

THE WASHINGTON-ROCHAMBEAU REVOLUTIONARY ROUTE IN PENNSYLVANIA, 31 AUGUST TO 7 SEPTEMBER 1781

9.1 Order and Organization of the March

Once the decision to march to Virginia had been made, Washington chose the Light Infantry Battalion under Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander Scammel consisting of two companies of a Captain, two subaltern officers, four sergeants and fifty rank and file each from the Connecticut Line and two companies Light Infantry from the New York Line commanded by Alexander Hamilton.²⁸² In addition he picked the two regiments of the New Jersey Line, the two regiments of the New York Line, the Canadian Regiment (Congress' Own) under Brigadier General Moses Hazen, the First Rhode Island, and Colonel John Lamb's Second Continental Artillery to march with him to Yorktown.²⁸³

Strength of the Continental Army on the March through Pennsylvania

Regiment/Unit	Commanding officer	Strength
Commander-in-Chief's Guard	Captain Caleb Gibbs	70 officers and men
Rhode Island Regiment	Lt.-Col. Jeremiah Olney	360 officers and men
First New York Regiment	Colonel Goose Van Schaick	390 officers and men
Second New York Regiment	Colonel Philip Van Cortlandt	420 officers and men
Combined New Jersey Regiment	Colonel Mathias Ogden	400 officers and men
Canadian Regiment (Congress' Own)	Brigadier Moses Hazen	270 officers and men
Light Infantry Regiment	Lt.-Col. Alexander Scammel	380 officers and men
Second Continental Artillery	Colonel John Lamb	200 officers and men
Corps of Sappers and Miners	Captain James Gilliland	50 officers and men
Artificer Regiment	Lt.-Col. Ebenezer Stevens	150 (? Unknown)
Total:		2,720 officers and men

The remainder of the Continental Army, also almost exactly 2,500 men, would stay behind in Westchester County under the command of General Edward Heath. Not all of these troops, however, left on the same day from White Plains or took the same routes to the rendezvous in Elkton. The First New Jersey under Colonel

²⁸² General Orders for 31 July 1781 stated that the light infantry companies "of the first and second regiments of New York (upon their arrival in Camp) with the two companies of [New] York Levies under command of Captains Sackett and Williams will form a Battalion under command of Lieutenant Colonel Hamilton and Major Fish.

²⁸³ This table is based on Charles H. Lesser, *The Sinews of Independence. Monthly Strength Reports of the Continental Army* (Chicago, 1975). The monthly strength reports are those for July; no reports for August have survived. The artillery had departed from West Point on 15 July and arrived at Philipsburg on 27 July.

Mathias Ogden (14 officers, 22 NCOs and 149 rank and file and 198 officers and men detached), the Second New Jersey under Colonel Elias Dayton (18/37/171 and 180 detached) and Moses Hazen's Canadian Regiment (17/38/208 and 85 detached) ferried to New Jersey during the night of 18/19 August and took up positions near Springfield. The Second New York Regiment (23 officers and 398 NCOs and men fit for duty on the eve of the siege on 28 September 1781) was ordered to remain behind until 34 flatboats were finished and ready for use in the campaign. That detachment caught up with the Continental Army at Trenton. This left Washington with about 1,600 officers and men who departed with him from White Plains for Peekskill.

Rochambeau's forces were considerably larger. On 1 August, not quite three weeks before departure for Virginia, he had some 4,200 men available.²⁸⁴

Strength of the French Army on the March through Pennsylvania

UNIT	PRESENT NCOs and Men	DETACHED	IN HOSPITALS along the route	TOTAL
Bourbonnais	787	178	64	1029
Soissonnais	896	116	44	1056
Saintonge	851	115	77	1043
Royal Deux-Ponts	842	172	29	1043
Artillerie	239	240	31	510
Mineurs	-	23	-	23
Workers (<i>ouvriers</i>)	32	-	4	36
Lauzun's Legion	593	13	4	610
TOTAL	4,240	857	253	5,350

On 15 August, the day after the decision to march to Yorktown had been made, Washington recorded in his Diary that he had "Dispatched a Courier to the Marquis de la Fayette with information of this matter -- requesting him to be in perfect readiness to second my views & to prevent if possible the retreat of Cornwallis toward Carolina. He was also directed to Halt the Troops under the Command of General Wayne if they had not made any great progress in their March to join the Southern Army." The following day he learned much to his relief in a letter from Lafayette, "that Lord Cornwallis with the Troops from Hampton Road, had proceeded up York River & landed at York & Gloucester Towns where they were throwing up Works on the 6th. Inst." The risks the two generals had taken were beginning to pay off as the pieces of the campaign were falling into place.²⁸⁵

Preparing and executing the march tested the resourcefulness of the Quartermaster General Department to its limits. Since speed was of the essence,

²⁸⁴ NARA, Military Service Records, Revolutionary War Rolls, 1775-1783. M246, Roll 136: Returns of the French Army Under Count Rochambeau, 1781-82.

²⁸⁵ Washington, *Diaries*, Vol. 2, p. 254. Washington's letter to Lafayette is in Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 22, p. 501-502.

logistical planning and preparation for the march had to be kept to a minimum. On 17 September, Washington announced the schedule for the French army: it was to leave Philipsburg on Saturday, 18 August, and reach Trenton on Thursday the 29th. Washington explained "I have named no halting day because we have not a moment to loose."²⁸⁶ On 18 August, the New Jersey Line and Hazen's Regiment ferried across the Hudson and received orders to move "to the heights between Chatham and Springfield".²⁸⁷ Concurrently the remainder of the Continental Army began its march north toward Peekskill.

The need of supplies for the army as well as for horses and wagons was immense and the task of providing draft animals and wagons lay with Quarter-Master General Timothy Pickering, who had taken over the position from Nathanael Greene in 1780.²⁸⁸ Chief engineer Louis le Begue de Presle du Portail's "Estimate of the number of Horses & Oxen of the Main Army for the Campaign 1781 & of the cost of the Forage requisite for their Support for 182 days" allowed the Commander-in-Chief and his guard 64 horses and 24 oxen. Each regiment of Infantry was allowed 22 horses and 32 oxen; an artillery regiment had 20 horses and 40 oxen. Moses Hazen's regiment was allowed 26 horses and 24 oxen, the artificers 11 horses and 40 oxen, the Sappers and Miners 22 horses and 8 oxen. Staff, commissary, artillery conductors, traveling forges, ammunition wagons and carts for provisions added dozens more animals. The total estimate of animals needed for the main army amounted to 3,106 horses and 2,132 draft oxen for the campaign.²⁸⁹ In view of the financial situation and with virtually no credit left, both Washington as well as du Portail knew that it would be impossible to acquire such a huge number of animals. But it seems reasonable to assume that including horses owned privately by officers, there may well have been 500-600 horses and as well as 200-300 oxen with the Continental Army on its march through New Jersey and Pennsylvania to Head of Elk.

This number is supported by a request from Major Thomas Cogswell on 11 July 1781, to Quarter-Master General (QMG) Timothy Pickering that the army needed 500 horses as soon as possible for the campaign.²⁹⁰ This request came on top of a request by General Knox of 1 July, in which he had asked for 205 horses

²⁸⁶ Washington, *Writings*, vol. 23, p. 7.

²⁸⁷ Washington, *Writings*, vol. 23, p. 25, and *Diaries*, Vol. 2, p. 255.

²⁸⁸ See E. Wayne Carp, *To Starve the Army at Pleasure. Continental Army Administration and American Political Culture, 1775-1783* (Chapel Hill, 1984), pp. 169-189.

²⁸⁹ National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Miscellaneous Numbered Documents, Record Group 93, microfilm reel 92, No. 26624. New Jersey State Archives, Record Group: Military Records, The Quartermaster General and Commissary General Records, Contractors Records, Box 1, contains the Wagonmaster-General's Account Book, 1 March 1780. List of teams in Continental Service at the post of Tr[enton] shows 133 teams with 4-horses and 16 with two horses for a total 564 horses though more would be needed before the beginning of the campaign in June 1780.

²⁹⁰ Timothy Pickering Papers, Microfilm Edition, reel 26, vol. 89, letters received, May-August 1781, No. 341. The volume contains confirmation of letters received, not the letters themselves.

for artillery and another 40 to draw the wagons loaded with spare ammunition.²⁹¹ But the acquisition of even that relatively small number of animals, less than a quarter of du Portail's number, proved difficult. Many of the Continental horses had been farmed out for the winter across New Jersey and into Pennsylvania, but when Spring came and the Deputy-QMGs and their Assistant-DQMGs wanted to recall the horses, many farmers refused to release them without first getting paid for the maintenance and upkeep - in specie. Unable to provide the cash, the ADQMs were either forced to leave the animals with the farmers or to produce impress warrants for horses already owned by the Continental Army. Since these farmers were usually supportive of the American cause, impressment could be used as a last resort only. When it came to Loyalists, however, sheer necessity overruled all such considerations. On 20 July, the 1781 campaign had barely begun, Pickering informed his deputy Henry Dearborn that in order to meet Knox' request, Washington had consented to impress 100 large horses for the artillery from "the disaffected" in Bergen County. In war-ravaged Bergen County, even impressment did not produce the wanted result: a few days later, Pickering reported that the action had yielded only 52 horses.²⁹² Eventually Heath's forces were denuded of as many wagons, horses, and ox-teams as Washington needed for the march to Virginia viz. on 23 August, the eve of the army's departure from Stony Point, two brigades of 40 ox teams each were diverted to Knox.²⁹³ But even that did not meet the needs of the army, and Washington granted Pickering from Chatham on 28 August permission to impress whatever animals he needed. "In all cases on the present March, where the Draught Horses or Cattle of the Army shall fail, or where an additional number shall be absolutely necessary, and cannot be procured by hire, or in any other way, except by Military force; You are hereby authorized and directed to impress such numbers of Horses or Oxen as shall be required to perform the public Service, taking care to have it done in such a manner, as to secure the property of the owners as well, and with as little damage and inconveniency as the circumstances will admit."

Due to the short time available between the decision to march to Virginia and the beginning of the march, four days, there was very little time to conduct the usual preparations such as reconnoiter roads, inspect river-fords, prepare campsites, and to establish depots and hospitals in advance of the troops. Selecting routes, locating campsites, supplying troops and a multitude of other responsibilities connected with keeping an army functioning lay once again with Pickering, who had appointed Deputy-QMGs for the various states; in New Jersey this task fell to John Neilson, whose office, however, was located in Trenton.

²⁹¹ Timothy Pickering Papers, Microfilm Edition Reel 26, Vol. 89, Letters received by Pickering, May 1781 –August 1781, No. 304.

²⁹² Timothy Pickering Papers, Microfilm Edition, reel 26, vol. 127: Letters sent by Pickering, 10 May to 21 December 1781.

²⁹³ Timothy Pickering Papers, Microfilm Edition, reel 26, vol. 127: Letters sent by Pickering, 10 May to 21 December 1781. Washington repeated the order to Heath on 24 August, informing him that he had "to furnish the Teams required by the Qr. Mr. General without a moments delay; ... I am halted for want of them and have my movements, the success of which depends absolutely upon celerity, impeded."

Since Pickering traveled ahead of the troops,²⁹⁴ the burden of getting the Continental Army across Pennsylvania lay on his chief assistants Colonel Henry Dearborn and Colonel Henry Emanuel [sic] Lutterloh, who accompanied the troops. AQMGs, commissaries, and purchasing agents often preceded the various detachments of the Continental Army by barely a day or two. Many decisions concerning supplies had to be made on the spot, which helps to explain why not a single letter or note detailing routes has survived in the Pickering Papers for the time between 21 and 31 August. Yet whether any additional letters, notes, or reports ever existed seems doubtful in view of the fact that instructions for the day's march were given to the troops verbally just before they set out. Entries such as these in General Lincoln's Orderly Book for 28 August on the eve of departure from Chatham are rare. "The different Routes and Orders of March will be given by the DQM Genl. On Parade at 4 o'Clock [a.m.]". The fact that even such brief entries are relatively rare, and that even the Washington's Head-Quarters Orderly Book for most of the days of the march does not even contain an entry for "Parole" and "Countersign", is another indication of the informality with which the troops hastened across New Jersey to Pennsylvania.²⁹⁵

As the Continental Army was preparing for the march to Yorktown, other logistical issues needed to be addressed as well. One of them was the issue of baggage. Since speed was of the essence the army needed to travel light, yet despite many prohibitions to the contrary officers tended to appropriate the wagons for their own use. On 21 August, Pickering had pointed out this evil to Washington. "I am opinion (sic) that the officers are greatly incumbered with unnecessary baggage the consequence of rest & expectation of marching very little. I find I have too much myself of which I shall get rid before we leave this

²⁹⁴ On 27 August, Washington asked Samuel Miles from Chatham to procure some rooms in Philadelphia. Almost as an afterthought he added "These Arrangements would have been made through the Quarter Master General, but he having been left at Kings ferry to execute some business in his Department, and the time of his arrival being uncertain, I have thought proper to write to you myself on the subject, and to desire in the most earnest Manner, that neither labour or expence may be wanting in the performance of the important business now committed to you." Pickering only joined the army in Williamsburg.

²⁹⁵ Orderly Book for MG Lincoln's Brigade 1781, Codex Eng 67, John Carter Brown Library, Providence, Rhode Island. Washington knew that once Philadelphia was reached even the Continental Army would need maps and on 29 August ordered his map-maker Simeon DeWitt to proceed to Philadelphia to map out a road from there to Williamsburg. "Brunswick, August 29, 1781.

Sir: Immediately upon receipt of this you will begin to Survey the road (if it has not been done already) to Princeton, thence (through Maiden head) to Trenton. thence to Philadelphia, thence to the head of Elk through Darby, Chester, Wilmington Christiana bridge.

At the head of Elk you will receive further orders. I need not observe to you the necessity of noting Towns, Villages and remarkable Houses and places but I must desire that you will give me the rough traces of your Survey as you proceed on as I have reasons for desiring to know this as soon as possible. I am, etc."

