heller
1 Albus	= 1 1/2 Batzen	= 6 Kreuzer	= 24 Denar	= 48 Heller
1 Batzen		= 4 Kreuzer	= 16 Denar	= 32 Heller
1 Groschen		= 3 Kreuzer	= 12 Denar	= 24 Heller
1 Kreuzer			= 4 Denar	= 8 Heller
1 Denar				= 2 Heller

1 Königstaler:	1 fl 20 Kreuzer rhein.
1 Laubtaler:	2 fl 45 Kreuzer rhein.
1 Dukaten:	5 fl rhein. (since 1559)
1 Karolin:	11 fl

French Currency:

Louis (Gold)	= 20 livres (24 livres after 1726)	= 480 sous	= 7200 denier
Livre (Silver)		= 20 sous	= 300 denier
Sous (Copper)			= 15 denier
Denier (Copper)			

Ecu (silver) = 3 livres = 60 sous = 900 denier

Franc = 1 livre, an administrative unit only

English Currency:

Pound Sterling (silver)	= 20 Shillings	= 240 Pennies	= 480 Ha'pennies	= 960 Farthings
Shilling (Silver)		= 12 Pennies	= 24 Ha'pennies	= 48 Farthings
Groat (Silver)		= 4 Pennies	= 8 Ha'pennies	= 16 Farthings
Penny (Copper)			= 2 Ha'pennies	= 4 Farthings
Ha'penny (Copper)				= 2 Farthings
Farthing (Brass)				
Guinee (Gold)	= 21 shillings (after 1707)			
Crown (Silver)	= 5 shillings			

Sovereign = £ 1 Gold coin, introduced in 1817

In 1849, a silver florin was introduced, worth 2 shillings.

In the cash-starved colonies in North America, Spanish coinage was widely used.

Spanish Currency:

Doubloon (Gold) = 8 Escudos = 4 Pistols = 16 Pieces of Eight = 128 Reals
Pistol (Gold) = 2 Escudos = 4 Pieces of Eight = 32 Reals
Escudo (Gold) = 2 Pieces Of Eight = 16 Reals
Piece Of Eight (Gold) = 1 Peso = 8 Reals
Real (Silver) = 8 Copper Pesos
Peso (Copper)

Piaster (gold) = 8 Reales = 1 Piece of Eight = 1 Spanish Milled Dollar = 1 Peso

Portuguese Currency:

Johannes (Gold, 1722) = 1/2 Dobra = 1/2 Doubloon = 4 Escudos = 8 Pieces of Eight
= 64 Reals = 36s sterling (called a *Half-Joe* in America)

The chief trade coin of the American colonies was the Spanish Milled Dollar or Piece of Eight and the Spanish Pistole worth 12s. 2.8 pence (=d) sterling.

There was a substantial difference in the trade value of these coins between England and her colonies. In England the Spanish milled dollar was worth anywhere between 4s. 3d. and 4s. 6d. st., up to 4 s 9 d. st. In New York, however, the Spanish milled dollar was rated by custom at 8s.; in Pennsylvania at 7s. 6d. in Delaware at 7s. 6d. and in Virginia the Spanish milled dollar was worth 6s. 8d. by 1764. Even English coins were valued higher in the colonies: the silver crown, worth 5s. in England, was rated at 6s. 3d. by the Virginia Act of 1727.

How did these currencies relate to each other? In 1764, Richard Wolters, British agent in Rotterdam, reckoned 1 Pistole at 17s. 2d.st., or 4s. 3.5d. st. per Piece of Eight.⁵¹³ In a letter of May 1780, Axel von Fersen wrote that 1 Piastre/Piece of Eight/Peso was worth 6 livres = 62 pennies = 5 s 2 d in America. Since he only payed 5 livres 5 sous = 4 shilling 5 pence in Brest, he hoped to make a profit upon arrival in Newport. Georg Daniel Flohr gave the value of 1 Spanish dollar at 2 fl 20 Kreuzer rhein., and according to Harris, "the British pound sterling was equal to 23.17 *livres tournois*" during the 1780s.⁵¹⁴ The Abbé Robin, a chaplain in one of Rochambeau's regiments in turn gave the value of a shilling in New England in the summer of 1781 as 22 sous 6 deniers or 22 livres 8 sous to the pound sterling.⁵¹⁵

⁵¹³ Frank Spencer, An Eighteenth-Century Account of German Emigration to the American Colonies. *The Journal of Modern History* 28 (March-December 1956), pp. 55-59, p. 58.

⁵¹⁴ Robert D. Harris, "French Finances and the American War, 1777-1783" *Journal of Modern History* 48 (June 1976), pp. 233-258, p. 247, note 41.

⁵¹⁵ Abbé (Charles César) Robin, *New Travels through North-America: In a Series of Letters* (Philadelphia, 1783), p. 16.

While stationed in Boston in the summer of 1775, Corporal Thomas Sullivan of the British 49th Regiment gave the value of a Spanish milled dollar at 4 s 6 d.⁵¹⁶

Based on the value of the Piece of Eight in England and contemporary sources as well as admitting for currency fluctuations we get the following exchange rates

1 £ Sterling = 23 livres 3 sous 6 deniers
1 £ Sterling ~ 4.5 Pieces of Eight
1 £ Sterling ~ 9 fl 30 Kreuzer rhein.

1 Piece of Eight = 4 shilling 5 pence
1 Piece of Eight = 2 fl 20 Kreuzer rhein.
1 Piece of Eight = 5 livres 5 sous

1 Livre = 24 Kreuzer rhein.
1 Livre = 10 pence 1.4 farthing
1 Livre = 1 reales 1 copper peso

1 fl rhein. = 2 s 2d st.
1 fl rhein. = 2 livres 10 sous
1 fl rhein. = 4 reales

⁵¹⁶ S. Sydney Bradford, "The Common British Soldier - From the Journal of Thomas Sullivan, 49th Regiment of Foot." *Maryland Historical Magazine* Vol. 62, No. 3, (September 1967), pp. 219-253, p. 243.

DOCUMENTS

1) Treaty of Paris (February 10, 1763)

The definitive Treaty of Peace and Friendship between his Britannick Majesty, the Most Christian King, and the King of Spain. Concluded at Paris the 10th day of February, 1763. To which the King of Portugal acceded on the same day. In the Name of the Most Holy and Undivided Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. So be it.

Be it known to all those whom it shall, or may, in any manner, belong,

It has pleased the Most High to diffuse the spirit of union and concord among the Princes, whose divisions had spread troubles in the four parts of the world, and to inspire them with the inclination to cause the comforts of peace to succeed to the misfortunes of a long and bloody war, which having arisen between England and France during the reign of the Most Serene and Most Potent Prince, George the Second, by the grace of God, King of Great Britain, of glorious memory, continued under the reign of the Most Serene and Most Potent Prince, George the Third, his successor, and, in its progress, communicated itself to Spain and Portugal: Consequently, the Most Serene and Most Potent Prince, George the Third, by the grace of God, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, Duke of Brunswick and Lunenburg, Arch Treasurer and Elector of the Holy Roman Empire; the Most Serene and Most Potent Prince, Lewis the Fifteenth, by the grace of God, Most Christian King; and the Most Serene and Most Potent Prince, Charles the Third, by the grace of God, King of Spain and of the Indies, after having laid the foundations of peace in the preliminaries signed at Fontainebleau the third of November last; and the Most Serene and Most Potent Prince, Don Joseph the First, by the grace of God, King of Portugal and of the Algarves, after having acceded thereto, determined to compleat, without delay, this great and important work. For this purpose, the high contracting parties have named and appointed their respective Ambassadors Extraordinary and Ministers Plenipotentiary, viz. his Sacred Majesty the King of Great Britain, the Most Illustrious and Most Excellent Lord, John Duke and Earl of Bedford, Marquis of Tavistock, &c. his Minister of State, Lieutenant General of his Armies, Keeper of his Privy Seal, Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, and his Ambassador Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to his Most Christian Majesty; his Sacred Majesty the Most Christian King, the Most Illustrious and Most Excellent Lord, Cæsar Gabriel de Choiseul, Duke of Praslin, Peer of France, Knight of his Orders, Lieutenant General of his Armies and of the province of Brittany, Counsellor of all his Counsils, and Minister and Secretary of State, and of his Commands and Finances: his Sacred Majesty the Catholick King, the Most Illustrious and Most Excellent Lord, Don Jerome Grimaldi, Marquis de Grimaldi, Knight of the Most Christian King's Orders, Gentleman of his Catholick Majesty's Bedchamber in Employment, and his Ambassador Extraordinary to his Most Christian Majesty; his Sacred Majesty the Most Faithful King, the Most Illustrious and Most Excellent Lord, Martin de Mello and Castro, Knight professed of the Order of Christ, of his Most Faithful Majesty's Council, and his Ambassador and Minister Plenipotentiary to his Most Christian Majesty.

Who, after having duly communicated to each other their full powers, in good form, copies whereof are transcribed at the end of the present treaty of peace, have agreed upon the articles, the tenor of which is as follows:

Article I. There shall be a Christian, universal, and perpetual peace, as well by sea as by land, and a sincere and constant friendship shall be re established between their Britannick, Most Christian, Catholick, and Most Faithful Majesties, and between their heirs and successors, kingdoms, dominions, provinces, countries, subjects, and vassals, of what quality or condition soever they be, without exception of places or of persons: ...

Article II. ...

Article III. ...

Article IV. His Most Christian Majesty renounces all pretensions which he has heretofore formed or might have formed to Nova Scotia or Acadia in all its parts, and guaranties the whole of it, and with all its dependencies, to the King of Great Britain: Moreover, his Most Christian Majesty cedes and guaranties to his said Britannick Majesty, in full right, Canada, with all its dependencies, as well as the island of Cape Breton, and all the other islands and coasts in the gulph and river of St. Lawrence, and in general, every thing that depends on the said countries, lands, islands, and coasts, with the sovereignty, property, possession, and all rights acquired by treaty, or otherwise, which the Most Christian King and the Crown of France have had till now over the said countries, lands, islands, places, coasts, and their inhabitants, so that the Most Christian King cedes and makes over the whole to the said King, and to the Crown of Great Britain, and that in the most ample manner and form, without restriction, and without any liberty to depart from the said cession and guaranty under any pretence, or to disturb Great Britain in the possessions above mentioned. His Britannick Majesty, on his side, agrees to grant the liberty of the Catholick religion to the inhabitants of Canada: he will, in consequence, give the most precise and most effectual orders, that his new Roman Catholic subjects may profess the worship of their religion according to the rites of the Romish church, as far as the laws of Great Britain permit. His Britannick Majesty farther agrees, that the French inhabitants, or others who had been subjects of the Most Christian King in Canada, may retire with all safety and freedom wherever they shall think proper, and may sell their estates, provided it be to the subjects of his Britannick Majesty, and bring away their effects as well as their persons, without being restrained in their emigration, under any pretence whatsoever, except that of debts or of criminal prosecutions: The term limited for this emigration shall be fixed to the space of eighteen months, to be computed from the day of the exchange of the ratification of the present treaty.

