

## THROUGH DELAWARE TO YORKTOWN, 2 SEPTEMBER TO 19 OCTOBER 1781

### 11.1 Embarkation at Elkton and Sea Journey to Virginia

Having quickly crossed the state of Delaware, Washington and the first units of the Continental Army reached Head of Elk in Maryland on Thursday 6 September, followed by French forces on 7 and 8 September. Once the American rear-guard arrived from Christiana on 9 September, the two armies were ready for the last leg of their journey to Yorktown. In exactly three weeks since departing from Philipsburg, New York, they had reached the banks of the Chesapeake. But speed was still of the essence: Sir Henry might still launch a rescue operation, Cornwallis might still break out of Yorktown, and de Grasse would only stay until 15 October. But Washington had more immediate concerns to deal with. On 17 August, he had already written Robert Morris from Dobbs Ferry that he would have to pay the army at least one month's salary in specie in order to induce it to march into Virginia. Morris was aware of Washington's needs, too, and recorded in his diary that "great S[y]mptoms of discontent had Appeared on their passing through this City" of Philadelphia.<sup>506</sup> The discontent was real enough: in the six days between its departure from Trenton and arrival at Head of Elk on 6 September, eleven men, almost 10 per cent of its *de facto* strength, deserted from Lamb's Artillery regiment alone. On 6 September, the situation had become critical and Washington repeated the request to Morris from Head of Elk, "intreating you in the warmest Terms to send on a Month's Pay at least, with all the Expedition possible". But Morris did not have the funds to pay the army and on 7 September asked Rochambeau for a loan of to \$26,600 Spanish dollars in specie to pay the troops, with the promise that he would return the money. But 26,600 Spanish Milled dollars, the famous Pieces of Eight or 143,640 livres, almost half of the 300,000 livres left in his treasury, was all Rochambeau could lend Morris to satisfy the demands of the American troops.<sup>507</sup> The effect of the French silver resonated for decades in the minds of the recipients.

On 6 September, Lincoln's Orderly Book records that "The Commanding Officers of Corps are to cause Abstracts to be immediately made for a month's pay of their respective commands."<sup>508</sup> Two days later a momentous event occurred. "This day," 8 September 1781, wrote Major William Popham, "will be famous in the annals of History for being the first in which the Troops of the United States received one month's Pay in Specie -- all the civil and military staff are excluded. ... I cannot even obtain my pay as Captain in the Line."<sup>509</sup> For

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<sup>506</sup> Diary: September 1-5, 1781. *The Papers of Robert Morris, 1781-1784*. E. James Ferguson, ed., Vol. 2: August - September 1781 (Pittsburgh, 1975), p. 173.

<sup>507</sup> The amount is given in Morris to Lincoln, 8 September 1781. *Morris Papers*, Vol. 2, p. 220.

<sup>508</sup> There is no entry for 7 September.

<sup>509</sup> Major William Popham, ADC, to Gov. Clinton of New York, 8 September 1781, quoted in Johnston, *Yorktown*, p. 173.

many a Continental soldier this was indeed the first and only times he ever received "real" money during his years of service. Private Joseph Plum Martin remembered, "we each of us received a MONTH'S PAY (sic), in specie, borrowed, as I was informed, by our French (sic) officers from the officers in the French army. This was the first that could be called money, which we had received as wages since the year '76, or that we ever did receive till the close of the war, or indeed, ever after, as wages."<sup>510</sup> Private John Hudson of the First New York Regiment who had celebrated only his 13<sup>th</sup> birthday on 12 June 1781, recalled that it was at Elkton that "I received the only pay that I ever drew for my services during the war, being six French crowns, which were a part of what Robert Morris borrowed on his own credit from the French commander to supply the most urgent necessities of the soldiers. My comrades received the same amount."<sup>511</sup>

On 8 September orders went out that "The Commander in Cheafe guards, Light Troops, Genl Heasons Regt artillery Sappers & Miners & the artificiers Will imbarck as the first divison of American troops, care will be taken to keep as much as poseble Corps together."<sup>512</sup> This first Division numbered around 1,450 officers and men. The combined New Jersey regiments of about 330 officers and men formed the Second American Division. There was no shipping space available for the two New York regiments, about 800 officers and men, and the Rhode Island Regiment, which were ordered to march with the French forces to Baltimore.