Quoted from Austin Scott, *Blazing the Way to Final Victory: Washington's Order of 29 August 1781* (New Brunswick, 1920). These maps are today preserved in the New-York Historical Society. See also Albert H. Heusser, *George Washington's Map Maker. A Biography of Robert Erskine* (New Brunswick, 1928, repr. 1966).

ground." In order to force his fellow officers to do likewise, Pickering suggested "to assign a reasonable number of carriages to the officers & then to keep their baggage wholly distinct from the men i.e. the tents & camp kettles - and that any officers baggage afterwards found in the tent waggons should be thrown out by the waggon master general and his deputy and conductors." Pickering proposed to allow the field officers of a regiment one closed waggon, another closed wagon to the regimental staff, the captains one closed and one open wagon, and three open wagons for the tents and camp kettles of the men.

As Pickering had requested, Washington announced the new rules in "General Orders" issued at Head Quarters at King's Ferry on Wednesday 22 August. In them, Washington clarified that "as the Detachment now under the particular direction of Major General Lincoln are to consider themselves as Light-troops who are always supposed to be fit for action and free from every incumbrance. He cannot help advising them to take the present opportunity of depositing at West Point such of their Women as are not able to undergo the fatigue of frequent marches and also every article of Baggage which they can in any wise dispense with and expects that Major General Lincoln and the Officers commanding Corps will pay particular attention to this seasonable admonition as they will thereby (in all probability) avoid evils which cannot be hereafter remedied though they may now be prevented.

As great inconveniencies have arisen in the transportation of Baggage from officers commanding regiments procuring a greater number of waggons than is their proportion and from not having the Tents and baggage of the officers conveyed in different Waggons from those that carry the Soldiers tents, to prevent such irregularities in future the Commander in Chief directs the following allowance of Waggons vizt.

To the Field Officer of a regiment, one covered waggon
To the regimental Staff Captains and Subs: two coverd and one open waggons
To every hundred men one open Waggon.

And particularly enjoins it on commanding officers of regiments and corps to see that the tents and Baggage of the officers are convey'd in their proper Waggons and the Waggon Master General is directed to throw away any officers baggage that he finds loaded in those Waggons that are appropriated for the Soldiers Tents."

Two days later as the army was getting ready to leave Stony Point, Lincoln on 24 August implemented Washington's orders: "the Quarter Master General is instructed to throw away any officers Baggage that he finds loaded in those Waggons that are appropriated for the Soldiers Tents."²⁹⁶ The fact that these order had to be repeated on an almost weekly basis throughout the campaign is as good an indication as any how difficult it must have been to enforce them.

²⁹⁶ Lincoln Orderly Book, John Carter Brown Library, Providence, Rhode Island.

Another issue concerned camp followers. Even though the army frowned on women and their children accompanying it on the marches, their presence was ubiquitous. Women and children have always formed an integral part of any army, and the American Revolutionary War was no different. Even though their numbers were, at least in theory, strictly limited, and attempts were made to keep women of questionable conduct out of the camp and to keep those within closely supervised, Washington - and Rochambeau - found it impossible to do without them. The vast majority of these women were either wives of soldiers or women looking for employment primarily as washerwomen to keep the soldier's clean or for use in the hospitals.

The earliest available general return for the Continental Army of December 1777 gives the number of women drawing rations equal to that of an enlisted man at about one woman for every 44 NCOs and men or 2.5%. At the beginning of the 1781 campaign in June, a return for the brigades encamped at New Windsor (except the Connecticut Line) shows 137 women, one for every 32 men. Male-female ratios varied from a high of 1 woman for every 11 men in the artillery (429 men) and 1 for every 24 men in the Commander-in-Chief's Guard (69 men) to a low of 1 to 87 in the New Hampshire Brigade. Based on the research by John U. Rees, about 40 to 45 women, 1/3 of the 137 women listed in the return, can be reasonably expected to have accompanied the Army on its march to Yorktown. Under 1781 garrison conditions, the number of female camp followers in the Continental Army stood at around 3% of the rank and file, somewhat higher for Washington's Lifeguard and technical troops such as the artillery, somewhat lower for Light troops. Under campaign conditions, numbers of female followers likely dropped to ca. 1.5 % or less of rank and file strength (with the above exceptions).

Combined New Jersey Regiment	6 women (1% of strength)
First New York	5 women (1.5%)
Second New York	5 women (1.5%)
First Rhode Island	7 women (1.5%)
Moses Hazen's Regiment	4 women (2.0%)
Second Continental Artillery	9 women (4.0%)
Scammell's Light Battalion	4 women (1.5%)
Washington's Life Guard	3 women (based on June 1781 return)
Corps of Sappers and Miners	1 woman (based on June 1781 return)
Corps of Artificers	2 women (estimate)

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46 women and an unknown number of children²⁹⁷

²⁹⁷ This tabulation is based on personal correspondence with John U. Rees and his articles "'The Multitude of Women': An Examination of the Numbers of female Camp Followers with the Continental Army." *The Brigade Dispatch* Vol. 23 No. 4, (Autumn 1992), pp. 5-17; vol. 24 No. 1, (Winter 1993), pp. 6-16; and No. 2 (Spring 1993), pp. 2-6; "The Number of Rations issued to Women in Camp: New Material Concerning Female Followers With Continental Regiments." *ibid.*, vol. 28 No. 1, (Spring 1998), pp. 2-8 and No. 2, (Summer 1998), pp. 2-12, 13, as well as his "'The Proportion of Women which ought to be allowed': Female Camp Followers With the

By the time the Continental Army had disengaged from the British at New York in August 1781 and was making its way across New Jersey to Pennsylvania, it numbered about 2,650 rank and file. Though the preceding table is mostly based on estimates and patterns established before 1781, it provides a generous but reasonable estimate of the number of women that could have accompanied the army to Virginia. In his General Orders of 22 August, Washington addressed that issue as well. He "cannot help advising them to take the present opportunity of depositing at West Point such of their Women as are not able to undergo the fatigue of frequent marches." Anticipating this order, Colonel Lamb had already ordered on 19 August that a return be made "of all the Women and Children in Camp, distinguishing those that have husbands and also Returns of the Husband's Names & whether they be in this Division of the Army or not."²⁹⁸

On 24 August, Lamb repeated in the "Orderly Book" of his regiment the General Orders of 19 June respect women and children on the march. "No Women will be suffered to ride in waggons or walk in the ranks this Campaign unless there are very particular reasons for it, of which the General Officer or officer commanding the Division or brigade to which they belong is to be the judge; a written permission only will avail; without this the officers of the day or police are not only authorized to turn them out, but requested to inflict instant punishment upon those who shall be found transgressors of this order."

And on 27 August, Lincoln issued this order: "Prior to the Commencement of our March this Morning the commanding Officers will inform the Women of their respective Corps that the General saw many of them, yesterday, from their proper Line of March strolling in gardens and Orchards – an irregularity which must not be repeated. Should any attempt it hereafter, they will be denied their Rations and prevented further from following the Army."²⁹⁹

French troops were campaigning in a foreign country, far away from their home bases. This explains why there were few women and even fewer children with Rochambeau's forces. In addition women "were not considered necessary to the administration of the army", as René Chartrand has pointed out. Therefore "women did not officially exist." The army very rarely approved marriages, but when it did, the women, though not allowed to live in the barracks, at least received a daily bread ration. Both Rochambeau's *French* and *Foreign* regiments brought women with them from Europe. In *French* regiments, women were but tolerated, but *Foreign* regiments such as the Royal Deux-Ponts were allowed 30 women each in the *capitulation* between the colonels of the regiments and the crown of 1 March 1760. On the march, they received 1 *sol* pay per day and a bread ration. Officially Rochambeau could have brought but 30 women and their

Continental Army." *The Continental Soldier. Journal of the Continental Line* vol. 8 No. 3, (Spring 1995), pp. 51-58.

²⁹⁸ Lamb, Orderly Book, search under date.

²⁹⁹ Lincoln Orderly Book, John Carter Brown Library, Providence, Rhode Island.

children from the Royal Deux-Ponts. The number of camp followers in 1781 approached this total, but only 1/4 were from the Royal Deux-Ponts.

The most reliable numbers are in the embarkation lists of 1782. When Rochambeau's infantry left from Boston on Christmas Day 1782, it embarked 25 women and 4 children:

5 women or children for the Bourbonnais

6 women and 1 child for the Soissonnais

5 women or children for the Saintonge

6 women and 3 children for the Royal Deux-Ponts (at least two are girls, one but 4 years old)

3 women for the artillery

A slightly different list in the *Archives Nationales* gives 20 women and six children for the infantry regiments plus three for the artillery, with six women and three children for the Royal Deux-Ponts. The siege artillery as well as Lauzun's Legion wintered on the American mainland and left in May 1783. An embarkation list dated Philadelphia, 4 May 1783, gives 5 women as passengers "a la ration," i.e., soldier's wives, though it is unclear to which unit they belonged. That would bring the total number of women and children in the French army to 34 women and children.

In June 1781, Rochambeau hired waggoners and cooks in Connecticut for the march south; seven of the 15 cooks were female, but they were Americans and had not crossed the Atlantic with the French army. If they are added to the known total of American and French women and children, we arrive at a combined total of about 80-85 women and children who accompanied the allied armies across New Jersey.

One of the women accompanying the armies to Yorktown was Sarah Mary Matthews, born in 1756 in Blooming Grove, Orange County, New York. After her first husband William Read had been killed in an early battle of the Revolutionary War, she married Aaron Osborn in January 1780. Osborn was a commissary sergeant in Captain James Gregg's company of Colonel Goose Van Schaick's First New York Regiment. In the summer of 1781, she and the other women in her regiment -- in her old age she remembered the wives of Lieutenant Forman and Sergeant Lamberson as well as a black woman named Letta -- traveled with the regiment across New Jersey, working alternately as a seamstress, washerwoman, and baking bread for the soldiers. In Baltimore she boarded a ship and sailed down the Chesapeake Bay to Williamsburg. At the siege of Yorktown she cooked for four soldiers besides her husband, carrying water and taking care of wounded soldiers. At some point she encountered General Washington who asked her: "Young woman are you not afraid of the bullets?" Her response was: "No, the bullets would not cheat the gallows".

The end of the war found Matthews at Continental Village in New York, and when Osborn left her for another woman in 1784, she took John Benjamin for her third husband in 1787. Forty years later, in 1837, Matthews applied for a pension and submitted her autobiography and Revolutionary War experiences as part application. Her application was successful and she lived to enjoy her pension for another twenty years. Sarah Matthews died on 26 April 1858, about 102 years old.

In order to avoid having to travel during the heat of the day, American as well as French forces got up early. The Orderly Book for Colonel Lamb's regiment of artillery provides first-hand insight into the order and organization of the march. On 19 August, reveille was beaten "at 1/2 past 2 Oclock, the Assemble at three, and the march will commence at 1/3 past three" with the baggage of the artillery preceding the park.

Once the crossing of the Hudson was completed and the march through New Jersey began, the Continental Army settled into a routine that had their march begin at 4:00 a.m.; camp for the day was reached in the early afternoon at the latest.³⁰⁰ Next came the distribution of food, especially beef, to the men, who were divided into messes: "One day's Provision will be drawn, and cook'd the Afternoon".³⁰¹ Cooking of meals took place in the common kettle: "Every Mess must carry its own Camp Kettle," Washington had ordered on 19 June.

In the absence of pre-established depots, the troops were handed their food supplies for a number of days in advance with the order to prepare their meals in advance as much as that was possible. On 24 August, the day of departure from Stony Point, Lincoln distributed to the Continental Army two days worth of beef, 14 days soap and candles, and three days worth of flour with the instruction to bake bread "this afternoon."³⁰² The French had the funds to pay locals to bake their bread for them, viz. on 28 June 1781, John Lloyd wrote to Wadsworth from Darby that he had been ordered by the French to provide a large quantity of bread. In order to meet the request, he had "distributed [the wheat flour] among the inhabitants to bake."³⁰³ The Continental Army "requested" locals to make their bake-ovens available to bake bread for the soldiers. On 8 September, Lincoln's Orderly Book records from Head of Elk that as the troops of the First Division were about to embark for the Chesapeake, they were to receive six days flour, four days pork and 2 days of beef. The flour was to be baked into bread that afternoon, "for this purpose the inhabitants must be requested to lend their Ovens". That was clearly an exception to the rule, however. The *comte de Lauberdière*, an aide-de-camp to Rochambeau, recorded that "They trouble themselves little with provisions: actually they are given just a bit of corn meal of which each soldier makes his own bread."³⁰⁴

³⁰⁰ But on 26 August, Lamb and his column marched from "Forks of Posaick" as late as 5:30 a.m.

³⁰¹ Lamb Orderly Book for 6 August 1781.

³⁰² Lincoln Orderly Book, John Carter Brown Library, Providence, Rhode Island.

³⁰³ Wadsworth Papers, Box 131.

³⁰⁴ Lauberdière, Journal, fol. 75.

Unless salted or smoked, beef spoiled easily in the summer heat. It was preferable to have a drove of cattle accompany the army and to slaughter the animals as needed. As the army began its march into New Jersey on 25 August, Lincoln ordered that "The Commissary will daily precede [with the Cattle] the Troops, to the place of Incampment & have the Beef ready to be issued on their arrival, in order to prevent delays, the provision returns will be made out every Evening."³⁰⁵ The number of cattle with the troops could be quite large -- John Hudson remembered that in Baltimore where the army "encamped on Howard's hill ... six hundred heads of cattle were slaughtered and salted for our use" on the final leg of the journey to Williamsburg.³⁰⁶

At times, however, Pickering's supply system could not meet the needs of the soldiery and the DQMG had to resort to confiscation of supplies. Even before the campaign started, Quarter-Master General Timothy Pickering and his assistants were casting covetous eyes on supplies gathered for the French forces. On 29 May and again on 4 June, Morgan Lewis and Daniel Parker begged Wadsworth from Albany to order the delivery of the 4,000 barrels of flour they had purchased as his agents for the French Army. More importantly, in order to benefit from the French presence they had purchased another 1,700 barrels on their own account that were in danger of being seized by the New York State Government for the Continental Army. "By a warrant from the Governor 200 Bbs [i.e., barrels] have already been seized from us."³⁰⁷ If their flour were to be confiscated, Lewis and Parker would be ruined.