Article V. The subjects of France shall have the liberty of fishing and drying on a part of the coasts of the island of Newfoundland, ... and his Britannick Majesty consents to leave to the subjects of the Most Christian King the liberty of fishing in the gulph of St. Lawrence, on condition that the subjects of France do not exercise the said fishery but at the distance of three leagues from all the coasts belonging to Great Britain, as well those of the continent as those of the islands situated in the said gulph of St. Lawrence. And as to what relates to the fishery on the coasts of the island of Cape Breton, out of the said gulph, the subjects of the Most Christian King shall not be permitted to exercise the said

fishery but at the distance of fifteen leagues from the coasts of the island of Cape Breton; and the fishery on the coasts of Nova Scotia or Acadia, and every where else out of the said gulph, shall remain on the foot of former treaties.

Article VI. The King of Great Britain cedes the islands of St. Pierre and Macquelon, in full right, to his Most Christian Majesty, to serve as a shelter to the French fishermen; and his said Most Christian Majesty engages not to fortify the said islands; to erect no buildings upon them but merely for the conveniency of the fishery; and to keep upon them a guard of fifty men only for the police.

Article VII. In order to reestablish peace on solid and durable foundations, and to remove for ever all subject of dispute with regard to the limits of the British and French territories on the continent of America; it is agreed that for the future, the confines between the dominions of his Britannick Majesty and those of his Most Christian Majesty, in that part of the world, shall be fixed irrevocably by a line drawn along the middle of the River Mississippi, from its source to the river Iberville, and from thence, by a line drawn along the middle of this river, and the lakes Maurepas and Pontchartrain to the sea; and for this purpose, the Most Christian King cedes in full right, and guaranties to his Britannick Majesty the river and port of the Mobile, and every thing which he possesses, or ought to possess, on the left side of the river Mississippi, except the town of New Orleans and the island in which it is situated, which shall remain to France, provided that the navigation of the river Mississippi shall be equally free, as well to the subjects of Great Britain as to those of France, in its whole breadth and length, from its source to the sea, and expressly that part which is between the said island of New Orleans and the right bank of that river, as well as the passage both in and out of its mouth: It is farther stipulated, that the vessels belonging to the subjects of either nation shall not be stopped, visited, or subjected to the payment of any duty whatsoever. The stipulations inserted in the IVth article, in favour of the inhabitants of Canada shall also take place with regard to the inhabitants of the countries ceded by this article.

Article VIII. The King of Great Britain shall restore to France the islands of Guadeloupe, of Marie Galante, of Desirade, of Martinico, and of Belleisle; and the fortresses of these islands shall be restored in the same condition they were in when they were conquered by the British arms, provided that his Britannick Majesty's subjects, who shall have settled in the said islands, or those who shall have any commercial affairs to settle there or in other places restored to France by the present treaty, shall have liberty to sell their lands and their estates, to settle their affairs, to recover their debts, and to bring away their effects as well as their persons, on board vessels, which they shall be permitted to send to the said islands and other places restored as above, and which shall serve for this use only, without being restrained on account of their religion, or under any other pretence whatsoever, except that of debts or of criminal prosecutions: and for this purpose, the term of eighteen months is allowed to his Britannick Majesty's subjects, to be computed from the day of the exchange of the ratifications of the present treaty; but, as the liberty granted to his Britannick Majesty's subjects, to bring away their persons and their effects, in vessels of their nation, may be liable to abuses if precautions were not taken to prevent them; it has been expressly agreed between his Britannick Majesty and his Most Christian Majesty, that the number of English vessels which have leave to go to the said islands and places restored to France, shall be limited, as well as the number of tons of

each one; that they shall go in ballast; shall set sail at a fixed time; and shall make one voyage only; all the effects belonging to the English being to be embarked at the same time. It has been farther agreed, that his Most Christian Majesty shall cause the necessary passports to be given to the said vessels; that, for the greater security, it shall be allowed to place two French clerks or guards in each of the said vessels, which shall be visited in the landing places and ports of the said islands and places restored to France, and that the merchandize which shall be found therein shall be confiscated.

Article IX. The Most Christian King cedes and guaranties to his Britannick Majesty, in full right, the islands of Grenada, and the Grenadines, with the same stipulations in favor of the inhabitants of this colony, inserted in the Ivth article for those of Canada: And the partition of the islands called neutral, is agreed and fixed, so that those of St. Vincent, Dominico, and Tobago, shall remain in full right to Great Britain, and that of St. Lucia shall be delivered to France, to enjoy the same likewise in full right, and the high contracting parties guaranty the partition so stipulated.

Article X. His Britannick Majesty shall restore to France the island of Goree in the condition it was in when conquered: and his Most Christian Majesty cedes, in full right, and guaranties to the King of Great Britain the river Senegal, with the forts and factories of St. Lewis, Podor, and Galam, and with all the rights and dependencies of the said river Senegal.

Article XI. In the East Indies Great Britain shall restore to France, in the condition they are now in, the different factories which that Crown possessed, as well as on the coast of Coromandel and Orixa as on that of Malabar, as also in Bengal, at the beginning of the year 1749. And his Most Christian Majesty renounces all pretension to the acquisitions which he has made on the coast of Coromandel and Orixa since the said beginning of the year 1749. His Most Christian Majesty shall restore, on his side, all that he may have conquered from Great Britain in the East Indies during the present war; and will expressly cause Nattal and Tapanouilly, in the island of Sumatra, to be restored; he engages farther, not to erect fortifications, or to keep troops in any part of the dominions of the Subah of Bengal. And in order to preserve future peace on the coast of Coromandel and Orixa, the English and French shall acknowledge Mahomet Ally Khan for lawful Nabob of the Carnatick, and Salabat Jing for lawful Subah of the Decan; and both parties shall renounce all demands and pretensions of satisfaction with which they might charge each other, or their Indian allies, for the depredations or pillage committed on the one side or on the other during the war.

Article XII. The island of Minorca shall be restored to his Britannick Majesty, as well as Fort St. Philip, in the same condition they were in when conquered by the arms of the Most Christian King; and with the artillery which was there when the said island and the said fort were taken.

Article XIII. ...

Article XIV. ...

Article XV. ...

Article XVI. ...

Article XVII. ...

Article XVIII. ...

Article XIX. The King of Great Britain shall restore to Spain all the territory which he has conquered in the island of Cuba, with the fortress of the Havannah; and this fortress, as well as all the other fortresses of the said island, shall be restored in the same condition they were in when conquered by his Britannick Majesty's arms, provided that his Britannick Majesty's subjects who shall have settled in the said island, restored to Spain by the present treaty, or those who shall have any commercial affairs to settle there, shall have liberty to sell their lands and their estates, to settle their affairs, recover their debts, and to bring away their effects, as well as their persons, on board vessels which they shall be permitted to send to the said island restored as above, and which shall serve for that use only, without being restrained on account of their religion, or under any other pretence whatsoever, except that of debts or of criminal prosecutions: And for this purpose, the term of eighteen months is allowed to his Britannick Majesty's subjects, to be computed from the day of the exchange of the ratifications of the present treaty: but as the liberty granted to his Britannick Majesty's subjects, to bring away their persons and their effects, in vessels of their nation, may be liable to abuses if precautions were not taken to prevent them; it has been expressly agreed between his Britannick Majesty and his Catholick Majesty, that the number of English vessels which shall have leave to go to the said island restored to Spain shall be limited, as well as the number of tons of each one; that they shall go in ballast; shall set sail at a fixed time; and shall make one voyage only; all the effects belonging to the English being to be embarked at the same time: it has been farther agreed, that his Catholick Majesty shall cause the necessary passports to be given to the said vessels; that for the greater security, it shall be allowed to place two Spanish clerks or guards in each of the said vessels, which shall be visited in the landing places and ports of the said island restored to Spain, and that the merchandize which shall be found therein shall be confiscated.

Article XX. In consequence of the restitution stipulated in the preceding article, his Catholick Majesty cedes and guaranties, in full right, to his Britannick Majesty, Florida, with Fort St. Augustin, and the Bay of Pensacola, as well as all that Spain possesses on the continent of North America, to the East or to the South East of the river Mississippi. And, in general, every thing that depends on the said countries and lands, with the sovereignty, property, possession, and all rights, acquired by treaties or otherwise, which the Catholick King and the Crown of Spain have had till now over the said countries, lands, places, and their inhabitants; so that the Catholick King cedes and makes over the whole to the said King and to the Crown of Great Britain, and that in the most ample manner and form. His Britannick Majesty agrees, on his side, to grant to the inhabitants of the countries above ceded, the liberty of the Catholick religion; he will, consequently, give the most express and the most effectual orders that his new Roman Catholic subjects may profess the worship of their religion according to the rites of the Romish church, as far as the laws of Great Britain permit. His Britannick Majesty farther agrees, that the Spanish inhabitants, or others who had been subjects of the Catholick King in the said countries, may retire, with all safety and freedom, wherever they think proper; and may

sell their estates, provided it be to his Britannick Majesty's subjects, and bring away their effects, as well as their persons. Without being restrained in their emigration, under any pretence whatsoever, except that of debts, or of criminal prosecutions: the term limited for this emigration being fixed to the space of eighteen months, to be computed from the day of the exchange of the ratifications of the present treaty. It is moreover stipulated, that his Catholick Majesty shall have power to cause all the effects that may belong to him, to be brought away, whether it be artillery or other things.

Article XXI. The French and Spanish troops shall evacuate all the territories, lands, towns, places, and castles, of his Most faithful Majesty in Europe, without any reserve, which shall have been conquered by the armies of France and Spain, and shall restore them in the same condition they were in when conquered, with the same artillery and ammunition, which were found there: And with regard to the Portuguese Colonies in America, Africa, or in the East Indies, if any change shall have happened there, all things shall be restored on the same footing they were in, and conformably to the preceding treaties which subsisted between the Courts of France, Spain, and Portugal, before the present war.

Article XXII. All the papers, letters, documents, and archives, which were found in the countries, territories, towns and places that are restored, and those belonging to the countries ceded, shall be, respectively and bonâ fide, delivered, or furnished at the same time, if possible, that possession is taken, or, at latest, four months after the exchange of the ratifications of the present treaty, in whatever places the said papers or documents may be found.

Article XXIII. All the countries and territories, which may have been conquered, in whatsoever part of the world, by the arms of their Britannick and Most Faithful Majesties, as well as by those of their Most Christian and Catholick Majesties, which are not included in the present treaty, either under the title of cessions, or under the title of restitutions, shall be restored without difficulty, and without requiring any compensations.