With most of the shipping space taken by the Continental Army, the total number of French troops embarked at head of Elk, four companies of Grenadiers, four companies of chasseurs, and about 300 men of Lauzun's infantry and artillery, numbered around 1,200 officers and men. Around 4:00 a.m. on 11 September, the small flotilla set sail for the Chesapeake. Annapolis was reached on 12 September, where unsettling news was awaiting them. De Grasse had sailed from Lynnhaven Bay on 5 September to meet a British fleet. The outcome of that naval engagement, which would also decide the fate of the land campaign, was anxiously awaited along the shores of the Chesapeake. News of de Grasse's victory reached Baltimore in the evening of 14 September and in the morning of 15 September the Continentals and the French grenadiers and chasseurs were on their way again. Around 8:00 p.m. on 19 September, 36 days after the decision to attack Cornwallis had been made, the first elements of the American Army anchored in the York River upstream from Pappahanuck. As it trickled in over the next few days, the Continental Army debarked at Archer's Hope upstream from the mouth of College Creek and marched into Williamsburg and its camp

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<sup>510</sup> Martin, *Private Yankee Doodle*, pp. 222-23.

<sup>511</sup> Hudson, "Reminiscences", *Cist's Advertiser*, 28 January 1846.

<sup>512</sup> NARA, Record Group M 853 reel 8, vol. 52, p. 124. Lincoln's Orderly Book also contains the embarkation orders for 8 September. The First Division was to embark with their baggage, six days flour and four days pork and 2 days of beef. The flour to be baked into bread, and "for this purpose the inhabitants must be requested to lend their Ovens." The remainder of the army "will set off as soon as possible for Williamsburg by land."

behind the College of William and Mary. The French grenadiers and chasseurs disembarked on 23 September at Burwell's Ferry a mile below the mouth of College Creek and encamped behind the Capitol.

On 9 September, even before the Head of Elk contingent was fully embarked, the remainder of the troops, between 3,800 and 4,000 Frenchmen, or still about 75% of the troops of the *expédition particulière*, including the artillery and 800 to 1,000 Americans, had begun their march to Baltimore. Rochambeau had hoped to find enough shipping for at least two of his regiments in Baltimore but, taken aback by the questionable sea-worthiness of the craft assembled, the *baron de Vioménil*, Rochambeau's second in command, refused to embark his troops and decided to march overland to Virginia. The Americans had no such qualms and embarked at Fell's Point for Williamsburg on 16 and 17 September. Concurrently Vioménil decided to send Lauzun's close to 300 hussars ahead of the main army to Gloucester opposite Yorktown. At 5:00 a.m. on 14 September, Colonel d'Arrot and his men crossed the Patapsco River at Ferry Bar and headed for Virginia. On the evening of 15 September they crossed the Potomac at Georgetown. Dumfries, Fredericksburg and King and Queen Court House were stations on the road to Gloucester Court House, which was reached on 24 September.

In the evening of 17 September a courier reached Vioménil with the welcome news that transports from de Grasse had reached Annapolis. He immediately changed course and by 7:00 a.m. on 19 September, French troops had reached Annapolis where they set up camp on the grounds of St. John's College and (today's) US Naval Academy. Over the next few days the infantry, their baggage, as well as the field artillery embarked on the 15 vessels sent by Admiral de Grasse. As the now empty wagon train, estimated at 1,500 horses, 800 oxen, and 220 wagons by Louis Alexandre Berthier, set off for Virginia, the *Romulus* of 74 guns, the frigates *Gentile*, *Diligente*, *l'Aigrette*, the captured British frigates *Iris* and *Richmond*, and nine transports, sailed for the York River in the afternoon of 21 September where they arrived only 24 hours later. By 26 September the transports were unloaded and the troops encamped at Williamsburg. Two days later, the armies of Washington, Rochambeau and Lafayette set out for Yorktown.

## 11.2 The Siege of Yorktown

Washington and Rochambeau were waiting for them. As soon as the troops had been paid, Washington on 8 September had departed from Head of Elk to Baltimore. Anxious to reach Mount Vernon after a six-year absence, Washington left Baltimore early on the 9<sup>th</sup> and reached his estate after a sixty mile ride late that same evening. Rochambeau and his staff arrived the following day. On 13 September, the two generals continued their journey, reaching Williamsburg on 15 September. A visit to Admiral De Grasse on his flagship the *Ville de Paris* followed on 18 September. Even though de Grasse had agreed to extend his stay until the end of October, the generals were eager for the siege to begin.

	. American Army
Continentals:	350 officers and 5,500 men (return of 9/26/1781; incl. 411 sick)
Militia:	3,300 officers and men
	→ 9,150 Americans
	French Army
Rochambeau's Forces:	425 officers and 4,500 men (return of 11/11/81; incl. 423 sick)
St. Simon's Forces:	225 officers and 3,300 men
	→ 9,250 French (incl. 800 Marines) <sup>513</sup>
	French Navy
French Marines:	5,200 officers and men (minus about 800 Marines at Gloucester)
Ship crews:	24,000 officers and men (18,000 de Grasse, 6,000 Barras )
British Forces (plus German Auxiliaries and American Loyalists)	
8,885 effectives plus 840 naval personnel = about 9,700 rank and file on 9/15/81	
7,247 rank and file (4,750 fit for duty) plus 840 men naval personnel surrender	
Total: 8,100 rank and file. Most of the missing 1,600 men are casualties.	