Wadsworth saved this flour from confiscation, but eventually it ended up in American hands after all. On 18 August, Washington informed Rochambeau, that "Before Mr. Morris left Camp he made a proposal which he desired might be communicated to your Excellency. He informed me that he understood Mr. Tarlé had between two and three thousand Barrels of Flour upon the upper parts of the North River, and as he imagined it could not now be wanted in that quarter he made an offer of supplying you with an equal quantity to the southward, if that above should be delivered to our Commissary General. I shall be obliged by your making Mr. Tarlé acquainted with the above, and if it can be transacted upon the terms proposed by Mr. Morris, I shall be glad to know the exact quantity and where Mr. Tarlé would chuse to have the Flour which is to be given in exchange deposited."

Rochambeau agreed to let the Americans have at least some of the flour as is evidenced in Washington's letter from Kings Ferry of 22 August. "Sir: You will

³⁰⁵ Lincoln Orderly Book, John Carter Brown Library, Providence, Rhode Island.. From December 1779 to the end of the war in 1783, Ephraim Blaine served as Commissary General to the Continental Army. A comparison of direct quotes shows that this seems to have been the Orderly Book used by Andrew D. Mellick, Jr., *The Story of an Old Farm or Life in New Jersey in the Eighteenth Century* (Somerville, 1889), pp. 534-542, esp. pp. 535-537.

³⁰⁶ Hudson Memoirs in *Cist's Advertiser* Vol. 3, No. 3, 28 January 1846.

³⁰⁷ Connecticut Historical Society, Jeremiah Wadsworth Correspondence, Box 131.

oblige me by letting me know the Quantity of Flour which you propose to deliver to my Comm[issar]y. General upon the North River, and where you would chuse to have the like quantity to replace it, delivered, and in what time. This last is particularly necessary to enable me to inform Mr. Morris, that he may make his purchases accordingly." And two days later he informed Morris that "Immediately after you left Camp I applied to Mr. Tarlé the French Intendant and requested to know the quantity of Flour which he could spare us and where he would wish to have it replaced. I have not been able to ascertain either of these points, but from a conversation which passed yesterday between Mr. Tarlé and Colo. Stewart on the subject, I do not imagine we shall obtain more than 1000 or 1200 Barrels in this quarter; and as the whole or the greater part which is to be given in return will be wanted to the southward, I think you may with safety prepare a few hundred Barrels in Philada. at which place the French will have a quantity of Bread Baked and the remainder at the Head of Elk and upon Chesapeake. The moment I know with more certainty, I will inform you."

From the very outset of the campaign, the Continental Army was living hand-to-mouth. All credit of Congress and its agents was long gone. On 25 October 1781, David Duncan wrote to John Davis, AQMG in Pennsylvania from Pittsburgh, "I assure you I can not do any thing without Money at this Place, the People have never been paid yet for their services or I may say for any thing due, and Promises will not answer to pay debts any Longer, they say they would not Trust their Father if in Public service, I cant blame them they have been Deceived so often since these times begun."³⁰⁸

To meet the requirements of keeping any kind of army in the field, State authorities had long since resorted to both collecting tax payments in kind³⁰⁹ and to handing out interest-bearing Continental loan certificates to farmers and merchants in exchange for their goods. Colonel Lamb's Orderly Book recorded for 25 August, the Continental Army was encamped barely three miles into New Jersey, that "The Officers Commanding Corps will appoint some Person to procure forage and Grain for their Horses, and receipt to Mr. Coldclough, Forage Master to the Park, who will give the necessary Certificates." For the historian, however, they provide insight into the wide variety of services required to move the Continental Army across New Jersey and sometimes into Pennsylvania as well. On 12 April 1782, Thomas Johnston, who traveled with the wagon train to Yorktown, received a certificate for a total £ 31 3/ for "21 days service of a four horse Team employed with the Army from 13 Sept to 3 Oct. 1781 at 2 dol[lar]s p[er] day - 1 waggon delivered by the Waggonmaster of the Army, to the French Army £ 14 - Sundry harness with said waggon £ 1 8/."³¹⁰

³⁰⁸ John Davis Papers, Library of Congress.

³⁰⁹ See New Jersey State Archives, Record Group: Dept. of the Treasury. Sub-group: State Treasurer's Office, Series: Revolutionary War-Era Accounts of Taxes received in kind 1781-1782.

³¹⁰ These certificates can be found in Neilson, John. "Papers ... kept as DQM for NJ, 1780-1782, Box 1" call no. Ac 589, Special Collections, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey. Neilson took over as DQMG in September 1780. In almost all cases only the signed receipt that

Faced with the option of selling for silver or certificates, Americans preferred to sell to the French. Unable to compete with Wadsworth's agents, Continental money and state emissions lost whatever value they still had. Wherever it went, resources for the Continental Army dried up, which for enlisted men often meant going hungry. In their need to raise cash, Continental Army officials occasionally even sold supplies to Wadsworth. Azariah Dunham's *Daybook* records for 29 August 1781: "£ 312 15/ cash for (illeg. number) heads of cattle".³¹¹ Tallmadge had foreseen this problem when he wrote to Wadsworth on 14 July 1780, "as you are Q[uartermaster]gen[era]l for the French I shall not be disappointed to find thro the Campaign that they are well fed & our Troops starving."³¹²

Once the campaign had started, his fears came true. On 21 August, James Hendricks wrote from Alexandria "Lord knows what will be done for provisions! Colo. Wadsworth & Carter, the French Agents have their Riders all round the Country, buying flour & beef with specie, this will effectively prevent the Commissioners from procuring any, as there is not a probability of the People letting the State Agents have an Ounce on Credit while they can get the French Crowns & Louis, I wish the Executive wou'd fall on some method to get the Cash from the French, and furnish the Supplies, without some method or other is fell on, the American Army will be starved."³¹³ There was no way "to get the Cash from the French", and their coffers empty, all that Continental Quarter-Masters could do was hand out certificates and, if all else failed, resort to impressment and confiscation of supplies, angering the very population upon whose support the army depended. As the Continental Army was approaching his state, Delaware DQM John Yeates warned Delaware Governor Caesar Rodney that "such actions were productive of the most disagreeable occurrences [since] the taking property indiscriminately ... never fails of giving much distress, and causing just murmuring."³¹⁴

payment had been made, i.e., a small strip on left hand of the certificate, has survived. The certificate cited here has the number 8054.

Box 2 of the Neilson Papers contains an account book beginning Trenton, 25 September 1780, with almost daily entries of horses being purchased, materials being received and/or handed out etc. There is no noticeable increase in activity in Neilson's office in September 1781, no mention of French forces and no entry that can be tied explicitly to the 1781 campaign. During the less than two years that Neilson served as DQMG he handed out over 10,000 certificates. I have not been able to locate any certificates relative to the march of the Continental Army through Pennsylvania.

³¹¹ Dunham, Azariah. *Accounts: daybook of purchases, expenses etc as Superintendent of Purchases for the American Army, 1777-1786*. 3 vols., 23 items Rutgers University, New Brunswick. AD-3, Ac 18. The *Daybook* is part of Charles Deshler Papers. In a volume called: "Accounts (in ledger form) of rations issued to the militia and the Continental Army 1776-1781" is a blank waggoner enlistment form.

³¹² Tallmadge to JW from Cortland Manor 14 July 1780. CHS, Wadsworth Papers, Box 130a.

³¹³ NARA, Revolutionary War Records, Miscellaneous Numbered Records, Record Group 93, microfilm reel 92, No. 26743.

³¹⁴ Public Archives Division of Delaware, *Delaware Archives. Revolutionary War. In Three Volumes* (Wilmington, 1919), vol. 3 pp. 1357/58. Trying to justify the inevitable, Nathanael Greene had written to Joseph Reed on 1 August 1780 "It is impossible to carry on a war without oppressing the inhabitants in some degree; and however disagreeable and inconvenient it may be

In the face of hunger, the Continental Army, or at least some of its men, resorted to pillaging, so much so, that on 12 Sept. 1780, William S. Pennington of the Second Regiment of Continental Artillery wrote in his diary: "Plundering and Morouding has become so prevelant at this time in the Army that there is No Such thing as Security of Property to the inhabitants."³¹⁵ As he sent him across the Hudson on the first day of the campaign, Washington had finished his order to Dayton and his New Jersey troops of 19 August with the admonition "I wish you to be particular in your orders to the officer, that he may take every effectual means in his power to prevent his men from Abusing the Inhabitants, which is a circumstance I am under the painful necessity of Observing, that your troops are too frequently charged with, and I fear not without foundation. By paying particular Attention to their conduct in this particular and punishing with severity offenders a stop May be put to further improprieties."

If the fact that the numerous prohibitions against plunder and pillage recorded in the Orderly Books are any indication for the frequency of the incidents, they must have been quite frequent indeed. Just one example: Lamb's Orderly Book records on 21 August: "Any Soldier who shall be detected in burning Rails or plundering the orchards or gardens of the Inhabitants may depend on being punished with the utmost severity." Only four days later while encamped at "Ramapogh" on 25 August, Lamb expressed his expectation "that the Officers will exert themselves to prevent the Inhabitants from being plundered, and the fences destroyed - any Soldier who shall be found guilty of such Extremities may depend on being punished with the utmost severity." The tendency to lawlessness was not lost on their allies. Baron Closen remarked that "It is to be noted that the American Army paid neither for wood nor forage, and in a way, for nothing in this country. *The soldiers plunder a great deal (and almost by turns.)*"³¹⁶

Unlike their American allies, the French forces had ample cash - specie - to pay for their purchases. On 17 August, the day before the French artillery departed from White Plains, Wadsworth and Carter informed the French Intendant that "we are on the eve of a March where clearly expenditures of hard Money are absolutely necessary - and without it your service can not be assured." To meet these expenditures, they wanted to "be Monthly supplied with about four

to the people, and to those in power, a regard to the common good and general safety will justify the measure."

³¹⁵ William S. Pennington Diary, 4 May 1780-23 March 1781, p. 62. NJHS MG 234. On 10 September 1780, Ezekiel Cornell, one of Rhode Island's representative to Congress, wrote to Rhode Island Governor William Greene, from Philadelphia that letters from friends in Hackensack inform him that the army has not gotten paid or fed. Therefore "The army now live principally by plunder both for meat & forage. And will if they keep together I fear soon become freebooters. And I think every man must feel for the Inhabitants where the Army marches." RISA Letterbooks Letters to Governor William Greene Vol. 15, 19 June to 10 November 1780. This is part of the background for the mutinies of January 1781. See also an advertisement in the *Freeman's Journal* (Philadelphia) of 18 December 1782 by Caspar Smith, a self-identified "Hessian deserter" who had been "beaten and robbed by some soldiers of gen. Hazen's regiment".

³¹⁶ Acomb, *Closen*, p. 259.

hundred thousand Livres - in Specie".³¹⁷ If Rochambeau had any apprehensions as to whether he would be able to meet his financial needs, these worries were greatly relieved when on 15 August 1781, the French frigate *Magicienne*³¹⁸ under the *chevalier* de la Bouchetiere arrived in Boston with 1,800,000 *livres* on board for Rochambeau.³¹⁹ The welcome news reached Rochambeau nine days later, on 24 August, at his headquarters in King's Ferry. Rochambeau immediately ordered Major Louis Aimable de Prez de Crassier of the Royal Deux-Ponts, who was stationed with 104 officers and men in Providence to guard the French stores, to furnish a detachment of one lieutenant and 24 men to *Commissaire de guerre* Jean Baptiste Louis Jujardy de Granville to go to Boston to retrieve these funds. Granville and the detachment under his command were to escort the funds from Boston via Springfield to New Windsor. From New Windsor they were to take the route to Chester, Warwick, Sussex Court House, Hacketstown and Coryell's Ferry to Philadelphia.³²⁰ The details of the march of this transport from Boston until its arrival in Philadelphia is unknown. Yet the knowledge of the availability of these funds, together with the funds he knew Admiral de Grasse was bringing from Cuba, allowed Rochambeau to advance to Washington the funds the American general needed urgently to pay his troops at Head of Elk on 8 September 1781.

Once under way, the columns of soldiers and wagons stretched for miles across the countryside. During the Monmouth campaign of 1778, Sir Henry Clinton informed Lord George Germaine on 5 July 1778 that "Under the head of the baggage was comprised, not only the wheeled carriages of every department, but also the bat horses, a train, which as the country admitted but of one route for carriages, extended near twelve miles."³²¹ Since Clinton's train consisted of about 1,500 wagons at the time, a train of 12 miles, including bat horses, averages out to

³¹⁷ Jeremiah Wadsworth Papers, CHS, Hartford, Box 143: French Army Papers.

³¹⁸ Launched in Toulon in 1778, the *Magicienne* carried 32 guns. Shortly thereafter as it was sailing from Boston to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, the British 50-gun-ship *Chatham* overtook her after a long chase on 2 September 1781, and forced her to strike her colors after a 30-minute fight in which she lost 32 killed and 86 wounded. The surviving crew of the *Magicienne* was returned to Boston by a flag from Halifax on 10 October 1781. See Historical Society of Pennsylvania AM 6553, p. 30. When she ran aground in the harbor of Grand-Port, Ile-de-France, on 23 August 1810, her crew set her on fire to avoid her falling into the hands of the French.

³¹⁹ The arrival of the "Magician, accompanied by a transport laden with clothing for the Continental army" is reported in the *Newport Mercury* for 18 August 1781. A few days later, on 25 August, John Laurens also sailed into Boston harbor on the French frigate *Resolue* with additional funds and supplies for Washington. He arrived in Philadelphia in the evening of 2 September. Gregory D. Massey, *John Laurens and the American Revolution* (Columbia, 2000), p. 190. The total valued of these supplies was almost 2.3 million *livres* and the equivalent of about 500.00 Spanish milled dollars in silver. Morris used more than half it, some 254.000 dollars, to establish the Bank of North America. "Fourteen wagons hauled by fifty-six oxen and lead horses conveyed the specie to Philadelphia," where it arrived only on 6 November. *Ibid.*, p. 191.