Article XXIV. As it is necessary to assign a fixed epoch for the restitutions and the evacuations, to be made by each of the high contracting parties, it is agreed, that the British and French troops shall compleat, before the 15th of March next, all that shall remain to be executed of the XIIth and XIIIth articles of the preliminaries, signed the 3d day of November last, with regard to the evacuation to be made in the Empire, or elsewhere. The island of Belleisle shall be evacuated six weeks after the exchange of the ratifications of the present treaty, or sooner if it can be done. Guadeloupe, Desirade, Mariegalante Martinico, and St. Lucia three months after the exchange of the ratifications of the present treaty, or sooner if it can be done. Great Britain shall likewise, at the end of three months after the exchange of the ratifications of the present treaty, or sooner if it can be done, enter into possession of the river and port of the Mobile, and of all that is to form the limits of the territory of Great Britain, on the side of the river Mississippi, as they are specified in the VIIth article. The island of Goree shall be evacuated by Great Britain, three months after the exchange of the ratifications of the present treaty; and the island of Minorca by France, at the same epoch, or sooner if it can be done: And according to the conditions of the Vith article, France shall likewise enter into possession of the islands of St Peter, and of Miquelon, at the end of three months after the exchange

of the ratifications of the present treaty. The Factories in the East Indies shall be restored six months after the exchange of the ratifications of the present treaty, or sooner if it can be done. The fortress of the Havannah, with all that has been conquered in the island of Cuba, shall be restored three months after the exchange of the ratifications of the present treaty, or sooner if it can be done: And, at the same time, Great Britain shall enter into possession of the country ceded by Spain according to the XXth article. All the places and countries of his most Faithful Majesty, in Europe, shall be restored immediately after the exchange of the ratification of the present treaty: And the Portuguese colonies, which may have been conquered, shall be restored in the space of three months in the West Indies, and of six months in the East Indies, after the exchange of the ratifications of the present treaty, or sooner if it can be done. All the fortresses, the restitution whereof is stipulated above, shall be restored with the artillery and ammunition, which were found there at the time of the conquest. In consequence whereof, the necessary orders shall be sent by each of the high contracting parties, with reciprocal passports for the ships that shall carry them, immediately after the exchange of the ratifications of the present treaty.

Article XXV. His Britannick Majesty, as Elector of Brunswick Lunenbourg, as well for himself as for his heirs and successors, and all the dominions and possessions of his said Majesty in Germany, are included and guaranteed by the present treaty of peace.

Article XXVI. Their sacred Britannick, Most Christian, Catholick, and Most Faithful Majesties, promise to observe sincerely and bonâ fide, all the articles contained and settled in the present treaty; and they will not suffer the same to be infringed, directly or indirectly, by their respective subjects; and the said high contracting parties, generally and reciprocally, guaranty to each other all the stipulations of the present treaty.

Article XXVII. The solemn ratifications of the present treaty, expedited in good and due form, shall be exchanged in this city of Paris, between the high contracting parties, in the space of a month, or sooner if possible, to be computed from the day of the signature of the present treaty.

In witness whereof, we the underwritten their Ambassadors Extraordinary, and Ministers Plenipotentiary, have signed with our hand, in their name, and in virtue of our full powers, have signed the present definitive treaty, and have caused the seal of our arms to be put thereto. Done at Paris the tenth day of February, 1763.

Bedford, C.P.S. Choiseul, Duc de Praslin. El Marq. De Grimaldi.

(L.S.) (L.S.) (LS)

The English version of the Treaty of 1763 is reprinted as found in Charles Jenkinson, *A Collection of all the Treaties of Peace, Alliance, and Commerce, Between Great-Britain and other Powers. From the Treaty signed at Munster in 1648, to the Treaties signed at Paris in 1783. By the Right Hon. Charles Jenkinson. In three Volumes.* The Treaty of 1763 in volume 3, pp. 177-197.

2) Treaty of Alliance between France and the United States (February 6, 1778)

The most Christian King and the United States of North America, to wit, New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, having this Day concluded a Treaty of amity and Commerce, for the reciprocal advantage of their Subjects and Citizens have thought it necessary to take into consideration the means of strengthening those engagements and of rendring them useful to the safety and tranquility of the two parties, particularly in case Great Britain in Resentment of that connection and of the good correspondence which is the object of the said Treaty, should break the Peace with France, either by direct hostilities, or by hindring her commerce and navigation, in a manner contrary to the Rights of Nations, and the Peace subsisting between the two Crowns; and his Majesty and the said united States having resolved in that Case to join their Councils and efforts against the Enterprises of their common Enemy, the respective Plenipotentiaries, impower'd to concert the Clauses & conditions proper to fulfil the said Intentions, have, after the most mature Deliberation, concluded and determined on the following Articles.

ARTICLE 1

If War should break out between France and Great Britain, during the continuance of the present War between the United States and England, his Majesty and the said united States, shall make it a common cause, and aid each other mutually with their good Offices, their Counsels, and their forces, according to the exigence of Conjunctures as becomes good & faithful Allies.

ARTICLE 2

The essential and direct End of the present defensive alliance is to maintain effectually the liberty, Sovereignty, and independence absolute and unlimited of the said united States, as well in Matters of Gouvernment as of commerce.

ARTICLE 3

The two contracting Parties shall each on its own Part, and in the manner it may judge most proper, make all the efforts in its Power, against their common Ennemy, in order to attain the end proposed.

ARTICLE 4

The contracting Parties agree that in case either of them should form any particular Enterprise in which the concurrence of the other may be desired, the Party whose concurrence is desired shall readily, and with good faith, join to act in concert for that Purpose, as far as circumstances and its own particular Situation will permit; and in that case, they shall regulate by a particular Convention the quantity and kind of Succour to be furnished, and the Time and manner of its being brought into action, as well as the advantages which are to be its Compensation.

ARTICLE 5

If the united States should think fit to attempt the Reduction of the British Power remaining in the Northern Parts of America, or the Islands of Bermudas, those Countries or Islands in case of Success, shall be confederated with or dependent upon the said united States.

ARTICLE 6

The Most Christian King renounces for ever the possession of the Islands of Bermudas as well as of any part of the continent of North america which before the treaty of Paris in 1763. Or in virtue of that Treaty, were acknowledged to belong to the Crown of Great Britain, or to the united States heretofore called British Colonies, or which are at this Time or have lately been under the Power of The King and Crown of Great Britain.

ARTICLE 7

If his Most Christian Majesty shall think proper to attack any of the Islands situated in the Gulph of Mexico, or near that Gulph, which are at present under the Power of Great Britain, all the said Isles, in case of success, shall appertain to the Crown of France.

ARTICLE 8

Neither of the two Parties shall conclude either Truce or Peace with Great Britain, without the formal consent of the other first obtain'd; and they mutually engage not to lay down their arms, until the Independence of the united states shall have been formally or tacitly assured by the Treaty or Treaties that shall terminate the War.

ARTICLE 9

The contracting Parties declare, that being resolved to fulfil each on its own Part the clauses and conditions of the present Treaty of alliance, according to its own power and circumstances, there shall be no after claim of compensation on one side or the other whatever may be the event of the War.

ARTICLE 10

The Most Christian King and the United states, agree to invite or admit other Powers who may have received injuries from England to make common cause with them, and to accede to the present alliance, under such conditions as shall be freely agreed to and settled between all the Parties.

ARTICLE 11

The two Parties guarantee mutually from the present time and forever, against all other powers, to wit, the united states to his most Christian Majesty the present Possessions of the Crown of France in America as well as those which it may acquire by the future Treaty of peace: and his most Christian Majesty guarantees on his part to the

united states, their liberty, Sovereignty, and Independence absolute, and unlimited, as well in Matters of Government as commerce and also their Possessions, and the additions or conquests that their Confederation may obtain during the war, from any of the Dominions now or heretofore possessed by Great Britain in North America, conformable to the 5th & 6th articles above written, the whole as their Possessions shall be fixed and assured to the said States at the moment of the cessation of their present War with England.

ARTICLE 12

In order to fix more precisely the sense and application of the preceding article, the Contracting Parties declare, that in case of rupture between France and England, the reciprocal Guarantee declared in the said article shall have its full force and effect the moment such War shall break out and if such rupture shall not take place, the mutual obligations of the said guarantee shall not commence, until the moment of the cessation of the present War between the united states and England shall have ascertained the Possessions.

ARTICLE 13

The present Treaty shall be ratified on both sides and the Ratifications shall be exchanged in the space of six months, sooner if possible.

In faith where of the respective Plenipotentiaries, to wit on the part of the most Christian King Conrad Alexander Gerard royal syndic of the City of Strasbourg & Secretary of his majestys Council of State and on the part of the United States Benjamin Franklin Deputy to the General Congress from the State of Pennsylvania and President of the Convention of the same state, Silas Deane heretofore Deputy from the State of Connecticut & Arthur Lee Councillor at Law have signed the above Articles both in the French and English Languages declaring Nevertheless that the present Treaty was originally composed and concluded in the French Language, and they have hereunto affixed their Seals

Done at Paris, this sixth Day of February, one thousand seven hundred and seventy eight.

C. A. GERARD

B FRANKLIN
SILAS DEANE
ARTHUR LEE

Source: *Treaties and Other International Acts of the United States of America*. Edited by Hunter Miller, Vol. 2, Documents 1-40: 1776-1818 (Washington, DC, 1931), pp. 3 - 27.

3) Act Separate and Secret (February 6, 1778)

The most Christian King declares in consequence of the intimate union which subsists between him and the King of Spain, that in concluding with the united states of America this Treaty of amity and commerce, and that of eventual and defensive alliance, his Majesty hath intended and intends to reserve expressly, as he reserves by this present separate and secret act, to his said Catholick Majesty, the Power of acceding to the said Treatys, and to participate in their stipulations at such time as he shall judge proper.

It being well understood nevertheless, that if any of the Stipulations of the said Treatys are not agreeable to the King of Spain, his Catholick Majesty may propose other conditions analogous to the principal aim of the alliance and conformable to the Rules of equality, reciprocity & friendship.

The Deputies of the united states in the name of their constituents, accept the present Declaration in its full extent and the Deputy of the said states who is fully empower'd to treat with Spain, promises to sign on the first Requisition of his Catholic Majesty, the act or acts necessary to communicate to him the Stipulations of the Treaties above written; and the said Deputy shall endeavour in good faith the adjustment of the points in which the King of Spain may propose any alteration, conformable to the principles of equality, reciprocity and the most sincere and perfect amity; he the said Deputy not doubting but that the Person or Persons empower'd by his Catholic Majesty to treat with the United States will do the same with regard to any Alterations of the same kind that may be thought necessary by the said Plenipotentiary of the United States. In Faith whereof the respective Plenipotentiaries have signed the present separate and secret Article, and affixed to the same their Seals.

