

Historical March in Massachusetts

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Some French Reinforcements Disembarked in Boston

On 1781 May 7 Admiral Barras' squadron and convoy (which had left Brest, France, in March) arrived in Boston MA with about 630 soldiers. Some of the men were so ill that they were left to recover in the barracks on Governor's Island in Boston Harbor.[Need source for info on Boston stay..]

Admiral Barras brought Rochambeau bad news -- the 2,300 troops that had been left behind in France in 1780 would not be sent to the U.S. They were needed to protect the Dutch colonies, now that the United Provinces (now the Netherlands) had declared war on Great Britain But there was also good news -- Admiral de Grasse was headed for the West Indies and had instructions to cooperate with the allied commanders in the U.S.

June 1781: The French soldiers who recovered from scurvy in Boston were added to the Newport RI garrison under Choisy, whichy eventually consisted of 430 French effectives. [Ref. 1781 June 10 letter Rochambeau to Choisy, per M. Trentinian]

On 1781 Jun 11 a convoy of eight vessels accompanied by the 50-gun ship-of-the-line *Le Sagittaire* arrived at Boston with 592 soldiers and two companies (68 men) of artillery for Rochambeau's force.

About 190 men were too sick to travel further. The artillery units and 400 of the others were well enough to march to Dedham MA, the next day to Wrentham MA, and finally to Providence RI, where 200 of the soldiers joined their main units for the march to New York while 200 other soldiers marched to Newport RI to join the garrison under Brigadier Claude Gabriel de Choisy. [Ref. [W3R[®] Historical Survey for PA, by Robert Selig \(2007\), p 81](#)]

At right is the Massachusetts portion of the W3R[®] campsite map, showing camps for the northward march in 1782 (sites possibly used in 1781).

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