³²⁰ Rochambeau's letter to DePrez as well as to Captain de la Bouchetiere listing the funds and a description of the route the transport was to take to Philadelphia is in the Rochambeau Papers, Library of Congress. In May 1782, Baron Closen followed the same route from Williamsburg to Newburgh and back (Acomb, Closen, pp. 197-203) and in December 1782, Rochambeau followed the same route from Newburgh to Philadelphia.

³²¹ Sir Henry Clinton, K.B., to Lord George Germaine, 5 July 1778. State of the Forces under . . . Sir Henry Clinton, 3 July 1778 (Library of Congress, Mss. Division: PRO CO 5:96, p. 77).

about 42 feet per wagon or 125 wagons per mile. On its march through New Jersey, the Continental Army split up into two and sometimes three columns of two or three regiments. With the seven or eight four-horse wagons plus artillery and supply wagons, its columns were relatively short. It seems reasonable to assume that in view of the horses and oxen requested by Knox and including the more than 200 horses with the Second New York regiment, the overall number of draft animals with the Continental Army, not counting the horses of the officers, was a minimum of 500 to 600 horses and 250 to 300 oxen.³²²

French army columns were considerably longer. Just for the 189 wagons of four oxen each Jeremiah Wadsworth had drafted a minimum of 756 oxen. Dozens more "steaks on the hoof" accompanied the thousands of troops. 80 horses drew the twenty staff wagons, the artillery added about 500 horses and Lauzun's Legion contributed the animals of the 300 mounted hussars. Almost all of the about 400 officers had at least three horses for themselves and their servants, which may have added another 1,200 animals to the columns. Eyewitnesses such as James Hopkins of Bedford remembered the spectacle for the rest of their lives. Hopkins recalled in the 1840s 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." Benjamin Hoyt of Danbury recorded in 1830 of the return march of French forces from Danbury to Newton on 24 October 1782:

"I very well remember when the French Army under Count Rochambeau returned to Boston after the taking of Yorktown. ... When we had got on to the height of land above Deacon Hickok's we could see the Front of the Army had arrived as far as where Samuel Dibble lives and as far as we could see over Shelterrock Hill, a distance probably of two miles the troops continued to come in sight. ... I should judge now that they were 2 Hours in passing the Army and baggage waggon - which latter I think took up more space than the former I know that at the time I began to think had no End."

Rochambeau was crossing Pennsylvania in brigades of two regiments of 1,000 men each plus their staffs, servants, wagons and artillery supplements. If we apply the above formula of 125 wagons per mile and allow for delays and gaps in the column it is not unreasonable to assume a column stretching three miles or more along the roads. Since the daily marching distance was between 10 and 15 miles, the troops at the head of the column could already have covered one quarter of their route before van left camp.

These numbers add up to close to 6,000 officers, their servants, enlisted men, waggoners, cooks and other support personnel and 900 to 950 head of cattle, incl. the "steaks on the hoof" for the troops and 1,700 horses on the French side. The Americans contributed some 2,700 officers and men plus waggoners, cooks, women and children and 500 to 600 horses and 250 to 300 head of cattle. Over a

³²² On its march through Philadelphia, Thacher estimated the column at "nearly two miles" long.

span of five days in early September 1781, some 9,000 people plus their 2,200 horses and 1,200 head of cattle marched and walked through America's de facto capital. That meant that the columns of men and beasts that made their ways across Pennsylvania in a column that literally stretched across the commonwealth represented one of the largest communities in the nascent United States. There were maybe five communities in all of the United States larger than these armies. One of these was Philadelphia, which numbered about 28,000 inhabitants; another was New York City with maybe 23,000. Boston (12,000 in 1783), Charleston (12,000 in 1775) and Baltimore (10,000) all were larger, but the next largest communities, Hartford, (5,000), Newport, RI (5,000 in June 1782) and Providence (4,500) were all smaller already. Wilmington in Delaware had fewer than 1,300 while towns such as Trenton had barely 500 inhabitants.

The amounts of food and feed for man and animal were enormous, and no city in Revolutionary America, not even Philadelphia with its 28,000 inhabitants, could maintain such large numbers of people for very long. Again it is unfortunate that not a single note from Wadsworth or from the American side has survived that would give an idea of the magnitude of the supplies provided during the march through Philadelphia and Pennsylvania. Yet information that has survived for the march of the French Army through Connecticut can be used as a substitute. A "Return of Goods supplied the Army of France at Bolton on their March" lists "8 oxen, 11 sheep, 7 calves, 12 tons straw, 19 tons 18 cwt Hay, 25 cords wood, 94 bushels rye, 105 bushels corn." Another 148 bushels rye and 5 bushels corn that had been waiting for French forces at Bolton were shipped to Stanford.³²³ Upon arrival in Newtown, Connecticut, Wadsworth had waiting for them 2.520 bushel of corn, 316 1/2 bushels of oats, 62 tons 5 cwt.³²⁴ of hay, 19

³²³ JW Papers, CTHS, Box 143.

³²⁴ The basic unit of weight in the British system is the grain based on the weight of a grain of barley, though monetary weights are based on the grain of wheat: three grains of barley weigh the same as four of wheat. This (barley) grain is called the troy grain and constant throughout the different systems of weights, though the pound in general use today is the avoirdupois pound of 7,000 grains (rather than the troy pound of 5,760 grains) of 16 ounces of 437.5 grains each.

Weights and measures in use in the UK were defined in a series of laws in 1824 and 1835/36, while those used in the US are still those of the eighteenth century. Up to and including the pound, the British and American system are the same, but the hundredweight (cwt) in England is 112 pounds (lbs; a long hundred-weight) while in the US the hundredweight is 100 lbs, (a short hundredweight). There are 20 cwt to the ton, which makes a ton in the US weigh 2,000 lbs (a short ton), and 2,240 lbs (a long ton) in the UK.

16 drams = 1 ounce = 437.5 grains (1 grain = 0.0648 gram)

16 ounces = 1 pound = 7,000 grains

25 pounds = 1 quarters

4 quarters = 100 pounds = 1 hundredweight (= 45.36 kg but 112 lbs or 50.80 kg in the UK)

20 hundredweight = 1 ton = 2,000 pounds

Liquid and dry measures have been the same in England since 1824 with 1 gallon = 4 quarts = 8 pints = 4.54 liters, and 8 gallons or 36.32 liters to the bushel. The liquid gallon in use in the US is the Queen Anne Gallon of 1707 of 231 cubic inches or 3.78 liters. The US bushel, defined as a round measure with a plain and even bottom, 18.5 inches wide throughout and 8 inches deep, of eight gallons is for dry measure only. Based on the William III Gallon of 1696 of 268.8 cubic

tons of straw, 22 1/2 cords of wood, and 20 head of beef cattle. While the French army was encamped at Philipsburg, daily rations were 1 pound of bread, 8 ounces of corn, and 1 1/2 pounds of fresh beef. To meet this demand, Henry Champion of Colchester, Connecticut delivered 927 oxen and 356 sheep from 5 July to 11 August 1781.³²⁵ And when the French army stayed in Baltimore during the return march of 1782, a table titled "Sundries Receiv'd Purchas'd & Deliver'd on the March from Williamsburg to Baltimore from the 2nd to the 23rd July Inclusive 1782" lists 270 beeves, 10 calves, 48 sheep supplied during those three weeks. In addition Wadsworth purchased for the French 1558 1/2 lbs. bread, 267 lbs. biscuits, 930 lbs. beef, 3 barrels pork, 176 1/2 lbs. bacon, 2096 half-pints rum, 3497 1/2 bushels corn, 608 1/2 bushels oats, 194197 lbs. hay, 2614 lbs. straw, 100 horse shoes and 1,000 horseshoe nails."³²⁶

Only when even money could not procure the needed supplies do we hear about French problems, e.g., in Washington's Diary of 19 August: "The want of Horses, or bad condition of them in the French army delayed the March till this day. The same causes, it is to be feared, will occasion a slow and disagreeable March to Elk if fresh horses cannot be procured & better management of them adopted." But these were only temporary problems that were solved by French silver. As wagons broke down and drivers deserted or were discharged and returned home, the French army hired replacements both individually as well as in groups on the march. Again we have examples from New Jersey but none from Pennsylvania. On 2 September, a brigade of initially seven four-horse teams under Thomas Gardner was hired at 12/ per day and driver. Gardner, who served as Conductor at 10/8 per day, as well as the other drivers were from around Chatham and were paid four days expenses for their journey to Philadelphia where they joined the French service on 1 September.³²⁷

Food rations, or allowances, in the Continental Army Four were based, at least in principle, on General Orders of July 1778: "That the whole army may be served with the same ration the Commissary Genl. is, till further orders, to issue as follows: One pound 1/4 flour, or soft bread, or 1 lb. of hard bread; 18 oz. beef, fresh or salt; 1 lb. pork, or 1 lb. of fish, & 2 oz. butter; a gill of rum or whiskey, when to be had; the usual allowance of soap and Candles."³²⁸ During the months

inches or 4.40 liters, this bushel holds 2,150.42 cubic inches or 35.24 liters. This means that the US hogshead as used in the eighteenth century, measured, and still measures, 63 gallons, while a hogshead in the UK since 1824 holds only 52.5 gallons.

³²⁴ Historical Society of Delaware (HSD) Rodney Collection, Caesar Rodney, Box 6 Folder 20.

³²⁵ Quoted in Chester M. Destler, *Connecticut: The Provisions State*. (Chester, 1973), p. 55.

³²⁶ JW Papers, CTHS, Box 143. "Beaves" or "beeves" is full-grown cattle intended for use as meat. When Wadsworth bought cattle for the French forces in Newport, Rhode Island, in July 1780, he calculated it to "average 400 lbs each of Meat Beef," i.e., slaughtered, about half the weight of a head of cattle today. Wadsworth to Champion, 15 July 1780, JW Papers, Letterbooks Box 151.

³²⁷ Between 29 September and 7 October, another five teams joined the brigade. The teams were paid off in Williamsburg on 6 November 1781. Williamson's daily rate had been somewhat less at 11/3 per day. The receipt is in JW Papers, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Box 132.

³²⁸ General orders, 6 August 1778, "Jacob Turner's Book", Walter Clark, ed., *The State Records of North Carolina*. XII, 1777-1778 (Wilmington, N.C., 1993), p. 526.

of September and October 1781, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania provided almost 270,000 of these rations to the Continental Army. In September alone, Alexander Blaine, contractor at York and Carlisle, provided 26,911 rations at 8 3/4 d; Parr and Dering at Lancaster provided 43,536 rations, Hazlewood and Blackiston in Philadelphia provided 55,340 rations at 9 1/2 d, Mathias Slough in Reading added 32,087 rations. Additionally these contractors supplied hundreds of barrels of flour and other foodstuffs. During the month of October 1781, these same contractors supplied another 105,000 rations. The total bill submitted by the Commonwealth to Robert Morris for these two months ran to almost 34,000 Spanish Milled dollars, some 7,000 dollars more than Washington received from Rochambeau on 7 September at Head of Elk to pay the Continental Army.³²⁹

The thousands of animals required vast amounts of forage as well. The Continental Army's "Plan for Conducting The Quartermaster General's Department" of 14 July 1780, stipulated "That the ration of forage shall consist of fourteen pounds of hay and eight quarts of oats for a saddle horse, and sixteen pounds of hay and twelve quarts of oats, or other short forage equivalent, for a draught horse, per day: that in cases where either of the above articles cannot be furnished a double quantity of the other shall be considered as a compleat ration." To feed these horses, Pickering informed Colonel Hughes from Philadelphia on 3 September 1781, that "besides the corn at Trenton there are 5000 bushels of Oats in Bucks County purchased for our army."³³⁰ But the horses needed to be shod as well. On 23 September 1781, Pickering informed DQMG Donaldson in Pennsylvania from Williamsburg that he was anxiously awaiting 7,000 pairs of horseshoes from Lancaster. He needed at least 3,000 pairs of them immediately via Head of Elk since the French needed some as well.³³¹ Earlier in the campaign Pickering had offered the French to have their horses shod in the American camp, but the French preferred their own smiths or hired locals. On 1 August 1781,

On 12 September 1781, David Duncan and Michael Huffnagle "proposed[d] to furnish the Militia and Ranger Company's for Bedford and Westmoreland County's with provisions on the following terms: each ration to be compos'd of the following articles, one pound of Bread, made of good flower, one pound of Beef, or three quarters of Pork, one Gill of Whiskey, three pounds of Candles, eight pounds of Soap for every Seven Hundred Rations two quarts of Vinegar and one quart of Salt for every hundred Rations, at eleven pence half penny for each Ration." RG 27, microfilm reel 18, Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg.

A standard ration in the British Army as outlined in a "Memorandum ... found among some British papers at York Town Virginia," in October 1781, listed the soldiers' daily "Allowance of Provisions": 1 pound of beef or 9 ounces of pork, 1 pound of flour or bread, 3/7 pint of peas, and 1/6 quart of "Rum or Spirits." Seven days' allowance of 1/2 pint oatmeal or rice and 6 ounces of butter was also issued. It was noted that "Since the troops have been upon this island, spruce beer has been issued at 8 quarts for 7 days. N.B. When the small species are not delivered, 12 oz of pork are allowed." NARA Numbered Record Books, 151. The "small species" for British troops at Yorktown included sugar, chocolate, and coffee. Sauerkraut was also issued on occasion to counter the effects of scurvy for troops in garrison or winter quarters.

³²⁹ "State of Pennsylvania their Account With Robert Morris" for September and October 1781. Pennsylvania Revolutionary Council Minute Book for 30 August 1782, p. 328, RG 27, microfilm reel 3964, Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg.

³³⁰ Pickering Papers reel 26, vol. 82: Letters sent by Pickering 29 June 1781 to 2 January 1782.

³³¹ Pickering Papers reel 26, vol. 82: Letters sent by Pickering 29 June 1781 to 2 January 1782.