Done at Paris, this sixth Day of February, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-eight.

C. A. GERARD

B FRANKLIN
SILAS DEANE
ARTHUR LEE

Source: *Treaties and Other International Acts of the United States of America*. Edited by Hunter Miller, Vol. 2, Documents 1-40: 1776-1818 (Washington, DC, 1931), pp. 29-34. .

1) Preliminaries of Peace (November 30, 1782)

Articles agreed upon, by and between Richard Oswald Esquire, the Commissioner of his Britannic Majesty, for treating of Peace with the Commissioners of the United States of America, in behalf of his said Majesty, on the one part; and John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, and Henry Laurens, four of the Commissioners of the said States, for treating of Peace with the Commissioner of his said Majesty, on their Behalf, on the other part. To be inserted in, and to constitute the Treaty of Peace proposed to be concluded, between the Crown of Great Britain, and the said United States; but which Treaty is not to be concluded, untill Terms of a Peace shall be agreed upon, between Great Britain and France; and his Britannic Majesty shall be ready to conclude such Treaty accordingly.

Whereas reciprocal Advantages, and mutual Convenience are found by Experience, to form the only permanent foundation of Peace and Friendship between States; It is agreed to form the Articles of the proposed Treaty, on such Principles of liberal Equity, and Reciprocity, as that partial Advantages, (those Seeds of Discord!) being excluded, such a beneficial and satisfactory Intercourse between the two Countries, may be establish'd, as to promise and secure to both perpetual

ARTICLE 1st

His Britannic Majesty acknowledges the said United States, Viz New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia, to be free Sovereign and independent States; That he treats with them as such; And for himself, his Heirs and Successors, relinquishes all Claims to the Government, Propriety, and territorial Rights of the same, and every part thereof; and that all Disputes which might arise in future, on the Subject of the Boundaries of the said United States, may be prevented, It is hereby agreed and declared that the following are, and shall be their Boundaries Viz

ARTICLE 2nd

From the north west Angle of Nova Scotia, Viz that Angle which is form'd by a Line drawn due north, from the Source of St. Croix River to the Highlands, along the said Highlands which divide those Rivers that empty themselves into the River St Laurence, from those which fall into the Atlantic Ocean, to the northwesternmost Head of Connecticut River; thence down along the middle of that River to the 45th Degree of North Latitude; from thence by a Line due West on said Latitude, untill it strikes the River Iroquois, or Cataraquy; thence along the middle of said River into Lake Ontario; through the middle of said Lake, untill it strikes the Communication by Water between that Lake and Lake Erie; thence along the middle of said Communication into Lake Erie, through the middle of said Lake, until it arrives at the Water Communication between that Lake and Lake Huron; thence along the middle of said water communication into the Lake Huron; thence through the middle of said Lake to the Water Communication between that Lake and Lake Superior; thence through Lake Superior northward of the

Isles Royal & Phelipeaux, to the Long Lake; thence through the middle of said Long Lake, and the water Communication between it and the Lake of the Woods, to the said Lake of the Woods, thence through the said Lake to the most Northwestern point thereof, and from thence on a due west Course to the River Mississippi; thence by a Line to be drawn along the middle of the said River Mississippi, untill it shall intersect the northernmost part of the 31st Degree of North Latitude. South, by a Line to be drawn due East, from the Determination of the Line last mentioned, in the Latitude of 31 Degrees North of the Equator, to the middle of the River Apalachicola or Catahouche; thence along the middle thereof, to its junction with the Flint River; thence strait to the Head of St. Mary's River, and thence down along the middle of St. Mary's River to the Atlantic Ocean. East, by a Line to be drawn along the middle of the River St Croix, from its Mouth in the Bay of Fundy to its Source; and from its Source directly North, to the aforesaid Highlands which divide the Rivers that fall into the Atlantic Ocean, from those which fall into the River Se Laurence; comprehending all Islands within twenty Leagues of any part of the Shores of the united States, and lying between Lines to be drawn due East from the points where the aforesaid Boundaries between Nova Scotia on the one part and East Florida on the other shall respectively touch the Bay of Fundy, and the Atlantic Ocean; excepting such Islands as now are, or heretofore have been within the Limits of the said Province of Nova Scotia.

ARTICLE 3d

It is agreed, that the People of the United States shall continue to enjoy unmolested the Right to take Fish of every kind on the Grand Bank, and on all the other Banks of Newfoundland; Also in the Gulph of St Laurence, and at all other Places in the Sea where the Inhabitants of both Countries used at any time heretofore to fish. And also that the Inhabitants of the united States shall have Liberty to take Fish of every kind on such part of the Coast of Newfoundland, as British Fishermen shall use, (but not to dry or cure the same on that Island,) and also on the Coasts, Bays, and Creeks of all other of his Britannic Majesty's Dominions in America, and that the American Fishermen shall have Liberty to dry and cure Fish in any of the unsettled Bays Harbours and Creeks of Nova Scotia, Magdalen Islands, and Labrador, so long as the same shall remain unsettled; but so soon as the same or either of them shall be settled, it shall not be lawful for the said Fishermen to dry or cure Fish at such Settlement, without a previous Agreement for that purpose with the Inhabitants Proprietors or Possessors of the Ground.

ARTICLE 4th

It is agreed that Creditors on either side, shall meet with no lawful Impediment to the Recovery of the full value in Sterling Money of all bond fide Debts heretofore contracted.

ARTICLE 5th

It is agreed that the Congress shall earnestly recommend it to the Legislatures of the respective States, to provide for the Restitution of all Estates, Rights, and Properties which have been confiscated, belonging to real British Subjects; and also of the Estates Rights and Properties of Persons resident in Districts in the Possession of his Majesty's Arms; and who have not borne Arms against the said United States: And that Persons of

any other Description shall have free Liberty to go to any part or parts of any of the thirteen United States, and therein to remain twelve months unmolested in their Endeavours to obtain the Restitution of such of their Estates, Rights and Properties as may have been confiscated; And that Congress shall also earnestly recommend to the several States a Reconsideration and Revision of all Acts or laws regarding the premises, so as to render the said Laws or Acts perfectly consistent not only with Justice and Equity, but with that spirit of Conciliation which on the Return of the Blessings of Peace should universally prevail. And that Congress shall also earnestly recommend to the several States, that the Estates Rights and Properties of such last mention'd Persons shall be restored to them; they refunding to any Persons who may be now in Possession the bond fide Price, (where any has been given,) which such Persons may have paid on purchasing any of the said Lands, Rights, or Properties since the Confiscation.

And it is agreed that all Persons who have any Interest in confiscated Lands, either by Debts, Marriage Settlements or otherwise, shall meet with no lawful Impediment in the prosecution of their just Rights.

ARTICLE 6th

That there shall be no future Confiscations made, nor any prosecutions commenced against any Person or Persons, for or by reason of the Part which he or they may have taken in the present War, and that no person shall on that account suffer any future Loss or Damage either in his Person, Liberty or Property; and that those who may be in confinement on such charges, at the time of the Ratification of the Treaty in America, shall be immediately set at Liberty, and the Prosecutions so commenced be discontinued.

ARTICLE 7th

There shall be a firm and perpetual Peace, between his Britannic Majesty and the said States, and between the Subjects of the one and the Citizens of the other, Wherefore all Hostilities both by Sea and Land shall then immediately cease: All Prisoners on both sides shall be set at Liberty, & his Britannic Majesty shall, with all convenient speed, & without causing any Destruction or carrying away any Negroes, or other Property of the American Inhabitants withdraw all his Armies Garrisons and Fleets from the said United States, and from every Port, Place, and Harbour within the same; leaving in all Fortifications the American Artillery that may be therein: And shall also order and cause all Archives, Records, Deeds and Papers belonging to any of the said States, or their Citizens, which in the Course of the War may have fallen into the hands of his Officers to be forthwith restored and delivered to the proper states and persons to whom they belong.

ARTICLE 8th

The Navigation of the River Mississippi from its Source to the Ocean, shall for ever remain free and open to the Subjects of Great Britain and the Citizens of the United States.

ARTICLE 9th

In case it should so happen that any Place or Territory belonging to Great Britain, or to the United States, should be conquered by the Arms of either, from the other, before the Arrival of these Articles in America, It is agreed that the same shall be restored, without Difficulty, and without requiring any Compensation.

Done at Paris, the thirtieth day of November, in the year One thousand Seven hundred Eighty Two

RICHARD OSWALD [Seal]
JOHN ADAMS. [Seal]
B FRANKLIN [Seal]
JOHN JAY [Seal]
HENRY LAURENS. [Seal]

[On the page of the original next after the above signatures, is the following, the brackets being in the original.]

Witness

The Words [and Henry Laurens] between the fifth and sixth Lines of the first Page; and the Words [or carrying away any Negroes, or other Property of the American Inhabitants] between the seventh and eighth Lines of the eighth Page, being first interlined CALEB WHITEFOORD

Secretary to the British Commission.
W. T. FRANKLIN
Sec. to the American Commission

Source: *Treaties and Other International Acts of the United States of America*. Edited by Hunter Miller, Vol. 2, Documents 1-40: 1776-1818 (Washington, DC, 1931), pp. 96-100.

4) Declarations for Suspension of Arms and Cessation of Hostilities (January 20, 1783)

We the underwritten Ministers Plenipotentiary of the United States of North America, having received from Mr Fitz-Herbert, Minister Plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty, a Declaration relative to a Suspension of Arms to be establish'd between his said Majesty and the said States, of which the following is a Copy. viz:

Whereas the Preliminary Articles agreed to and signed this Day between his Majesty the King of Great Britain, and his most Christian Majesty on the one Part, and also between his said Britannic Majesty and his Catholic Majesty on the other Part, stipulate a Cessation of Hostilities between those three Powers, which is to Commence upon the Exchange of the Ratifications of the said Preliminary Articles; And whereas by the Provisional Treaty signed the thirtieth of November last, between his Britannic Majesty and the United States of North America, it was stipulated that the said Treaty should have its Effect as soon as Peace between the said Crowns should be established; The under-written Minister Plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty declares in the Name, and by the express, Order of the King his Master, that the said United States of North America, their Subjects and their Possessions, shall be comprised in the suspension of Arms above-mentioned, And that they shall consequently enjoy the Benifit of the Cessation of Hostilities, at the same Periods and in the same Manner as the three Crowns aforesaid and their Subjects and Possessions respectively On Condition however, that on the Part and in the Name of the Said United States of North America, there shall be deliver'd a similar Declaration expressing the Assent to the present Suspension of Arms, and containing an Assurance of the most perfect Reciprocity on their Part.

In faith whereof, we, the Minister Plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty, have signed this present Declaration, and have thereto caused the Seal of our Arms to be affixed, at Versailles this twentieth Day of January One Thousand seven hundred & Eighty three.

(signed)

ALLEYNE FITZ-HERBERT
(LS.)

We have in the Name of the said United States of North America & in Virtue of the Powers we are vested with, received the above Declaration and do accept the same by these Presents, and we do reciprocally declare, that the said States shall cause to cease all Hostilities against his Britannic Majesty, his Subjects and Possessions at the Terms or Periods agreed to between his said Majesty the King of Great Britain, his Majesty the King of France, and his Majesty the King of Spain, in the same manner as is stipulated between these , three Crowns, and to have the same Effect.

In faith whereof, We Ministers Plenipotentiary from the United States of America, have signed the present Declaration and have hereunto affixed the Seals of our Arms. At Versailles the twentieth of January one thousand seven hundred and eighty three.

JOHN ADAMS. B FRANKLIN

Source: *Treaties and Other International Acts of the United States of America*. Edited by Hunter Miller, Vol. 2, Documents 1-40: 1776-1818 (Washington, DC, 1931)

6) Declaration Signed in Paris by the American Commissioners (February 20, 1783)

By the Ministers Plenipotentiary of the United States of America, for making Peace with Great Britain. A Declaration of the Cessation of Hostilities as well by Sea as Land, agreed upon between His Majesty, the King of Great Britain, and the United States of America.

Whereas Preliminary Articles were signed, at Paris, on the thirtieth Day of November last, between the Plenipotentiaries of his said Majesty the King of Great Britain, and of the said States, to be inserted in, and to constitute the Treaty of Peace to be concluded between his said Majesty, and the said United States when Terms of Peace should be agreed upon between his said Majesty and his most Christian Majesty: and Whereas Preliminaries for restoring Peace, between his said Majesty, the King of Great Britain, and his most Christian Majesty, were signed at Versailles, on the twentieth day of January last, by the respective Ministers of their said Majesties: and Whereas preliminaries for restoring Peace, between his said Majesty the King of Great Britain, and his Majesty the King of Spain, were also signed at Versailles, on the twentyeth Day of January last, by their respective Ministers: and Whereas, for putting an End to the Calamity of War, as soon and as far as possible, it hath been agreed, between the King of Great Britain, his most Christian Majesty, the King of Spain, the States General of the United Provinces and the United States of America as follows, that is to say.

That such Vessells and Effects, as should be taken, in the Channell and in the North Seas, after the Space of twelve Days, to be computed from the Ratification of the said Preliminary Articles should be restored on all Sides; that the Term should be one Month from the Channell and North Seas, as far as the Canary Islands inclusively, whether in the Ocean or the Mediterranean; two Months from the said Canary Islands, as far as the Equinoctial Line, or Equator, and lastly five Months in all other Parts of the World, without any Exception or any other more particular Description of Time or Place.

And Whereas the Ratifications of the said Preliminary Articles between his said Majesty, the King of Great Britain, and his most Christian Majesty, in due Form, were exchanged by their Ministers on the third day of this instant February, from which Day the several Terms abovementioned, of Twelve Days, of one Month, of two Months, and of five Months are to be computed, relative to all British and American Vessells and Effects

Now therefore, We, the Ministers Plenipotentiary, from the United States of America, for making Peace with Great Britain do notify to the People and Citizens, of the said United States of America that Hostilities, on their Part, against his Britannic Majesty, both by Sea and land are to cease, at the Expiration of the Terms herein before specified therefor, and which Terms are to be computed, from the third day of February instant. And We do, in the Name and by the Authority of the said United States, accordingly warn and enjoin all their Officers and Citizens, to forbear all Acts of Hostility, whatever, either by Land or by Sea against his said Majesty, the King of Great Britain, or his Subjects under the Penalty of incurring the highest Displeasure of the said United States.

Given at Paris the Twentieth Day of February, in the Year of our Lord, One Thousand, Seven hundred and Eighty Three, under our Hands and Seals

JOHN ADAMS [Seal]
B FRANKLIN [Seal]
JOHN JAY [Seal]

Source: *Treaties and Other International Acts of the United States of America*. Edited by Hunter Miller, Vol. 2, Documents 1-40: 1776-1818 (Washington, DC, 1931)

7) Treaty of Paris (September 3, 1783)

In the name of the most holy and undivided Trinity.

It having pleased the Divine Providence to dispose the hearts of the most serene and most potent Prince George the Third, by the grace of God, king of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, defender of the faith, duke of Brunswick and Lunebourg, arch-treasurer and prince elector of the Holy Roman Empire etc., and of the United States of America, to forget all past misunderstandings and differences that have unhappily interrupted the good correspondence and friendship which they mutually wish to restore, and to establish such a beneficial and satisfactory intercourse, between the two countries upon the ground of reciprocal advantages and mutual convenience as may promote and secure to both perpetual peace and harmony; and having for this desirable end already laid the foundation of peace and reconciliation by the Provisional Articles signed at Paris on the 30th of November 1782, by the commissioners empowered on each part, which articles were agreed to be inserted in and constitute the Treaty of Peace proposed to be concluded between the Crown of Great Britain and the said United States, but which treaty was not to be concluded until terms of peace should be agreed upon between Great Britain and France and his Britannic Majesty should be ready to conclude such treaty accordingly; and the treaty between Great Britain and France having since been concluded, his Britannic Majesty and the United States of America, in order to carry into full effect the Provisional Articles above mentioned, according to the tenor thereof, have constituted and appointed, that is to say his Britannic Majesty on his part, David Hartley, Esqr., member of the Parliament of Great Britain, and the said United States on their part, John Adams, Esqr., late a commissioner of the United States of America at the court of Versailles, late delegate in Congress from the state of Massachusetts, and chief justice of the said state, and minister plenipotentiary of the said United States to their high mightinesses the States General of the United Netherlands; Benjamin Franklin, Esqr., late delegate in Congress from the state of Pennsylvania, president of the convention of the said state, and minister plenipotentiary from the United States of America at the court of Versailles; John Jay, Esqr., late president of Congress and chief justice of the state of New York, and minister plenipotentiary from the said United States at the court of

Madrid; to be plenipotentiaries for the concluding and signing the present definitive treaty; who after having reciprocally communicated their respective full powers have agreed upon and confirmed the following articles.

Article 1. His Brittanic Majesty acknowledges the said United States, viz., New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia, to be free sovereign and independent states, that he treats with them as such, and for himself, his heirs, and successors, relinquishes all claims to the government, propriety, and territorial rights of the same and every part thereof.

Article 2. And that all disputes which might arise in future on the subject of the boundaries of the said United States may be prevented, it is hereby agreed and declared, that the following are and shall be their boundaries, viz. ...

Article 3. It is agreed that the people of the United States shall continue to enjoy unmolested the right to take fish of every kind on the Grand Bank and on all the other banks of Newfoundland, also in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence and at all other places in the sea, where the inhabitants of both countries used at any time heretofore to fish. And also that the inhabitants of the United States shall have liberty to take fish of every kind on such part of the coast of Newfoundland as British fishermen shall use, (but not to dry or cure the same on that island) and also on the coasts, bays and creeks of all other of his Brittanic Majesty's dominions in America; and that the American fishermen shall have liberty to dry and cure fish in any of the unsettled bays, harbors, and creeks of Nova Scotia, Magdalen Islands, and Labrador, so long as the same shall remain unsettled, but so soon as the same or either of them shall be settled, it shall not be lawful for the said fishermen to dry or cure fish at such settlement without a previous agreement for that purpose with the inhabitants, proprietors, or possessors of the ground.

Article 4. ...

Article 5. ...

Article 6. ...

Article 7. There shall be a firm and perpetual peace between his Brittanic Majesty and the said states, and between the subjects of the one and the citizens of the other, wherefore all hostilities both by sea and land shall from henceforth cease. All prisoners on both sides shall be set at liberty, and his Brittanic Majesty shall with all convenient speed, and without causing any destruction, or carrying away any Negroes or other property of the American inhabitants, withdraw all his armies, garrisons, and fleets from the said United

States, and from every post, place, and harbor within the same; leaving in all fortifications, the American artillery that may be therein; and shall also order and cause all archives, records, deeds, and papers belonging to any of the said states, or their citizens, which in the course of the war may have fallen into the hands of his officers, to be forthwith restored and delivered to the proper states and persons to whom they belong.

Article 8. The navigation of the river Mississippi, from its source to the ocean, shall forever remain free and open to the subjects of Great Britain and the citizens of the United States.

Article 9. ...

Article 10 ...

The solemn ratifications of the present treaty expedited in good and due form shall be exchanged between the contracting parties in the space of six months or sooner, if possible, to be computed from the day of the signatures of the present treaty. In witness whereof we the undersigned, their ministers plenipotentiary, have in their name and in virtue of our full powers, signed with our hands the present definitive treaty and caused the seals of our arms to be affixed thereto.

Done at Paris, this third day of September in the year of our Lord, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-three.

D. HARTLEY (SEAL)
JOHN ADAMS (SEAL)
B. FRANKLIN (SEAL)
JOHN JAY (SEAL)

Source: *Treaties and Other International Acts of the United States of America*. Edited by Hunter Miller, Vol. 2, Documents 1-40: 1776-1818 (Washington, DC, 1931)

16.1 Minutes of the Westfield Conference between Washinton and Rochambeau, May 22, 1781

ROCHAMBEAU

A COMMEMORATION by the CONGRESS
of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA of
the SERVICES of the FRENCH AUXILIARY
FORCES in the WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

Prepared by authority of Congress under direction of
the Joint Committee on the Library

By

DEB. RANDOLPH KEIM
Life Member of the Pennsylvania Historical Society



"I join to this letter a copy of my instructions and even of my
secret instructions also, as I do not choose to have any secrets with
my general." (Letter Comte de Rochambeau to General Wash-
ington upon the arrival of the French Allies at Newport, R.I.)

WASHINGTON : : GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : : 1907

WETHERSFIELD CONFERENCE

The commander in chief and commandant-general of the allies held their conference on May 22 at Wethersfield, Conn., as arranged.

The exchange of views was had in the form of queries submitted by Count DE ROCHAMBEAU and answered in writing by General Washington. The substance, as given, throws much detail on events preceding the march of the two armies to the scene of the surrender of the last organized force of British troops of any consequence in the field on American soil.

Rochambeau.—Concerning a project of employing the squadron at Newport to transport the French army to Chesapeake Bay he consulted Count de Barras, who deemed it impracticable, chiefly on account of the inferiority of his naval force to that of the enemy. The objections were mentioned in detail.

Washington.—However desirable such an event might have been, the reasons assigned by Count de Barras are sufficient to prove its impracticability.