Roger Bulkley of Colchester, Connecticut, signed on behalf of Wadsworth and Elijah Buell, an agreement for “three good Black Smiths at the french Camp for the term of five Months unless sooner discharged” for 50 Silver dollars p month for Each man” tools to be provided, “to be paid in Sickness as well as Health.”³³²

The economic impact of French forces and their tens of thousands of silver coins was immense and very much appreciated by the local populations. On 31 December 1781, John Jeffrey wrote to Jeffrey Whiting from Hartford: “Money is very scarce among the People in General, their daily Prayers are that the French Army may return soon to the part of the World that Money may again circulate amongst them.”³³³ Well before the march had begun, French purchasing power had reached Philadelphia. George Nelson, an employee of the Quarter-Master Department recorded happily in his diary on 22 May 1781: “Laurince & I sold our Team to some French Men for £ 110 hard money.” When they got paid the next day, his share was “£ 56.18.10 Hard Money being more Cash than I have been able to realize since the War”.³³⁴ A few miles down the road in Wilmington, Samuel Canby expressed the hope on 11 November 1781, that: “as I apprehend from the present prospect of things in our Country that people generally will rather be encouraged to go into Business more than there has been opportunity for these several Years past as there is nothing but Specie now Circulating as a currency.”³³⁵ Before departure from Dobbs Ferry, Wadsworth had asked for 400,000 livres cash to pay for the expenses of the march. Much of this money was spent among a population that very much appreciated the king's livres.

Unlike other cities such as Newport, Rhode Island, Lebanon, Connecticut, Williamsburg, Virginia, or Wilmington, Delaware, where French forces spent the winters of 1780/81, 1781/82, and 1782/83, Philadelphia's merchants seem to have benefited only marginally from their short-term stay in the city. Large trading houses such as the Hollingsworths were the greatest beneficiaries. Unlike their American allies, the French forces had ample cash to pay for their purchases. On 17 August, the day before the French artillery departed from White Plains, Wadsworth and Carter informed the French Intendant that “we are on the eve of a March where clearly expenditures of hard Money are absolutely necessary - and without it your service can not be assured.” To meet these expenditures, they wanted to “be Monthly supplied with about four hundred thousand Livres - in Specie”.³³⁶ The availability of cash to pay for purchases made the French welcome guests in Pennsylvania, but since cash payments leave no paper trail they not make the task of a historian any easier. There are only a very few primary sources such as letters by Jeremiah Wadsworth for the march through Pennsylvania. Just like his American counter-parts, Wadsworth was traveling with the army and conducted his business orally.

³³² CTHS, Hartford, Ms 98887.

³³³ Wadsworth Papers, CTHS, Hartford, Box 132.

³³⁴ Diary of George Nelson, AM 107, HSP.

³³⁵ Diary of Samuel Canby, Nov 1779 to Dec 1796. Photostat in Historical Society of Delaware from the original at Yale University.

³³⁶ Wadsworth Papers, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Box 143, French Army Papers.

Sources showing evidence or examples of how much individual French soldiers spent where and for what during their two days in Philadelphia are even more difficult to come by. Though the soldier of the *ancien régime* was notoriously underpaid, French troopers, unlike their American counterparts, did have some money to spend. In anticipation of increased expenses in the New World salaries for the troops were increased by 50 percent in March 1780. During his time in America a fusilier received 9 sols 6 deniers per day or 14 livres 5 sols per month/171 livres a year.³³⁷ The better-paid grenadier made 11 sols per day, 16 1/2 livres per month or 198 livres per year, as did a hussar. A sergeant-major, the highest-paid NCO, 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 the *masse* were distributed upon arrival in Newport.³³⁸ But they also had stoppages taken out of their pay. The *ordonnance* of 20 March 1780, set food costs at 2 sols for bread and 1 sol 6 d for beef per day. This meant a monthly food bill for every NCO and enlisted man of

3 livres	for bread
2 livres 5 sols	for beef
1 sols 6 deniers	for 1 pound of salt per month

5 livres 6 sols 6 deniers	

Also increased were the deductions for the *masse de linge et chaussure*, the regimental fund to pay for a soldier's uniform and for his shoes. NCOs contributed 16 deniers per day to this *masse*, corporals and enlisted men half as much. That meant additional stoppages of 2 livres for a sergeant and 1 livre for each hussar, fusilier, grenadier, or *chasseur*, leaving a fusilier or *chasseur* with 7 livres 18 sols 6 deniers per month, a grenadier or hussar with 10 livres 3 sols 6 deniers per month, or 122 livres, 2 sols per year.³³⁹ To put this figure into perspective it may be worth mentioning that Axel von Fersen estimated that it cost him 20 livres a month to keep his dog. Christian de Deux-Ponts, colonel of the Royal Deux-Ponts, had income from estates in Germany and France amounting to over 7,200 livres annually. He also enjoyed an annuity of 14,400 livres, 9,000 livres pay as colonel of his regiment, doubled to 18,000 livres for the American campaign, plus financial support from his mother, which brought his annual income for the American campaign to well over 40,000 livres -- more than 400 times the income of a common soldier.³⁴⁰

³³⁷ For administrative purposes the French military counted every month as having 30 days.

³³⁸ 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 to account for the anticipated high expenses of the American campaign, were covered by the crown.

³³⁹ This compilation of a soldier's income is based on Charles Victor Thiroux, *Manuel pour le corps de l'infanterie: extrait des principales ordonnances relatives à l'infanterie française & le plus journellement en usagé* (Paris, 1781), pp. 178-190.

³⁴⁰ These figures are based on the *Nachlass Christian Graf von Forbach, Freiherr von Zweibrücken* (Signatur N 73) in the Pfälzische Landesbibliothek Speyer, Germany. With an annual income of more than 100,000 livres, Lafayette was even better off.

But a look across the battlefield shows that his British and German enemies were even worse off. A common soldier in the British army received 8 pence a day or £1 pound per month, or just about 23 livres. Stoppages (2d. per day “for cloaths, &c.” and stoppages for “furnishing stockings, shoes &c. when the regimental ones are worn out” and food) reduced his wages so much that at the end he still received less than a French trooper.³⁴¹

Since specie money had an intrinsic value in itself based on weight and purity of the metal used, it did not really matter whether the coin bore a picture of George III, Louis XVI, or Carlos III. What was important was that French soldiers were paid regularly every two weeks without fail in specie, whether it was in Spanish or in French coin. The kind and denomination of French coinage had been set in an *ordonnance* of 23 May 1774. There were three kinds of copper coin: the liard at 3 deniers, the 1/2 sol at 6 deniers, and the one sol coin worth 12 deniers. There were five different kinds of silver coins: the écu of six livres, the 1/2 écu worth three livres, the 1/5 écu at 24 sols, the 1/10 écu at 12 sols, and the 1/20 écu at 6 sols. If a common hussar hardly ever handled an écu -- six livres were more than two weeks of wages -- one of the three gold coins was even less likely to pass through his hands: the 1/2 louis d'or at 12 livres, the louis d'or at 24 livres, and the double louis d'or at 48 livres. The double louis d'or at 48 livres was 18 weeks wages for a grenadier, and more than six months wages for a fusilier.³⁴²

Even so, a livre was not a currency commonly used in Pennsylvania, where account ledgers were kept in pounds and shillings and pence. The British pound, valued in sterling silver equivalents and identified by the symbol £ for the Latin *librum*, was divided into 20 shillings (symbol: s) of 12 pennies (symbol: d for Latin *denarius*) each or 240 pennies to the pound.³⁴³ Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries British-minted specie or “hard” money was rare in America, and even in Pennsylvania, the most commonly circulating coin was the Spanish milled dollar of eight reals, also called a Piece of Eight. Minted in silver, it was similar in size and weight to the German *thaler* or the French *écu* of 6 livres. A little less than a troy ounce of British sterling silver (.925 fine silver, valued at 62d. or 5s. 2d.), a Spanish dollar was worth 54d. or 4s. 6d. sterling in England. In the colonies, however, where the demand for silver coinage far exceeded the available supply, silver coins traded at a premium; the premium

³⁴¹ Deductions from the pay of a British soldier can be reconstructed from John Williamson, *A treatise on military finance: containing the pay, subsistence, deductions and arrears of the forces on the British and Irish establishments; and all the allowances in camp, garrison and quarters, &c. &c. : with an enquiry into the method of cloathing and recruiting the Army: and an extract from the report of the Commissioners of Public Accounts, relating to the office of the Pay-master-General* (London: Printed for T. Egerton, 1782), p. 73.

³⁴² The *livre* as a coin did not exist; it was minted only briefly in 1720 by the French East India Company.

³⁴³ There was no £ 1 coin; the largest silver coins minted in the eighteenth century were the Crown at 5 shillings, usually entered as 5/ in merchant ledgers and account books, and the Half-Crown at 2 shillings 6 pence, written as 2/6 .

above the 54d. level was termed the "crying up" of coinage. In order to limit this crying up, Queen Anne issued a proclamation in 1704, passed into law by parliament in 1707, which specified that a full weight Spanish dollar would pass in the colonies at 72d. or 6s., a third above the sterling rate. Since 5s. were called a *Crown* in Britain and Spanish milled dollars circulated at exchange rates between 4s. 6d. and 6s., milled dollars were also known as *Spanish crowns*. French *écus* of 6 livres, almost exactly 5s., came to be called *French crowns*. During the Revolutionary War, New England, including Rhode Island, Virginia, the Carolinas and Georgia adhered to this "Proclamation Rate" of a one third "up-crying" and currency issued at this rate was known as "Current Money" or "Lawful Money," abbreviated as L.M. or L. Money. The Middle colonies of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland set the exchange rate for a Spanish dollar at 90 d or 7 s 6 d, 66.66 per cent over sterling. To distinguish it from the "Proclamation Money," it was referred to as "Common Money" or "Pennsylvania Money," though "Lawful Money" (or "Current Money") appears in Pennsylvania ledgers as well.³⁴⁴

By 1781, "Pennsylvania Money" was still recorded in business ledgers, but there was also almost always a parallel column that gave its value in specie dollars. The reason for that was simple. Since the beginning of the rebellion in April 1775, the Commonwealth had issued six emissions of paper currency -- on 20 July, 25 October and 8 December 1775, 25 April 1776, and 10 April 1777. The total amount of these emissions had run to £ 422,000. The most recently emission on 29 April 1781 had added another £ 486,500 in bills of credit. The value of this paper currency had fallen accordingly to about 75 to 1 in January 1781. In an attempt to halt the continuing downward pressure, Pennsylvania on 20 April 1780 had issued its own independent emission guaranteeing redemption in Spanish Milled dollars with 5% interest. Inflation and distrust soon impacted the value of these emissions as well so that the availability of cash to pay for purchases made the French welcome guests wherever they went. Since cash payments leave no paper trail, however, they not make the task of a historian any easier. Primary sources such as letters by Jeremiah Wadsworth, chief supplier to the French Army, are virtually non-existent for the march through Pennsylvania. In the voluminous Wadsworth correspondence there is a single letter written on 4 September from Philadelphia. Just like his American counterpart, Wadsworth was traveling with the army and conducted his business orally.³⁴⁵

But no matter what currency the French soldiers men were paid in, as far as the merchants in Philadelphia were concerned, a *sergeant-major* was left with 37 livres 13 sols 6 deniers per month after all deductions, a sergeant 28 livres 13 sols

³⁴⁴ New York created its own rate of 96 d or 8 s to the Spanish dollar, a 78 per cent increase over sterling. This paragraph is based on information found at www.coins.nd.edu/ColCurrency. The best book in print by far is John J. McCusker, *Money and exchange in Europe and America, 1600-1775: a handbook* (Chapel Hill, N.C., Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, VA, by the University of North Carolina Press, 1978).

³⁴⁵ JW Papers, CHS, Hartford, Box 132. It is a private letter without bearing on the campaign.

6 deniers, a corporal 15 livres 3 sols 6 deniers, a grenadier 10 livres 3 sols 6 deniers, and a fusilier or *chasseur* 7 livres 18 sols 6 deniers -- all in specie.

How does that compare to wages in Philadelphia, and what could a soldier have purchased with his wages? On 25 January 1783, the Rev. Pitman entered in his diary: "Got a servant from the work house for 18 Months Service for £ 6 6/ 3d." At an exchange rate of 23 livres per pound, £ 6 6/ 3d. constitute the equivalent of about 160 livres. Fusiliers or *chasseurs*, who constituted more than three fourth of Rochambeau's forces, received 7 livres 18 sols 6 deniers per month after deductions. Over a time span of 18 months, this amounts to 142 livres 13 sols -- less than what Pitman paid for his servant from the workhouse. At the same time, however, one needs to keep in mind that soldiers also received wages in kind, also known as "social wages" such as food, clothing, and shelter; that even in America they had opportunities to add to their incomes by cutting wood and performing other chores, and while stationed in France had opportunities to earn additional income while working in their trade. The value of these "social wages" offered by the military to a young man and potential recruit is difficult to assess, but it must have been attractive since the *ancien régime* was always able to find enough volunteers for its armed forces.

What could they have bought with their salaries during their brief stay in Philadelphia in September 1781? An "Account Book" of general expenses filed with the diary of the Rev. Pitman provides a broad overview of prices in the city.

- 7 May 1781: 6 silver tea spoons £ 2 2/ 6d hard money.³⁴⁶
- 7 July 1781: 5 lbs cherries 10d
- 11 July 1781: 1 cwt rye flour 11/
- 24 July 1781: ½ bushel potatoes 3/
- 1 Sept. 1781: ¼ lb Pepper 3/6, ½ peck cocoa 1/, ½ bushel potatoes 2/,
1 cwt rye flour 10/
- 21 Sept. 1781: 50 lbs beef @ 4/4
- 26 Sept. 1781: 1 cwt rye flour 9/, 2 lb butter 4/
- 3 Oct. 1781: 25 lbs beef @ 4/4
- 6 Oct. 1781: 75 lbs beef @ 4/ each, 1 lb butter 2/, ½ bushel potatoes 1/8
- 22 Oct. 1781: 1 cord wood 30/, hauling 3/9, sawing 3/9
- 30 Oct. 1781: bushel corn 3/
- 31 Oct. 1781: potatoes 3/ per bushel
- 7 Nov. 1781: 1 cwt wheat meal 16/, rye 9/6, 1 lb tea 7/6; shoes between 8/ and 9/
- 14 Dec. 1781: shoes for his daughter Hannah 6/, men's shoes 11/3
- 9 Dec. 1781: 1 goose 3/, pork 5/ per lb

- 16 Feb. 1782: 2 bushels indian corn 9/4
- 1 June 1782: French Commissary's boy 7/6 (unknown what he paid him for)
- 7 Sept. 1782: 6 chickens 3/9, potatoes 6/ to 9/ p/bush³⁴⁷

³⁴⁶ In 1782, the term "French crowns" is frequently used at an exchange rate of 8/4 in accounts where cash is mentioned, a clear indication that French specie is circulating in the city.