Rochambeau.—Should the French army march to the North River, will the squadron be safe at Newport under a guard of militia? By his secret instructions he is not permitted to separate his army, except for detachment of a short duration. Count de Barras thinks the squadron would not be secure if the enemy should take possession of Rhode Island, and, moreover, he has been instructed that in case the army should march into the country his fleet should proceed to Boston.

Washington.—It is General Washington's opinion that the plan of the campaign is for the French army to march from Newport toward the North River as soon as possible, and that consequently it will be advisable for the Count de Barras (agreeably to his instructions in that case provided) to seek the first favorable moment of removing the squadron under his command to Boston.

Rochambeau.—In that case what does General Washington propose about Rhode Island? Does he intend it should be kept by a general officer and a body of American militia? It is to be observed that if in the hurricane months the French fleet should come to the coast the harbor of Rhode Island might be of use to the operations of the squadrons, either for a union to act against New York or as a place of retreat in case of misfortune.

Washington.—As the harbor of Rhode Island may be useful to the fleets of His Most Christian Majesty, it is General Washington's opinion that a force should be left for the security of Newport; but as the enemy will not be in a condition, from the present circumstances of their affairs, to

detach any considerable body of men to repossess the island, it is agreed between Count DE ROCHAMBEAU and General Washington that 500 militia, under a good officer, will be sufficient as a guard for the works; but in case of an enterprise against them a greater force should be called in for their defense.

Rochambeau.—If General Washington resolves that Rhode Island shall be left and the works destroyed, does he consider the siege artillery, powder, magazines, and heavy stores, which can not follow the French army in a land march, as safe at Providence under 200 French troops and the militia? For such an object the English may attempt an enterprise to seize these stores. Would they not be more secure if taken with the fleet to Boston?

Washington.—In the former communications between Count DE ROCHAMBEAU and General Washington it was understood that the French fleet was to remain in the harbor of Newport after the removal of the army; and therefore Providence was fixed upon as a safe and proper deposit for the heavy artillery and spare stores. It now being determined that the fleet shall embrace the first opportunity of going round to the harbor of Boston, it is to be wished that the heavy artillery and spare stores should be sent round also. But General Washington being informed by Count DE ROCHAMBEAU that they have been already deposited at Providence, and that it will be impossible, under the present circumstances of the fleet and want of transportation, to remove them to Boston, he is of opinion that they may safely remain there under the guard of 200 French troops, who will be aided by the militia of the country in case of need. The possession of Newport will add to their security.

Rochambeau.—Should the squadron from the West Indies arrive in these seas, an event that will probably be announced by a frigate beforehand, what operations will General Washington have in view after a union of the French army with his own?

Washington.—The enemy, by several detachments from New York, having reduced their force at that post to less than one-half of the number which they had at the time of the former conference at Hartford in September last, it is thought advisable to form a junction of the French and American armies upon the North River as soon as possible, and move down to the vicinity of New York, to be ready to take advantage of any opportunity which the weakness of the enemy may afford. Should the West India fleet arrive upon the coast, the force thus combined may either proceed in the operations against New York or may be directed against the enemy in some other quarter, as circumstances shall dictate. The great waste of men, which we have found from experience in the long marches to the southern States, the advanced season in which such a march must be commenced, and the difficulties and expense of land transportation thither, with other considerations too well known to Count DE

ROCHAMBEAU to need detailing, point out the preference which an operation against New York seems to have in the present circumstances over an attempt to send a force to the southward.

TELLTALE CORRESPONDENCE

While the conference was on, General Washington was handed a packet containing two letters which had been captured by an American privateer from Lord Germaine, British minister of war, to General Clinton, which revealed the purpose of the British campaign of that year to conquer the whole south and confine Washington to the north of the Hudson River.

It may be said Washington and ROCHAMBEAU had no little amusement over the contemptuous reference of Germaine, who had been cashiered for cowardice in the Seven Years' War, to the American forces, and upbraiding Clinton in that—

he had said there were in the King's service more American royalists than rebels in Washington's army and it was very extraordinary he should let the rebellion last so long.

He hit at the French corps by conveying the information which had been confirmed in advance by young Rochambeau "that no preparations were being made in France to send out the second division," and "the first would have quite enough to do to uphold and protect its little squadron at Newport."

ROCHAMBEAU, in continuing the story, adds this interesting contributory information:

Germaine did not forget to observe the precarious state of the finances of Congress, and in this his calculations were so near the truth that at the period at which the conference took place at Wethersfield the paper currency after having been reduced to as low as 1,000 to 1 was at length completely "annulled" by resolution of Congress.

Comte DE ROCHAMBEAU among his papers referring to this conference says that Washington had dominant in his thoughts an expedition against New York as the most effectual way to deal a death blow to British power in America, his hope of success resting on the diminution of the garrisons by drafts for the south.

admitting that his inclinations would be the defense of the country where all his property and connections were, there were powerful objections to his leaving his station, one of them "that no other person has power to command the French troops now about to form a junction with this army."

NEWS FROM THE SOUTH

On June 3 Lafayette reported the British army in considerable force between Richmond and Fredericksburg, its destination uncertain, but at liberty to move anywhere, owing to superiority of numbers.

TO TAKE THE FIELD

The junction of the French and American armies on the Hudson having been determined, General Washington requested the calling out of the Rhode Island militia to combine with the French detachment as a guard to relieve the marching forces for the protection of the heavy stores and baggage and of the works erected for the security of the harbor.

General DE ROCHAMBEAU at once began the final preparations antecedent to taking the field with his troops.

The monthly report of June 1 showed his total effective strength to be: Bourbonnais, 910; Soissonais, 985; Saintonge, 897; Royal Deux-Ponts, 926; artillery, 408; miners, 23; laborers, 26; Lauzun, 581; total, 4,756, as follows: Captains, command, 51; second captains, 45; lieutenants, 108; under lieutenants, 85; cadets, gentlemen, 13; lower officers, 344; corporals, fraters, fusiliers, and drummers, 4,412; total, 4,756.

FRENCH AUXILIARY ARMY

The organization of the French auxiliary army for operations, which included the march from Newport, R. I., to the junction with the American forces under Washington at Dobbs Ferry on the Hudson River was as follows:

Lieutenant-general commanding.—Comte DE ROCHAMBEAU.
Intendant.—De Tarle.

HISTOIRE
DE
LA PARTICIPATION DE LA FRANCE
À L'ÉTABLISSEMENT
DES ÉTATS-UNIS D'AMÉRIQUE

CORRESPONDANCE DIPLOMATIQUE ET DOCUMENTS

PAR

HENRI DONIOL

MEMBRE DE L'INSTITUT, DIRECTEUR DE L'IMPRIMERIE NATIONALE

TOME CINQUIÈME



PARIS
IMPRIMERIE NATIONALE

ALPHONSE PICARD, ÉDITEUR

LIBRAIRE DES ARCHIVES NATIONALES ET DE LA SOCIÉTÉ DE L'ÉCOLE DES CHARTES

M DCCC XCII

Le général Washington vous prie de ne faire remettre cette lettre au général Green qu'au moment où vous serez prêts à mettre à la voile, afin que le secret ne s'ébruite pas. Je vous prie cependant d'aller en personne à Providence fixer la disposition que le major d'artillerie et le major de Deux-Ponts auront à faire après votre départ, et concerter avec la marine le lieu où les transports devront mouiller.

Je joins ici le duplicata des observations que je vous ai envoyées le 24 juin dernier, sur la défense de Providence et de Patuxet.

Folio 65. — DE M. LE COMTE DE ROCHAMBEAU AU GÉNÉRAL WASHINGTON.

Au camp de Philippsburg, devant New-York, le 19 juillet 1781.

Je viens de recevoir la réponse de M. de Choisy à ma lettre du 11. J'ai envoyé à Votre Excellence une lettre de M. le comte de Barras. Il paraît décidé à ne sortir que pour sa réunion avec la grande flotte; mais il me demande par sa dernière lettre et par celle de M. de Choisy, d'aujourd'hui, que Votre Excellence veuille bien lui faire part du plan définitif de ses opérations, afin qu'il puisse en instruire M. le comte de Grasse dès le premier moment où il paraîtra dans ces parages. Je supplie Votre Excellence de m'accorder demain dans la matinée, à l'heure qui lui conviendra, une heure de conférence. Je mènerai avec moi le chevalier de Chateaux, et si Votre Excellence veut, faire avertir M. Dupontail pour nous servir respectivement d'interprète et convenir de ce que Votre Excellence jugera à propos de proposer à M. de Grasse dans toutes les suppositions.

Folio 65. — DE M. LE COMTE DE ROCHAMBEAU À M. LE COMTE DE BARRAS.

Au camp de Philippsburg, le 21 juillet 1781.

Une petite escadre de cinq voiles, Monsieur, a remonté la rivière du Nord pour intercepter la navigation de nos vivres et nous a pris un bateau de pain qui a donné dedans pendant la nuit; mais cette escadre, dont l'amiral était de seize canons, a payé cher cette incursion : nos pièces de 12 et nos obusiers l'ont fort maltraité. Le feu a été à bord et a fait jeter plus de 20 hommes à la mer, dont un nous est venu au rivage et nous a appris qu'un de nos obus avait mis le feu et causé une grande alarme, et que plus de vingt de nos boulets avaient percé le bâtiment. Je ne crois pas qu'ils reviennent de sitôt chercher du pain frais.

Nous avons fait avant-hier, le général Washington et moi, une reconnaissance par les Jerseys, où nous avons bien vu tous les ouvrages de l'ennemi sur York-Island, et cinq ou six petits camps qui les soutiennent. Nous n'avons vu que fort

peu de vaisseaux de transport, et je ne crois pas du tout que l'on songe à vous aller faire visite tant que nous serons ici.

Je joins ici la réponse du général Washington à la demande que je lui ai faite de votre part sur le plan définitif de ses opérations. Vous y verrez que cela roule sur deux points : ou New-York, si les moyens que M. de Grasse amène nous en procurent la facilité, soit en forçant Sandy-Hook, soit en nous amenant des troupes de terre, et je vous confie, sous le plus grand secret, que nos deux armées réunies ne sont pas plus fortes actuellement que la garnison de New-York; sinon nous marcherons à la baie de Chesapeak, à la Tête de l'Elek, pour délivrer la Virginie. Dans ce cas, il faudra que l'escadre vienne nous y chercher pour nous convoyer par la baie jusqu'au point où nous trouverons le lord Cornwallis. Le général Washington pense que vous devez laisser à Providence, après le départ de l'escadre, vos transports, non seulement pour nous amener notre grosse artillerie, mais aussi pour passer l'armée dans la baie où l'ennemi se trouvera. Il pense que vous jugerez mieux que lui de l'escorte qu'il conviendra de donner à ce convoi précieux, lorsque les circonstances nous permettront d'en faire usage.