Since £1 = 20 shillings = 240 pence or about 463 sols 6 deniers, and a fusilier earned 7 livres 18 sols 6 deniers or about 158 sols 6 deniers per months, his salary represents the equivalent of about 82 pence or 4/2. That was just enough for a pound of beef, which retailed for around 4/ in Philadelphia. Not much indeed for one month' income.

9.2 Accounts of the March through Pennsylvania

On 4 September 1781, American DQMG John Neilson reported to his superior officer QMG Timothy Pickering from Trenton the conclusion of the crossing operation into Pennsylvania. The forces designated to participate in the operation at Yorktown had successfully completed the, until then, most dangerous part of the operation - disengagement from British forces in New York City.

"Sir, I have the pleasure to acquaint you that the duties required of the Department under my direction, with respect to the Movement of the Army, have been executed with all the dispatch and Success that could be expected from the Nature of the business. And I believe from what I could discover to the Satisfaction of the officers commanding the respective divisions. Fryday [i.e., 31 August] about noon the van of the Army under the Command of General Lincoln arrived here, and at 6 o'clock Saturday morning the whole of the remaining Troops and Teams had crossed the river, having precariously embarked the Artillery, Hazen's Regiment and heavy baggage on board the Shallops provided for the purpose. At ten o'clock on Saturday [i.e., 1 September] the first division of the French Army came in, which with the whole of their baggage were crossed by 7 o'clock Sunday morning; that day the 2d Division under the command of Count Viomenil arrived, and at Six O'clock Monday Morning they with all their baggage were on the Pennsylvani Shore. About this time [i.e., on 3 September] Colonel Cortlandt's Regiment together with the Boats, Quarter Master General's Stores, Clothiers Stores &c came into Town, Colonel Cortlandt's Regiment embarked in the Boats he had with him about two hours after, the Stores were embarked in the Vessels retained for that Purpose, and all the Teams crossed the river by two O'clock and the vessels with the stores sailed about four in the Afternoon. - A number of the Shallops were left by Genl Lincoln for transporting the Heavy Baggage of the French Army, which I informed them of on their arrival, but making any use of them observing to me they had Teams &c sufficient to carry all by land, upon which I immediately ordered all the Shallops except those retained by the Quarter

³⁴⁷ Total expenses of the Pitman household for 1783 amounted to £ 215 4/ 11d; total expenses from 7 May 1781 to 1 June 1784, including moving expenses to Providence (£ 13 12/ 5d) following his ordination on 22 June 1783 amounted to £ 724 12/ 7d.

Master & Clotheir Stores to Philadelphia, and to apply to Colonel Miles for further Instructions."³⁴⁸

But their tasks were by far not done. Not only were allied forces were still hundreds of miles from Yorktown, when Neilson wrote his letter they were also stretched across the whole length of Pennsylvania and beyond. On 4 September, the most advanced units of the Continental Army were already either encamped in Wilmington, Delaware or on board vessels anchored at Christiana, more than 60 miles from Trenton. And Washington still did not know whether Admiral de Grasse and the French fleet had indeed sailed to the Chesapeake, or, if so, whether he had arrived there safely. And even if he had, there were six weeks at most left until the middle of October, when de Grasse would sail back to the Caribbean.

Time was still of the essence. Washington had been well aware of the many uncertainties and unknowns in his campaign plan as the combined armies were converging on Trenton, the most convenient point to cross the Delaware River.³⁴⁹ Preceding their troops, Generals Washington and Rochambeau and their staffs had set out for Philadelphia on 30 August. In his *Diary*, Washington recorded his journey to, and arrival in, the city

30th. As our intentions could be concealed one March more (under the idea of Marching to Sandy hook to facilitate the entrance of the French fleet within the Bay), the whole Army was put in motion in three columns -- the left consisted of the light Infantry, first York Regiment, and the Regiment of Rhode Island -- the Middle column consisted of the Parke Stores & Baggage -- Lambs Regt. of Artillery -- Hazens & the Corps of Sappers & Miners--the right column consisted of the whole French army, Baggage Stores &ca. This last was to march by the rout of Morristown -- Bullions Tavern -- Somerset Ct House & Princeton. The middl. was to go by Bound brooke to Somerset &ca. and the left to proceed by the way of Brunswick to Trenton, to which place the whole were to March Transports being ordered to meet them there.

I set out myself for Philadelphia to arrange matters there -- provide Vessels & hasten the transportation of the Ordnance Stores, &ca.-- directing before I set out, the secd. York Regiment (which had not all arrived from Albany before we left Kings ferry) to follow with the Boats--Intrenching Tools &ca. the French Rear to Trenton.

³⁴⁸ NARA Misc. Numbered Records M859, film 14, reel 80, frame 38.

³⁴⁹ There were two ferries where the armies could cross the Delaware, in Trenton and downstream in Lambertson, plus a ford further upstream. The first bridge across the Delaware in Trenton was not built until 1806.

31st. Arrived at Philadelphia to dinner and immediately hastened up all the Vessels that could be procured--but finding them inadequate to the purpose of transporting both Troops & Stores, Count de Rochambeau & myself concluded it would be best to let the Troops March by land to the head of Elk, & gave directions accordingly to all but the 2d. York Regiment which was ordered (with its baggage) to come down in the Batteaux they had in charge to Christiana bridge.³⁵⁰

Upon arrival, around 1:00 p.m. on Friday, 31 August, they were "received by crowds of people with shouts and acclamations."³⁵¹ Next Generals Washington and Rochambeau and their staffs proceeded to the homes of Robert Morris and of French Ambassador de la Luzerne, where they lodged.³⁵² That night they had dinner with Robert Morris, the new Superintendent of Finance.³⁵³ Following sight-seeing excursions through America's de facto capital, the illustrious guests, according to Baron Closen, one of Rochambeau's aides, were entertained in the evening of 1 September at the home of Joseph Reed, president of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania. The following day, 2 September, Closen "went with the generals to see the battlefield of Germantown," after which the group went "to dine at the home of M[onsieur]. [John] Holker, the French consul, who entertained us magnificently in his charming country house [i.e., Cliveden] 3 miles from Philadelphia."³⁵⁴

As Washington was making the rounds in Philadelphia, his army, which had grown to a little over 3,000 officers and men by now, was not far behind. Coming from Princeton on Stockton Avenue (NJ-SR 206, designated the Washington Victory Trail), the advance troops of the Continental Army concluded its march at the Lower Ferry at the end of South Warren Street and encamped along Broad Street in Trenton. On 1 September it crossed the river and marched seventeen miles to a camp at Lower Dublin, twelve miles from Philadelphia. The following day, 2 September 1781, Lieutenant Reuben Sanderson of the Fifth Regiment of the Connecticut Line doing duty with Scammel's Light Infantry, "Marched throw^d

³⁵⁰ This diary entry seems to leave no doubt that Washington and Rochambeau arrived in Philadelphia on 31 August, though the *Philadelphia Packet* in its edition for 2 September gives the arrival date as 30 September. Washington's private secretary Jonathan Trumbull, and Baron Closen also give 30 August as the date of arrival. See Trumbull, "Occurences," p. 332, and Acomb, *Closen*, p. 116. Washington's diary contains no entries for the days spent in Philadelphia and only resumes on 5 September.

³⁵¹ Trumbull, "Occurences," p. 332. Washington spent most of his time arranging for supplies and transport for the march to Virginia. See Washington to Morris of 17, 24, 27 August 1781; for the conference between Morris and Washington on supplying the campaign see Morris's diary entry for 31 August 1781.

³⁵² At the residence of the chevalier de la Luzerne, "M. de Rochambeau and his staff were housed like princes." Acomb, *Closen*, p. 116.

³⁵³ Baker, *Itinerary*, pp. 235/36. On 28 August, Robert Morris had offered Washington his house since the city was "filled with Strangers" and private lodgings were hard to find.

³⁵⁴ Acomb, *Closen*, pp. 119/120.

Philadelphia about five miles, encamped near the Schoelkill.³⁵⁵ The main body of the Continental Army left its camp on the Schuylkill on 3 September again for a ten-mile march to its next camp, which Lieutenant Sanderson recorded to have been about "three miles from Chester." On 4 September, the army "Marched through Chester, through Brandywine, through Wilmington -- encampd one mile from Wilmington."³⁵⁶

Fortunately James Thacher provides a much more vivid description of the march of the Continental Army through the city.

*2d, In the afternoon, marched through the city of Philadelphia. The streets being extremely dirty, and the weather warm and dry, we raised a dust like a smothering snow-storm, blinding our eyes and covering our bodies with it; this was not a little mortifying, as the ladies were viewing us from the open windows of every house as we passed through this splendid city. The scene must have been exceedingly interesting to the inhabitants; and, contemplating the noble cause in which we are engaged, they must have experienced in their hearts a glow of patriotism, if not emotions of military ardor. Our line of march, including appendages and attendants extended nearly two miles. The general officers and their aids, in rich military uniform, mounted on noble steeds and elegantly caparisoned, were followed by their servants and baggage. In the rear of every brigade were several field pieces, accompanied by ammunition carriages. The soldiers marched in slow and solemn step, regulated by the drum and fife. In the rear followed a great number of wagons, loaded with tents, provisions and other baggage, such as a few soldiers' wives and children; though a very small number of these are allowed to encumber us on this occasion. The day following, the French troops marched through the city.*³⁵⁷

Coming on the Delaware River from Trenton, Colonel Van Cortlandt had also reached Philadelphia on 1 September where he "halted one day to accommodate my officers" and to wait for the arrival of the Continental Army. Following this brief stop-over on 1/2 September, Van Cortlandt's Second New York Regiment on 2 September continued to use the Delaware River as a conduit and sailed on "to markees Hook where I remained a few days for the Army to pass and my men to wash their clothes."³⁵⁸ In the morning of 3 September, Sergeant-Major Hawkin's regiment and the Corps of Sappers and Miners too set sail again, floated

³⁵⁵ The journal is published in Johnston, *Yorktown Campaign*, p. 170-173, the quote on p. 170.

³⁵⁶ Johnston, *Yorktown Campaign*, p. 170. See also Stevens, "Route," p. 18.

³⁵⁷ Thacher, *Eyewitness*, pp. 271/72.

³⁵⁸ Judd, *Revolutionary War Memoir*, p. 60. Marcus Hook lies about a mile from the Delaware State line. Thacher uses an almost identical line: "3d. We crossed the river Schuylkill, over a floating bridge, and encamped four miles from Philadelphia where we continued through the day, to give the men time to rest and wash their clothes." Thacher, *Eyewitness*, p. 273.

down the Delaware and cast anchor in Wilmington in the mouth of the Christiana River that evening. Taking advantage of the rising tide the following morning, 4 September, the units followed the winding course of the Christina River to Christiana Bridge, where they landed and began unloading their supplies.³⁵⁹

Water transportation, especially of heavy or bulky goods, was faster than transporting them on land and cheaper as well: freight charges on land were ten times the freight charges for water transport.³⁶⁰ In a military context this meant primarily artillery and foodstuffs, and wherever possible Washington used the waterways along the route in 1781 to his advantage. From Trenton onwards, except for the short, 10-mile portage from Christiana to Elkton, Colonel Lamb's Second Continental Artillery, the Sappers and Miners, and Hazen's Canadian Regiment traveled to Virginia on water. By 29 August 1781, Deputy Quartermaster Samuel Miles had 31 craft capable of carrying more than 3,200 men waiting for the armies at Philadelphia.³⁶¹ That same day, Washington informed General Lincoln that Rochambeau was "inclined to have the French Troops march by Land from Trenton to Head of Elk, which will give a larger proportion of Craft for the American Baggage and Troops. ... after a lot[tin]g a Sufficiency for the French Baggage &c ... first put on Board such heavy Stores and Baggage, Cloathg Tools Garrison Carriages &c,&, as Colo Lamb and you shall think proper, and then Embark the Troops on Board the Water Craft and let them fall down the River to Christiana Bridge as soon as possible."³⁶²

At Trenton on 31 August, Washington's diary recorded that "Count de Rochambeau and myself concluded it would be best to let the Troops march by land to the Head of Elk, and gave directions accordingly to all but the 2d. York Regiment which was ordered (with its baggage) to come down in the Batteaux they had in charge to Christiana bridge."³⁶³ The execution of this order can be followed in the journal of Samuel Tallmadge of the 2nd New York. At 8 a.m. on the morning of 3 September, the 2nd New York arrived in Trenton where "(we) put our boates in the delaware river put the baggage on board, and Imbarked about one Oclock." Some of the carriages were to be taken apart and put on board the batteaux for future use as Timothy Pickering told Henry Dearborn on 31 August. "As soon as the boats arrive, please to direct all the carpenters to repair any damage they may have sustained ... if 15 of the best boat Carriages are selected, they may be taken to pieces, put on board the boats, & with so many troops as they will carry, go to Christiana Bridge, from whence at two trips they may take all the boats over to the Head of Elk; or if inconvenient to take down

³⁵⁹ *Private Yankee Doodle* p. 223. Sanderson recorded that on 5 September, the army marched "through Christeen where the Park of Artillery landed the day before". Johnston, *Yorktown Campaign* p. 170.

³⁶⁰ Buel, *In Irons*, p. 325, note 23.

³⁶¹ Miles to GW, 29-30 August 1781. George Washington Papers at the Library of Congress, 1741-1799: Series 4. General Correspondence. 1697-1799, at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem>

³⁶² GW to Lincoln, Washington, *Writings* vol. 23, p. 71.