Vous pourrez prendre, mon cher Amiral, les 400 hommes de M. de Choisy pour nous les rendre au point où nous opérerons conjointement; il suivra, du reste, l'instruction que je lui ai donnée pour laisser à Providence le major de Deux-Ponts et tout le surplus du détachement et les convalescents, pour garder tout le dépôt des effets et habillements de l'armée qui s'y trouvera conjointement avec les milices américaines de Rhode-Island.

Folio 67. — RÉPONSES
DU GÉNÉRAL WASHINGTON.

Il est presque impossible, dans ce moment-ci, dans les circonstances et l'incertitude où nous sommes, de fixer un plan de campagne définitif. Les mesures définitives dépendront des circonstances au moment de l'arrivée du comte de Grasse, et surtout des circonstances suivantes :

- 1° De la situation de l'ennemi dans ce moment;
- 2° Des secours qu'il amènera avec

QUESTIONS
DE M. LE COMTE DE ROCHAMBEAU
AU GÉNÉRAL WASHINGTON.

M. le comte de Barras, par sa lettre du 13, et M. de Choisy par celle du 15 juillet me le demande encore de la part de M. de Barras, quel est le plan définitif que Son Excellence se propose, pour qu'il puisse en instruire M. de Grasse à son arrivée et le mettre en état d'opérer de concert. Je supplie Votre Excellence de me faire la réponse que je dois lui faire, et de me mettre à portée en même temps de faire à l'avance

lui ou de la force que nous aurons alors;

3° Des opérations de la flotte au moment de son arrivée, et des avantages qu'elle pourra remporter;

4° Du temps que la flotte restera sur ces côtes et de la supériorité maritime pendant son séjour.

Si la flotte du comte de Grasse arrive tard dans la saison, si le Comte ne juge pas à propos de tâcher de forcer le Hook ou n'y réussit pas, s'il n'amène point de troupes de terre avec lui, et si les Américains ne sont pas considérablement augmentés, je suis d'avis que, dans ces circonstances, nous devons mettre une garnison suffisante à West-Point; laisser quelques troupes continentales et quelques milices pour couvrir le pays autour de New-York, et transporter le reste de l'armée, tant française qu'américaine, en Virginie; si l'ennemi continue d'y être forcé, la saison et d'autres circonstances permettront d'y agir dans une saison plus avancée. Pour être préparé à cet événement, je juge très nécessaire que M. de Barras tienne tous ses transports prêts à prendre à bord le détachement sous M. de Choisy et la grosse artillerie qui est à Providence, et à mettre à la voile pour aller au-devant des troupes soit dans la Delaware, soit dans la baie de Chesapeake, comme il sera ultérieurement convenu.

Mais si la flotte arrive à temps, n'est point gênée pour le temps, peut forcer

les préparatifs convenables pour le corps de troupes que je commande. On suppose que le comte de Grasse ne juge pas praticable de forcer l'entrée du Hook, et qu'il n'amène pas avec lui de troupes de terre; dans ces deux cas, qui ne paraissent que trop vraisemblables, puisque, d'une part, tous les marins regardent la barre de Sandy-Hook comme inforçable, et, de l'autre, que la Cour, en annonçant l'arrivée de M. de Grasse, ne fait mention d'aucune troupe qu'il doive amener; dans cette supposition, dis-je, Son Excellence croit-elle qu'elle puisse avec une armée qui, réunie au corps français, ne forme guère plus de monde qu'il n'y en a pour la défense de New-York, entreprendre avec succès sur cette place?

Si Votre Excellence ne pense pas qu'il soit praticable de le risquer, ne peut-on pas tourner ses idées sur la Virginie, diriger M. de Grasse à la baie de Chesapeake et y faire marcher, soit une partie de l'armée de Son Excellence, soit le corps français, jusqu'à la Tête de l'Elck où M. de Grasse, maître de la baie, viendrait le convoyer? Ne serait-on pas alors en état d'entreprendre avec succès contre le lord Cornwallis et de le forcer à l'évacuer? Cette marche du corps français demande à être préparée; il faut, dans ce cas, que M. de Barras amène avec lui toute notre artillerie de siège et tous les transports nécessaires au passage du corps français dans la baie de Chesapeake.

le port de New-York et enfin trouve les forces anglaises séparées, je suis d'avis que l'entreprise contre New-York et ses environs doit être notre objet principal.

Pour être à l'ennemi la possibilité même de faire une jonction et pour préparer leur ruine, j'avais le plus grand désir que si M. de Barras eût cru que le départ du *Royal-Oak* lui donnât la supériorité, il fût parti pour la Chesapeake; cette mesure ayant la supériorité, je la désire ardemment; je suis d'avis qu'il n'en peut résulter que beaucoup de bien et point de mal. M. de Barras nous a communiqué, par ses lettres à Votre Excellence et à moi, les raisons qui l'en éloignent.

Enfin, tout bien considéré, je ne vois pas ce qu'on peut faire de plus que de suivre le plan arrêté à Weatherfield, et de recommander au comte de Grasse de venir tout de suite à Sandy-Hook, de s'emparer s'il est possible du port de New-York au moment de son arrivée, et ensuite, d'après les circonstances qui auront lieu, de former un plan de campagne définitif sur les apparences les plus sûres.

Au camp de Philippsburg, le 19 juillet 1781.

Folio 69. — DE M. LE COMTE DE ROCHAMBEAU À M. LE COMTE DE BARRAS.

Au camp de Philippsburg, le 16 juillet 1781.

J'ai l'honneur de vous envoyer, mon cher Amiral, un duplicata de ma dernière dépêche, que nous soupçonnons avoir été enlevée par des toriers, parce qu'on a trouvé dans les chemins des lettres particulières qui en faisaient partie et qu'on

17.1 Uniform and Equipment of a French Soldier

Uniform and equipment carried by a soldier in the Army of General Rochambeau 1780-83

- 1 Regimental Coat.
- 1 Tricorn Hat with black trim and white, red, and black cockade. While it was not regulation Grenadiers wore a bearskin bonnet.
- 1 Fatigue hat or polakem.
- 1 Sleeved vest.
- 1 Sleeveless vest to be worn under the sleeved vest in the months of November, December, January, and February.
- 2 Pairs of Breeches.
- 3 Shirts.
- 2 Pairs of shoes, 1 to be new.
- 1 Pair white linen gaiters for parade.
- 1 Pair black linen gaiters for service.
- 1 Pair black wool gaiters for winter.
- 2 Pair gaiter cuffs of white linen with black buttons.
- 2 Handkerchiefs.
- 2 Pairs stockings
- 2 Stocks - horsehair.
- 4 Neck bands.
- 1 ribbon for queue.
- 1 Stock buckle.
- 1 Pair shoe buckles.
- 2 Pair garter buckles.
- 2 Pair breeches buckles.
- 2 Pair gaiter buckles.
- 1 Sack powder and powder puff for hair.
- 1 Comb for hair.
- 1 Comb for cleaning.
- 1 Clothes brush.
- 2 Shoe brushes.
- 1 Small brush for cleaning brass.
- 1 Paint brush to whiten buff leather straps
- For sewing, needle and thread.
- 1 Button hook.
- 1 Ball puller for musket.
- 1 Touch hole pick.
- 1 Screw driver.
- Pieces of old cloth for cleaning uniform.
- Pieces of linen for cleaning weapon.
- Musket with sling.
- Cartridge box. Fusiliers carried the Cartridge box on right hip with a strap over left shoulder, which also carried the bayonet. Grenadiers and Chausseurs carried the Cartridge box the same as the Fusiliers with the Bayonet and Saber on the left hip with a strap over the right shoulder.
- 1 Calfskin haversack.
- 1 Linen distribution bag for carrying bread, which was at times to be also used as a sleeping bag.

17.2 March Route of the French Army from Newport to Yorktown and back

MARCH OF FRENCH ARMY FROM PROVIDENCE TO PHILIPSBURG

MARCH	DATE		MILES
1st	18 June	Providence to Waterman's Tavern	4
2nd	19 June	Waterman's Tavern to Plainfield	15
3rd	20 June	Plainfield to Windham	23
4th	21 June	Windham to Bolton	24
5th	22 June	Bolton to East Hartford	12½
6th	25 June	East Hartford to Farmington	12½
7th	26 June	Farmington to Baren's Tavern	13
8th	27 June	Baren's Tavern to Breakneck	13
9th	28 June	Breakneck to Newtown	18
10th	1 July	Newtown to Ridgebury	18
11th	2 July	Ridgebury to North Castle	17
12th	6 July	North Castle to Philipsburg	20

MARCH OF THE FRENCH ARMY FROM PHILIPSBURG TO YORK, VIRGINIA

MARCH	DATE		MILES
1st	20 August	Philipsburg to North Castle	17½
2nd	21 August	North Castle to Hunt's Tavern	4½
3rd	22 August	Hunt's Tavern to King's Tavern	14
4th	24 August	King's Tavern to Haverstraw	2½
5th	25 August	Haverstraw to Suffern (NY)	15½
6th	26 August	Suffern to Pompton Meeting House (NJ)	15
7th	27 August	Pompton Meeting House to Whippany	14½
8th	28 August	Whippany to Bullion's Tavern (Liberty Corner)	16
9th	30 August	Bullion's Tavern to Somerset Courthouse	13
10th	31 August	Somerset Courthouse to Princeton	15
11th	1 September	Princetown to Trenton	12
12th	2 September	Trenton to Red Lion Tavern	17½
13th	3 September	Red Lion Tavern to Philadelphia	14
14th	5 September	Philadelphia to Chester	14
15th	6 September	Chester to Wilmington	11
16th	7 September	Wilmington to Head of Elk	20

(To Baltimore via lower ferry over the Susquehanna, Bush and White Marsh 9-12 September)

From Baltimore to Annapolis

Embarked on transports, Annapolis September 21

9 September	Elkton to Octoraro Creek	21
10 September	Octoraro Creek to Bushton (Bush)	24
11 September	Bushton to Tavern	12
12 September	Tavern to Baltimore	10
13 - 17 September	In Baltimore	
17 September	Baltimore to Byron's Tavern	18

PHILIPSBURG TO YORK (continued)

18 September	Bryon's Tavern to outskirts of Annapolis	17
19 September	To Annapolis	7
20 - 25 September	250 miles by sea to Jamestown	6
26 September	Jamestown to Williamsburg	
27 September	In Williamsburg	
28 September	Williamsburg to Yorktown	12

ITINERARY OF WAGON TRAIN FROM ANNAPOLIS TO WILLIAMSBURG

DATE		MILES
September 21	Annapolis to John Easton brothers plantation	18
September 22	John Easton House to Age (?) House	9
September 23	Age (?) Tavern to Georgetown	13
September 24	Georgetown to Alexandria	8
September 26	Alexandria to Colchester	16
September 27	Colchester to Marumsc Creek	11
September 28	Marumsc Creek to Aquia Run	17
September 29	Aquia Run to Fredericksburg	17
October 1	Fredericksburg to Colonel Dangerfield's	8½
October 2	Dangerfield's House to Bowling Green	18
October 3	Bowling Green to Lynch's Tavern	14
October 4	Lynch's Tavern to Hanovertown	18
October 5	Hanovertown to Hartfield	19
October 6	Hartfield to Byrd's Tavern	17
October 7	Byrd's Tavern to Williamsburg	15½