³⁶³ Washington, *Diaries*, Vol. 2, p. 258.

more than ten carriages, they will of course take the boats over in three trips." The teams and the remainder of the carriages were to go to Christiana by land.³⁶⁴

The French army in the meantime made its way through Princeton and on 1 September, just as the Continental Army departed Philadelphia, encamped on the same ground that the Americans had just vacated on the east side of the Assunpink in Trenton. The next morning, 2 September, the troops began the crossing of the Delaware, which, according to the French itinerary, was "about 800 yards wide" at the point of crossing. "There are generally 2 ferryboats and some sailboats available for crossing. This is the highest point for small vessels coming up river, as navigation is interrupted by the falls that are above the ferry. You can ford the Delaware above the falls, opposite Colonel Cox's house. The ford is good but care must be taken to face upstream against the current. As far as a point above the little island, after which you can head straight for the opposite bank."³⁶⁵ Clermont-Crèveœur recorded in his "Journal: "We crossed the Delaware by ford and ferry. It is not deep here. In summer the average depth is only 2 to 3 feet; however, in winter it is very deep."³⁶⁶ The ferry used by French and American forces alike was the Trenton Ferry run by Hugh Rankin in 1781.

Once across the Delaware at Trenton, the French troops continued on toward Bristol. Clermont-Crèveœur recorded that "At Bristol the army and the artillery separated, the former crossing the Neshaminy River by ferry, and the latter by ford 6 miles upstream. We arrived very late in camp (i.e. at the Red Lion), having covered 24 miles with our wagons."

The next morning, 3 September 1781, the First Brigade got ready to march into Philadelphia and to parade before Congress. Pickering with some relief informed Hugh Hughes that "Hitherto we have got along pretty well & with unusual rapidity".³⁶⁷ As Thomas McKean, president of the Continental Congress, the members of Congress, Washington, Rochambeau, and other dignitaries greeted them from the steps of the building, the troops paraded past the Pennsylvania State House (Independence Hall), seat of the Continental Congress, and the home of the French Ambassador de la Luzerne. In a letter to Meshech Weare, President of New Hampshire, delegate Samuel Livermore described the scene:

"I had yesterday the pleasure to see the first division of the French. They marched through Front & Chesnut streets by the state house and so out to the common where they encamped. The members of Congress were at the door of the state house and recd. from the officers of the army as they passed a royal salute. The ceremony on their part was to let fall the point of the sword,

³⁶⁴ NARA, Record Group 93, Numbered Record Book, vol. 82 Target 3, microfilm reel 26, pp. 175-178.

³⁶⁵ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 2, p. 72. Cox owned the House from 1778-1792.

³⁶⁶ Clermont-Crèveœur, "Journal", in Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 45.

³⁶⁷ Pickering to Hugh Hughes, DQMG in New York, 3 September 1781. Timothy Pickering Papers Microfilm Edition, reel 26, vol. 82.

likewise the colours, and the members of Congress took off their hats. The engaging figure and behaviour of the officers of all ranks, their dress, the cavalry, musick, arms, artillery, the figure & behaviour of the privates, and the uniform motion of the whole, afforded the most pleasing prospect of the kind I ever saw."³⁶⁸

About two miles outside the city on the road to Chester the troops entered their camp along the eastern banks of the Schuylkill. The following day, 4 September 1781, the Second Brigade joined the First Brigade for a day of rest.³⁶⁹

That afternoon, Jeffrey Whiting informed John Jeffery from Philadelphia that "after a March of allmost 3 Weeks we arrived at this place yesterday and to morrow leave it for the Head of Elk which place we expect to embark and go to Virginia, the French Army are in fine health & Spiritts and like Philad^e very well. Yesterday they March'd into town and made a fine appearance as they were dress'd in their best Claoths & they are admired by the people of this City and every Mark of Respect is shown them which they truly deserve."³⁷⁰ Washington's private secretary Jonathan Trumbull Jr. described the scene to his wife Eunice in similar words as a "Matter of great Admiration as well as great Pleasure to many People." But not everyone was pleased. Referring to perhaps lingering anti-French and/or loyalist sentiments in the city, he told Eunice that "some, however, perhaps too many, are very little delighted with them."³⁷¹

One of those who were not shouting for joy either about Washington or the French was Samuel Rowland Fisher, a Philadelphia Quaker who was repeatedly imprisoned for his beliefs. In his journal he described the exciting days of late August and early September 1781 thus:

"I came home from Jersey on 30th of 8 mo: [30 August 1781] & from Wm. Cooper's ferry opposite the City I observed the City to be noisy, many houses illuminated, & the Bells ringing, on account of Washington's coming to Town, whose Soldiers with about 5,000 french from Rhode Island are now on their march Southward unitedly intending to oppose Lord Cornwallis' progress -- Upon

³⁶⁸ Quoted from the on-line edition of Letters of Delegates to Congress.

³⁶⁹ The French campsite is most likely identical with that occupied by the Continental Army, which had left for Chester in the morning of 3 September 1781. Stevens, "Route," p. 18. See also Clermont-Crèvecœur in Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 46, and Acomb, Closen, p. 117. There are numerous accounts in American newspapers of the parade, e.g., in the *Pennsylvania Evening Post and Public Advertiser* or *The Freeman's Journal* of , the *Pennsylvania Journal* of 8 September, and the *Pennsylvania Packet* of 5, 8, and 12 September.

³⁷⁰ Jeremiah Wadsworth Papers, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Box 132.

³⁷¹ Jonathan Trumbull Jr. to Eunice Trumbull, 3 September 1781. Trumbull Family Letters, Call No. 920T7721 no. 107, Connecticut State Library, Hartford. He continued "Col^o d'Arrot I saw in the Crowd and other officers of the Legion, poor fellows! they will hardly see Lebanon again next winter." While none of these men returned to Lebanon -- they spent the winter in Virginia -- Trumbull's fears of massive casualties during the campaign did not come true; the Legion lost fewer than ten men before Yorktown.

my landing in the City with my Sister, the Streets were so amazingly thronged we could hardly get home, & there being but two houses between my father's & R. Morris's where Washington resided -- I saw this Man Great as an instrument of destruction & devastation to the property, Morals & principles of the people, [sic] several times walking the Street, attended by a concourse of Men, Women & Boys, who Huzza'd him, & broke some of my father's Windows & some near us -- This junction of Washington's & the French Soldiers looked to me as a serious matter, yet some how or other the more I considered it, the Less anxiety prevailed on my mind about it, possibly had I been instrumental in this Junction, I should not be so easy about it -- For the Consequences thereof look likely to be very interesting at least to the Rulers who have joined with them --

A few days after the french Army passed thro' the City in two or more divisions, distant about two days march behind each other. They are said & I suppose with truth to have behaved themselves much better on their march than either Brittish or Washington's Soldiers -- This I conclude cannot be supposed to arise from the general principles & morals of the french being better than those of the Inhabitants of the British Dominions in Europe & America, but merely from a piece of French policy to gain the good opinion of the people of America, that they may thereby effect their purposes the better, for can any man that has the use of his faculties, or is not deluded believe that they have meddled as it were in a Quarrell between Members of the same family, Religion & Language , upon any other motive than to serve their own purpose, which they study to keep covered till a suitable time may arrive to discover the cloven foot. May they never have strength to establish their Government & religion in any Country where Liberty of Conscience has generally prevailed -- Is my sincere desire -- .³⁷²

Francis Bailey, editor of *The Freeman's Journal*, only felt contempt for people such as Fisher. On 5 September, his paper recorded that

"The appearance of these troops far exceeds any thing of the kind before seen on this continent; and presages the happiest success to the cause of America. They enjoy remarkable good health, and show the utmost ardour to face the common enemy wherever he may lurk. When we reflect upon the generosity of our great and good ally, in sending such a body of forces to our

³⁷² "Journal of Samuel Rowland Fisher, of Philadelphia, 1779-1781" *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* vol. 41 No. 4 (1917), pp. 399-457, pp. 455-457. Fisher was 36 years old at the time, having lived from 1745 to 1834.

assistance, entirely at his own expense, to serve the interests of virtue and mankind, we cannot but behold with abhorrence and indignation those ungrateful monsters, the execrable croakers against the French nation, who impute these generous proceedings to the blackest motives, and such alone as the tyrant of Britain and his abandoned adherents would be guilty of in similar circumstances."

The eyewitness account of the parade through Philadelphia recorded by 30-year-old Reverend John Pitman in his diary confirms Bailey's impressions though without the polemics. On his way home from Pennepeck on 3 September he

*"Saw on the Road the French Troops. Also saw ym March in Order by the State house the finest troops I ever saw (4) [September] a Number more french troops came (5) [September] saw the French Camp and a Number of Large Cannon going into Virginia. Heard Lord Rawdon was taken and the French fleet was in the Chesepeck and had landed 5000 Granadiers. The Bells Rang some houses was Illuminated & guns fired."*³⁷³

That same day James Madison wrote to Edmund Pendleton that

*"This letter will be the most agreeable of any I have long had the pleasure of writing. I begin with informing you that the Commander in chief and the Ct. Rochambeau, the former with a part of the American Army, and the latter with the whole of the French are thus far on their way for the Southern Department. The American troops passed through the Town yesterday. The first division of the French today. The 2d will pass tomorrow. Nothing can exceed the appearance of this Specimen which our ally has sent us of his army, whether we regard the figure of the men or the exactness of their discipline."*³⁷⁴

³⁷³ Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence, Mss 622, box 1 folder 3. Pitman was on his way home from attending services at Pennepeck Baptist Church in today's Lower Dublin. His diary at times reflects the hardships caused by the war. On 4 May, while "the Congress dines on board the french Frigate," the city was "much in distress" because of the depreciation of money: "The poor could not get Bread, Sugar nor Nothing else for Money." Four days later, on 8 May, "a Mob went about to cry down Paper Money."

Other incidents relative to the war recorded in his diary are on 17 September when he reports the naval battle off the Virginia Capes and "that the French Carried in 2. Ships of 74 Guns and one frigate into Chesepeck."

On 22 September 1781, he had "heard for ceartain & saw it in the News yt the French beat the English fleet took two Ships sunk one This caused much joy in the City."

On 6 October already he had "heard also that Genl Washenton summoned Conwallis to Surrender was answered he would not while he had a Man to fight, the Batterries were oppened on him and we gained two Posts."

Finally, on 1 May 1782, he "heard the Parlament acknowledged our Independence."

³⁷⁴ Letters of Delegates to Congress: Volume 18, 1 March - 31 August 1781 <http://memory.loc.gov>

After the parade of the Second Division on 4 September, Thomas McKean, President of Congress, informed the *comte de Rochambeau* of

*"the satisfaction of congress in the compliment which has been paid to them by the troops of his most christian majesty under your command. The brilliant appearance and exact discipline of the several corps, do the highest honour to their officers, and afford a happy presage of the most distinguished services, in a cause which they have so zealously espoused."*³⁷⁵

The next day the two generals departed for Head of Elk. Rochambeau decided to make a detour to inspect Red Bank with Fort Mercer, Fort Billingsport and Fort Mifflin on Mud Island.³⁷⁶ According to Baron Closen's and the *comte de Lauberdière's* account, the group started its excursion at Fort Mifflin, and then continued on to Fort Mercer and Fort Mifflin. Visits to sites such as the Delaware River forts formed part of the continuing education process for Rochambeau's senior officers and his aides. Rochambeau was accompanied by Artillery Captain Mauduit du Plessis, who had been in command of the American artillery at Fort Mercer as a lieutenant colonel in the Continental Army during the siege of 1777.

Washington also left Philadelphia in the morning of Wednesday, 5 September 1781. In the early afternoon he experienced one of the happiest days in his life. His secretary Jonathan Trumbull recorded the events of this momentous day in his journal. "About 3 miles below Chester meets an Express from Admiral de Grasse. The fleet arrived in the Chesapeak 26 ult^o. News welcome though strangely delayed. The General returns to Chester to meet and rejoice with Count Rochambeau, who was coming down by water, and to communicate the joy to Congress."³⁷⁷

As Rochambeau approached the shore, Closen "discerned in the distance General Washington, standing on the shore and waving his hat and a white handkerchief joyfully. There was good reason for this; for he informed us as we disembarked that M. de Grasse had arrived in Chesapeake Bay with 28 ships of the line and 3,000 troops."³⁷⁸ The capture of Cornwallis in Yorktown had come

³⁷⁵ Quoted in *Freeman's Journal* of 12 September 1781.

³⁷⁶ Fort Billingsport and Red Bank with Fort Mercer are on the New Jersey side of the Delaware River. Fort Mifflin is 1,900 yards to the north of Fort Mercer on the Pennsylvania side of the river. Almost 350 Americans died in the defense of Fort Mifflin, which fell on 15 November 1777.

On 10 September 1781, the Pennsylvania State treasurer was ordered to pay Joseph Robenett "the sum of Nine pounds twelve shillings and six pence, Specie," to cover the "expenses in carrying down the French Generals to view the Forts at Mud Island and Billingsport." Pennsylvania Revolutionary Council Minute Book for Tuesday, 28 August 1781, pp. 386, RG 27, microfilm reel 691, Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg.

³⁷⁷ Trumbull, "Minutes of Occurrences," p. 332.

³⁷⁸ Acomb, *Closen*, pp. 121-123; the quote is on p. 123. The news that de Grasse had cast anchor in the Chesapeake Bay on 26 August came via General Mordecai Gist from Baltimore, where the 18-gun Cutter *Serpent* under Captain Arne de Laune had arrived on 4 September.

within reach.³⁷⁹ In Closen's eyes, Washington's joy represented a vindication of Rochambeau, "who must indeed have felt deep satisfaction in having the time draw near when his long-considered plans would be executed and in winning the approval of General Washington, who originally had been bent upon a campaign against New York."³⁸⁰ Lauberdière recorded how "le témoignage de la joie des deux Généraux dans cette occasion n'est pas facile a rendre -- the expression of the joy of the two generals on this occasion is not easy to describe."³⁸¹ Washington immediately returned to Chester to inform Congress.

Chester, September 5, 1781, 3 o'clock.

Sir:

*With the highest Pleasure, I do myself the Honor to transmitt to your Excellency the inclosed Copy of a Letter from Genl Gist. It announces the safe Arrival in the Chesapeake of Admiral D Grasse with 28 Ships of the Line. On this happy Event, I beg your Excellency to accept my warmest Congratulations.*³⁸²

I shall proceed myself with all possible Dispatch, forwardg. as I go on, the Troops, Stores &c. with all the Expedition in my Power. On my Arrival at the Head of Elk, if I do not find Water Craft sufficient to embark all the Stores, Baggage &c and the Troops, I shall forward on the former by Water, with as many Troops as can go by that Conveyance, and march the others by Land. With the highest Esteem &c.

Concurrently he wrote to the French minister the Chevalier de la Luzerne

Chester, September 5, 1781, 3 o'clock.

Sir:

With the highest Satisfaction, I do myself the Honor, to transmit to your Excellency, the inclosed Copy of a Letter, announcing the Arrival of the Count De Grasse, with 28 Ships, in the Chesapeak.

In his diary he wrote

"5th. The rear of the French army having reached Philadelphia and the Americans having passed it--the Stores having got up &

³⁷⁹ Unbeknownst to Washington or Rochambeau, Cornwallis' fate was sealed that very afternoon in the Battle off the Capes when de Grasse's fleet prevented a British fleet from entering the Chesapeake Bay.

³⁸⁰ Acomb, *Closen*, p. 123.

³⁸¹ Lauberdière, "Journal," fol. 104.

³⁸² The original of Gist's letter of 4 September 1781 from Baltimore is in the Washington Papers.

every thing in a tolerable train here; I left this City for the head of Elk to hasten the Embarkation at that place and on my way--(at Chester)--received the agreeable news of the safe arrival of the Count de Grasse in the Bay of Chesapeake with 28 Sail of the line & four frigates -- with 3000 land Troops which were to be immediately debarked at James town & form a junction with the American Army under the command of the Marqs. de la Fayette.

In his journal, Jonathan Trumbull records that "About 3 miles below Chester meets an Express from Admiral de Grasse. The fleet arrived in the Chesapeake 26 ult^o. News welcome though strangely delayed. The General returns to Chester to meet and rejoice with Count Rochambeau, who was coming down by water, and to communicate the joy to Congress."³⁸³ Rochambeau takes the opportunity to inform French War Minister Ségur of the arrival of de Grasse as well.³⁸⁴

Three miles below Chester places the two generals at Marcus Hook, and Trumbull's account as well as Washington's and Rochambeau's letters leave no doubt that the two generals returned to Chester. It is unknown, however, where Rochambeau and Washington spent the night of 5/6 September 1781. The *comte* de Laubardière writes: "M de Rochambeau and M Washington departed on the 6th from Chester to betake themselves to Head of Elk." This indicates that the two men stayed in Chester, where they could have slept in *the Blue Anchor Tavern* at Fourth and Market, the *Pennsylvania Arms* on Market Street across from the Court House, or even in the Blue Ball Tavern near Marcus Hook.

This stands however in contradiction to Trumbull, who wrote in his "Minutes of Occurrences": "At evening [GW] proceeds to Wilmington. 6. Breakfast at Christiana Bridge, where our boats, stores &c. are brought from Delaware Water through the Christiana Creek, debarked and carried across by land about 12 miles to the head of Elk where the troops and a great part of the stores are arrived and beginning to embark."³⁸⁵

9.3 French Accounts of the March through Pennsylvania

On 25 August, the van of the Continental Army had entered New Jersey, one week later, on 1 September, its most advance units crossed into Pennsylvania at Trenton. Unfortunately these men left precious few descriptions of what they saw. Not surprisingly, the official papers of Washington, Pickering, Knox, and Lincoln as well as the Orderly Books of Colonel Lamb's Artillery and the Second New York regiments contain no information about what these soldiers saw or heard. Neither do contemporary sources such as the diaries of Samuel Tallmadge, the memoirs of Philip Van Cortlandt, Sergeant-Major Hawkins, Privates John Martin,

³⁸³ Trumbull, "Occurrences," p. 332.

³⁸⁴ Rochambeau's letter to Ségur is in the Rochambeau Papers, vol. 9.

³⁸⁵ Trumbull, "Occurrences," p. 332.

John Hudson or Thomas Graton tell us anything about the towns they marched through, the people they met, or their way of doing things. But why should they? For an American soldier, the land he marched through contained no surprises. It was his homeland, filled with familiar things that were hardly worth recording. For the French officers and men this was very different. For them, Pennsylvania was a country they would most likely see only once in their lives and much of what they saw was new and worth recording. It is from their diaries, memoirs, and letters of those among them who took the trouble to record their experiences that we can learn much about life in revolutionary Pennsylvania.

The depth of recording and reflection on what a person saw and considered worthy of recording of course varies much from observer to observer. Some accounts are not much more than tables of dates and locations. But Philadelphia, the largest city they would encounter during their stay in the New World, impressed all of them. The accounts and descriptions of the city, be they from Count William de Deux-Ponts, second in command of the Royal Deux-Ponts regiment which formed part of the First Brigade, from Abbé Robin, whose *New Travels through North America* were published in Philadelphia in 1783, Cromot du Bourg, the *vicomte de Rochambeau*, the general's son, Axel von Fersen or Baron Closen-- all longer and more detailed than that of any other locality.

This account of Philadelphia by *Commissaire des Guerres* Claude Blanchard, who more or less followed his own route behind the French forces, will serve as an example of what these descriptions and accounts are like.

My intention had been to spend the night at Princeton, but the weather was fine and I proceeded to Trenton, going forty miles in the day. Trenton, ten leagues from Philadelphia, is a pretty considerable village, of at least a hundred houses, situated on the Delaware. This village, or little city, is pretty and seems to announce the vicinity of a capital I made haste to leave it on the 4th, having learnt that our first division was already at Philadelphia and that the second arrived there on this very day. I crossed the Delaware in a ferry boat; it is neither broad nor deep at this place, but at the distance of four leagues it becomes as broad as the Loire below La Fosse. ... The road leading to Philadelphia is fine, at least to within ten miles from this city, at Redlines [i.e., Red Lion], where I stopped to dine and wrote these notes. It is quite wide and skirts the Delaware; forests are passed through in some places. At last, I reached Philadelphia in the evening; the country in the neighborhood is cultivated; here and there I met with pretty houses and everything announced the vicinity of a great city. Philadelphia is a very extensive city, and regularly built; the houses are of brick and pretty high, the streets straight, broad and very long; there are side walks for persons on foot. Some public buildings are also to be seen there which are

worthy of a great city, such as the house where the congress meets, the hospitals and the prison. The absence of quays upon the Delaware deprives it of a great convenience and a great beauty. In the evening I repaired to the house of M. de la Luzerne, who was giving a great dinner to chief officer of the Congress, General Washington and the principal officers of our troops. On entering the city they defiled before the president of the congress and saluted him. Beginning on the 5th, our first division set out for the Chesapeake bay. I walked much in the city, without neglecting my business and the attention paid to our sick, who had been quartered in the Philadelphia hospital. I dined on the same day at the house of the M. de la Luzerne with more than 80 persons. Whilst we were at table, news was brought that m. de Grasse had arrived in Chesapeake bay with twenty-eight ships of the line, and that he had landed three thousand men who had joined M. de la Fayette, so that Cornwallis, who found himself between the fleet and the land forces, was in danger of being captured. This news was received with great joy by all the guests, French and Americans. In the evening the citizens assembled and proceeded in a crowd to the hotel of the ambassador. During the day, the regiment of Soissonnais had manoeuvred before a crowd of the inhabitants, who seemed to admire the fine appearance of the soldiery and their discipline. The tories could not avoid agreeing to it, but they said that it was a regiment recruited in England. The English had described us to the Americans as pygmies.

On the 6th, the second division commenced its march. ...

On the 7th, after having breakfasted at the house of our ambassador, I set out to rejoin the army, and lay at Chester, after having crossed the Schuylkill one mile from Philadelphia, at the place where M. Tronçon-Du-Coudray, a well-known officer of artillery, who had been sent to the Americans, was drowned in crossing a ferry. At present there is a bridge. Chester is a little village, five leagues from Philadelphia and on the Delaware.³⁸⁶

Accounts of their experiences kept by enlisted men during the campaign are extremely rare - only three are known to exist. One kept by an anonymous grenadier in the Bourbonnais Regiment records nothing more than the stations of the march through Pennsylvania. A second account kept by André Amblard of the Saintonge regiment of infantry is primarily of interest for its, albeit very brief, description of the drill and live firing exercise of the Soissonnais regiment carried out "on the beautiful plain in front of the city where the Schylkill enters it." Though his estimate of the number of spectators at 40,000 is probably too high, there can be no doubt that the spectacle attracted large numbers of people.

³⁸⁶ Blanchard, *Journal*, pp. 133/5. Blanchard reached Philadelphia in the evening of 4 September.

Such displays of military prowess and skill, conducted also in cities such as Baltimore both on the way to Yorktown as well as on the return march in 1782, were not only meant to entertain or impress the Americans. As Amblard also pointed out, it was meant to correct in the American colonists "la plus mauvais idée - the worst [imaginable] conception of the physical nature and built of other [i.e., non-English] Europeans" which they were holding.³⁸⁷ Like so many of his fellow soldiers and officers, Amblard too blamed the British as well as Huguenots immigrants: "This idea was given to them by English politics and confirmed the view of a number of unfortunates who had fled there." It was therefore important that Americans "saw for themselves in its abundance an army composed of superb examples of men trained and polished as well as and better than the English."

The most detailed account kept by an enlisted man is that of Georg Daniel Flohr of the Royal Deux-Ponts Regiment. His entry for the march through Pennsylvania which is well worth quoting in its entirety. Having spent the night of 1/2 September in Trenton,

*On the 2nd we broke camp and passed the Bristol Forest and reached Bristol, a very small village at the foot of the mountains. That same day we made 11 miles, and we continued on from Bristol to the Red Lion, a beautiful tavern along the road. We set up camp very close to it. Here the province of Pennsylvania begins.*³⁸⁸

On the 3rd we broke camp again, 12 miles to Philadelphia, which is the capital of all of North America. That day we passed a beautiful little town by the name of Frankfurt in a pleasant region not far from the Delaware River. There we met for the first time Germans who greeted us immediately along the road as fellow countrymen.

As we were now approaching the city of Philadelphia a multitude of German inhabitants from the city came to meet us to look for fellow countrymen and acquaintances, since they had heard that the Zweibrücken Regiment was supposed to be here. And there was no lack of fellow countrymen among us because one can justly say that the third part of the regiment met fellow countrymen. Among them were also very many brothers and sisters who met and who had not seen each other for many years [because] they had emigrated to go to this New Country.

³⁸⁷ See also the *Newport Mercury* of 23 November 1780 for a note on a "petite guerre sur le bord de mer en avant du grand Camp" translated in the paper as "a sham fight in the Neck."

³⁸⁸ Pennsylvania begins of course well before the Red Lion Inn.

That same way many a soldier found his father who had left behind his children many years earlier already and had fled to this country because he had wasted [or: lost] everything.

There we set out camp half of a quarter of an hour from the city. Within half an hour one saw such a multitude of people there that one could have thought the largest possible market was taking place in front of the camp, and all the tents were full too, one had his brother with him, the other his sister, a third his friend etc.

On the 4th we had a day of rest. That day the visitations were even stronger than before as the inhabitants from the country-side began to arrive up to 10-12 hours away to look for acquaintances, which could be found in large numbers indeed.

It was indeed surprising what a commotion and visiting took place there. These people had not seen any of their fellow countrymen in many years as it is also very rare that troops or similar groups of people get there and so it was news to them to see all of this and to visit. And also to ask in general terms how things were in their fatherland, whether their friends and relatives were still alive etc. When a soldier was walking about in the city or anywhere else and a German met him he immediately took him and led him to a tavern and paid more than could be consumed only to be able to discuss things with him.

In the evening of the 4th we received orders that tomorrow we would parade through the city in the greatest order and probity.

On the 5th we departed, 15 miles to Chester. We marched in platoons through the city, arranged into brigades, the artillery with burning wicks.³⁸⁹

Monsieur Rochambeau led the First Brigade, Regiment Bourbonnais and Royal Deux-Ponts besides a company of hussars. The heavy artillery in front. The constables with burning wicks at the canons ready to fire. The regimental [artillery] pieces were in the middle in front of the Royal Deux-Ponts, which was led by the Baron de Vioménil.

The Chevalier de Vioménil led the Second Brigade, Regiments Soissonnais and Saintonge. The Brigade artillery in front. The constables with burning wicks in hand. The regimental pieces in the middle in front of the Regiment Saintonge which was led by the

³⁸⁹ Flohr's description reads as if the Royal Deux-Ponts had marched through Philadelphia on 5 September AFTER a few days rest. In reality the regiment marched through the city on the 3rd.

Chevalier de Chastellux. After them came the Free-Corps of Lauzun which was led by the duc de Lauzun, behind them a company of hussars to close [the parade].

The city of Philadelphia is situated in a pretty, flat region. And is three English miles long and wide and is adorned with many remarkable buildings such as the Town Hall, the residence of the French ambassador, the hospital etc. all streets are built in a line and a wonderful sight to behold. About a third of the inhabitants are Germans yet more English is spoken there than German. This city also has a beautiful harbor for the merchants.

It was only there that we found out the destination of our march; up until then we did not have any specific orders. And so it would go to Virginia which General Cornwallis of the English was raving very badly and had taken up a position with 12,000 men in a small village named Little York where he took up such a strong position that it took great effort to drive him out of it. This was the reason why we had to march there, to provide support, and where the Americans were already with great anxiety waiting for us with their army.

On the 5th we passed the city of Philadelphia and behind the city we crossed the river Schuylkill, a river full of ships and crossed by a beautiful bridge, something that is very remarkable in that region. Along the way we encountered a pretty little town in a pretty area by the name of Farly which is completely inhabited by German. We however marched on to Chester, also a German village in the plain in a pleasant area.³⁹⁰

As the allied forces were crossing into Delaware, the highest hopes and best wishes accompanied them on their way. On 4 September 1781, Rhode Island delegate Richard Varnum wrote to Governor Greene from Philadelphia.

"Yesterday the American troops detached from the main Army, marched from hence on their Way to Virginia. The French army is now here & will move tomorrow. The Objects of their movements are immense and should Circumstances prove as favorable as we have reason to expect, the Event will be glorious."³⁹¹

Glorious they were indeed.

³⁹⁰ The community identified as "Farly" in the ms is most likely Darby.

³⁹¹ RI State Archives Providence, Greene Letterbooks Vol. 17,1 August 1781 to 25 July 1782.