MARCH NORTH - FOUR DIVISIONS, ONE DAY'S MARCH APART

1788 DATES		MILES
1 - 4 July	Williamsburg to Drinking Spring	8
2 - 5 July	Drinking Spring to 2 miles beyond Boyd's Tavern	8
3 - 6 July	To Ratcliffe House	5
4 - 7 July	Ratcliffe House to Hartfield	7½
5 - 8 July	Hartfield to New Castle - Extra Day's Halt	15
7 - 10 July	New Castle to Hanovertown	7
8 - 11 July	Hanovertown to Little Page's Bridge or Graham's House	10
9 - 12 July	Graham's House to Barks Bridge or Kenners Tavern	12
10 - 13 July	Kenners Tavern to Bowling Green	9
11 - 14 July	Bowling Green to Charles Thornton's House	8½
12 - 15 July	Thornton's House to Falmouth - Extra Day's Halt	14
14 - 17 July	Falmouth to Peyton's Tavern	16
15 - 18 July	Peyton's Tavern to Dumfries	10
16 - 19 July	Dumfries to Colchester	10

MARCH NORTH (continued)

17 - 20 July	Colchester to Alexandria	15
18 - 21 July	Alexandria to one and one-half miles beyond Georgetown	8
19 - 22 July	Georgetown to Bladensburg - Two Day's Halt	8
22 - 25 July	Bladensburg to Snowden's Ironworks, Laurel, MD	13½
23 - 26 July	Snowden's Ironworks to Sparrie's Tavern	9
24 - 28 July	Sparrie's Tavern to Baltimore	13

Army rested in Baltimore for one month - Small number left there until May, 1783, and then sailed to France.

24 - 27 August	Baltimore to White Marsh Forge	12½
25 - 28 August	White Marsh Forge to Bushtown	12½
26 - 29 August	Bushtown to Lower Ferry - One Day's Halt	12
28 - 31 August	Lower Ferry to Head of Elk (in Maryland)	15
29 - 1 September	Head of Elk to Newport, Delaware	16½
30 - 1 September	Newport to Chester, Pennsylvania	15
31 - 3 September	Chester to Philadelphia - One Day's Halt	16
2 - 5 September	Philadelphia to Red Lion Tavern	18
3 - 6 September	Red Lion Tavern to Trenton - Three Day's Halt	
7 - 8 September	Trenton to Princeton - In Two Divisions	
8 - 9 September	Princeton to Somerset Courthouse (Milestone, NJ)	14
9 - 10 September	Somerset Courthouse to Bullion's Tavern (Liberty Corner)	13
10 - 11 September	Bullion's Tavern to Whippany	
11 - 12 September	Whippany to Pompton Meeting House	15
13 - 14 September	Pompton's Meeting House to Suffern (NY)	15
14 - 15 September	Suffern to Haverstraw	15½

One division, three day's halt; Second division, two day's halt.

18 September	Haverstraw to Peekskill (One Week's Halt)	9½
24 September	Peekskill to Hunt's Tavern (Yorktown, NY)	11

Army stayed here to October 21

22 - 23 October	Hunt's Tavern to Salem, New York	13½
23 - 24 October	Salem to Danbury, New York	11
24 - 25 October	Danbury to Newton (One Day's Halt)	
26 - 27 October	Newton to Breakneck	
27 - 28 October	Breakneck to Barn's Tavern	
28 - 29 October	Barn's Tavern to Farmington	13
29 - 30 October	Farmington to East Hartford	12½

Halted from 30 October to November 4.

4 - 5 November	East Hartford to two miles beyond Bolton Meeting House	14
5 - 6 November	Bolton Meeting House to Windham (One Day's Halt)	16½
7 - 8 November	Windham to Canterbury	10
8 - 9 November	Canterbury to Voluntown (Sterling Hill, CT)	10
9 - 10 November	Voluntown to Waterman's Tavern	
10 - 11 November	Waterman's Tavern to Western Providence	

MARCH NORTH (continued)

Three day's halt.

14 November to December 4 Camped at Providence

Army marched to Boston as follows:

- 1 December Bourbonnais
- 2 December Soissonois
- 3 December Saintonge
- 4 December Royal Deux-Ponts

Artillery November 16-17 because of large amount of material to be loaded.

- 1 - 4 December To Wrentham, Mass.
- 2 - 5 December Wrentham to Dedham
- 3 - 6 December Dedham to Boston and immediately embarked on ships.

Fleet sailed 24 December 1782.

18 Site Profiles and Inventory Forms

List of Sites for the W3R in New York

Site 1: Bedford French Army Camp

Location: Near the lake in the triangle formed by Seminary, Court, and Poundridge Roads on the grounds of the Bedford Village Elementary School
Bedford, New York

Site 2: Leonard Park Plaque

Location: Across from Leonard Park at the Junction of Routes 117/172 on the left-hand (south) side of drive into Northern Westchester Hospital Center
Mount Kisco, New York

Site 3: North Castle Meeting House Plaque

Location: at intersection of East Main Street and the Corner of St. Mark's Place in the cemetery of the former St. George's Protestant Episcopal Church
Mount Kisco, New York

Site 4: Captain John Smith Tavern

Location: 440 Bedford Road (at 37th milestone on the Danbury Post Road from New York City)
Armonk, New York

Site 5: Peekskill Continental Army Camp

Location: north side of Crompond Road between Washington Street and Lafayette Ave
Peekskill, New York

Site 6: Van Cortlandt Manor

Location: Riverside Avenue
Croton-on-Hudson, New York

Site 7: Tarry Town/Sleepy Hollow Church

Location: US Route 9
North Tarrytown, New York

Site 8: Philipsburg Manor

Location: 381 Bellwood Avenue
North Tarrytown, New York

Site 9: Philipsburg French Infantry Camp

Location: Sunningdale Country Club along Underhill Road and Clayton Street
Scarsdale, New York

Site 10: Philipsburg French Artillery Camp

Location: Hart's Brook Nature Preserve & Arboretum
Ridge Road
Hartsdale, New York

Site 11: Colonel John Odell House

Location: 425 Ridge Road
Hartsdale, New York

Site 12: Colonel John Odell House Plaque

Location: on stone wall surrounding Odell House property along Ridge Road
Hartsdale, New York

Site 13: Joseph Appleby House Lot

Location: on a wooded lot behind WFAS radio station
Secor Road
Hartsdale, New York

Site 14: Philipsburg Continental Army Camp

Location: south of Joseph Appleby House Lot/WFAS radio station
extending south between Sprain Brook and Saw Mill River
Hartsdale, New York

Site 15: Valentine Hill Marker

Location: on Seminary Avenue in front of St. Joseph's Seminary
Yonkers, New York

Site 16: Rose Hill Manor House

Location: Fordham University
Bronx, New York

Site 17: Fort Independence French Camp

Location: Gun Hill Road and Bainbridge Avenue
Bronx, New York

Site 18: Valentine Varian House

Location: 3266 Bainbridge Avenue
Bronx, New York

Site 19: Van Cortlandt House

Location: Van Cortlandt Park at 242nd Street
Bronx, New York

Site 20: Van Cortlandt Park Continental Army Camp

Location: along ridge that forms the Riverdale neighborhood and in Van Cortlandt Park
Bronx, New York

Site 21: Dobbs Ferry Monument

Location: on left-hand/east side of Livingston Avenue across from St. Gabrini Nursing Home
Dobbs Ferry, New York

Site 22: Tarrytown Land-Sea Battle Marker

Location: in front of Tarrytown train station (east of tracks) on south end (left side) of turn-around
Tarrytown, New York

Site 23: Fort Lafayette Marker

Location: on Riverview northwest of intersection with Broadway
Cortlandt, New York

Site 24: King's Ferry Marker

Location: on Riverview at intersection with Broadway
Cortlandt, New York

Site 25: Stony Point

Location: Stony Point Battlefield State Historic Site
Stony Point, New York

Site 26: Pines Bridge French Army Bivouac

Location: north of NYS 100 Bridge across Croton Reservoir
Yorktown, New York

Site 27: Hunt's Tavern

Location: on the north side of Crompond Road near the intersection with Hallock's Mill
Road, east of the Crompond and Mohansic Lakes
Yorktown, New York

Site 28: Fort Lafayette French Army Camp

Location: Vicinity of Fort Lafayette
Cortlandt, New York

Site 29: Daniel Birdsall Home

Location: 317 North Broad Street
Peekskill, New York

Site 30: Birdsall House Plaque

Location: just west of Kathleen's Tea Room near the corner of North Division Street
Main Street.
Peekskill, New York

Site 31: Jeshua Hett Smith Home Marker

Location: on Route 9W on the grounds of the State Rehabilitation/Helen Hayes Hospital
Haverstraw, New York

Site 32: Haverstraw French Army Camp

Location: north of Cedar Pond Brook
Stony Point Village, New York

Site 33: United States Military Academy

Location: United States Military Academy
West Point, New York

Site 34: Old St. Peter's Church

Location: Oregon Road and Locust Avenue
Van Cortlandville, New York

Site 35: Old St. Peter's Church Cemetery Marker

Location: Oregon Road and Locust Avenue
Van Cortlandville, New York

Site 36: John Suffern Tavern Plaque

Location: on the Green on the left (= west) side of Washington Avenue and north side of
Lafayette Avenue
Suffern, New York

Site 37: Suffern French Army Camp Marker

Location: west side of Washington Avenue and south of Lafayette Avenue
Suffern, New York

Site 38: Sidman's Bridge Tablet

Location: Off Exit 15 A on I 87 N
Hillburn, New York

Site 39: Washington's Headquarters -- Hasbrouck House

Location: Liberty and Washington Streets
Newburgh, New York

Sites 40: Peekskill French and American Army Camp

Location: on north side of Crompond Road between Fort Lafayette and Lafayette Avenue
Peekskill, New York

Site 41: Samuel Delevan House Site

Location: Hallock's Mill Road between Route 202 and Saw Mill River Road
Yorktown, New York

Site 42: Hallock's Mill Brook Site

Location: SR 202 south of Police Station
Yorktown, New York

Site 43: Joseph Purdy Homestead

Location: intersection of (Old) State Route 22 and State Route 116
Purdys, New York

Site 44: North Salem Town Hall

Location: Route 116
Salem Center, New York

Site 45: New Windsor Cantonment State Historic Site

Location: Temple Hill Road
New Windsor, New York