On 29 September, Rochambeau sent Brigadier Claude Gabriel de Choisy, with 800 men from among the infantry serving as marines on the vessels of de Grasse to assume command at Gloucester from General George Weedon. This brought the allied forces there to about 2,900 men. Much to the surprise of the allies Cornwallis abandoned his outer defenses without a fight on 30 September. Three days later, on 3 October, the *duc* de Lauzun with about 500 men of his legion, half of them mounted hussars supported by Lieutenant Colonel John Mercer's Select Battalion of the Virginia militia, crossed swords with some 240 horse of Lieutenant-Colonel Banastre Tarleton's British Legion and 350 infantry of the 23rd Royal Welsh Fusiliers. Both sides claimed victory but Lauzun had remained master of the battlefield. Choisy pushed his advance posts to within one mile of Gloucester, where they stayed for the remainder of the siege, effectively confining Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Dundas's garrison of around 1,100 men to its position at Gloucester Point.

Across the river in Yorktown the First Parallel was dug on 6 October at about 500 to 600 yards from British defenses, and on 9 October, French siege guns opened up on Cornwallis' troops. The completion of the Second Parallel closer to Yorktown was blocked by two detached earthen forts called Redoubts 9 and 10, located 400 yards in advance of the British inner defenses on the extreme right of the siege line. On 14 October, Allied artillery bombarded Redoubts 9 and 10 for most of the day, preparing them for the American and French assaults. That evening, American Light infantry under Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander Hamilton took Redoubt No. 10 while French grenadiers of the Gâtinais and Royal Deux-Ponts regiments carried No. 9. The capture of these redoubts enabled the besiegers to finish the Second Parallel and to construct the Grand American

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<sup>513</sup> These 800 "marines" were infantry detachments drawn from the line regiments Picardie, Colonel-Général, Brie, Bresse, Maine, La Sarre, Bourbon, Monsieur, d'Angoumois, and Rohan for service as marines on board de Grasse's fleet rather than men from France's regular naval infantry.

Battery within point blank range of the British inner defense line. On 16 October Cornwallis launched a morning attack, temporarily seizing two French batteries. That evening he attempted to ferry his troops across the York River to Gloucester Point, but a storm disrupted the operation. The following day, 17 October, a British drummer beat for a parley. On 18 October, two British officers, one American and one French officer met at the home of Augustine Moore to negotiate surrender terms. Washington granted them the same honors of war allowed Lincoln at Charleston the previous year. Around 2:00 p.m. on 19 October, the British troops with their Loyalist American and German allies, colors cased and beating a British march, marched out of Yorktown to lay down their arms. It did not take long for news of the victory to reach Pennsylvania. Early in the morning of 22 October, a night watchman announced the victory in the streets. The Rev. Pitman recorded in his diary that "News came to Town that Cornwallis is taken in Virginia." Two days later, on 24 October, came the proof of victory when "Genl Washenton's Aidecamp came with the Confirmation of Cornwallis's surrender the town was Illuminated the Mobb went about brak:g Windows." Jacob Hiltzheimer too recorded the ritual of window-breaking: "October 24.- The city was handsomely illuminated in consequence of Lord Cornwallis's surrender, but am sorry to have to add that so many doors and windows have been destroyed in houses of Friends." In the evening of the 25<sup>th</sup>, there were "fireworks in the State House yard."<sup>514</sup> On 3 November, he "Saw the British Standards that were taken with Cornwallis laid at the feet of Congress their number was 24."<sup>515</sup> Hiltzheimer recorded that "At the Schuylkill they were met and escorted into the city by our City Light Horse, commanded by Captain Sam Morris, and delivered to Hon. Thomas McKean, President of Congress, at the State House. At night the house of the French Minister was illuminated to a great degree."

The "ragged Continentals" and their French allies had undoubtedly won an important victory, but only from hindsight does it become obvious, to paraphrase the *marquis* de Lafayette, that on 19 October 1781, the curtain had fallen on the final act of the Revolutionary War. Contemporaries were by far not as sanguine about the inevitability of the outcome of the war. Writing on 20 October, the day after the surrender ceremony, General George Washington thought Lord Cornwallis' surrender but "an interesting event that may be productive of much good if properly improved."<sup>516</sup> And on 26 October, General *Mad* Anthony Wayne of Pennsylvania used almost identical words in a letter to Robert Morris, in which he described the victory as "an event of the utmost consequence & if properly improved, may be productive of a glorious & happy peace."<sup>517</sup> In the same letter Wayne also pointed out that "It was not to the exertions of America, that the reduction of the modern Hannibal is to be attributed, [but to] our power to Command 37 Sail of the line & 8,000 Auxiliary veterans."

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<sup>514</sup> Hiltzheimer, *Diary*, p. 46. Among the expenses for the celebrations approved by the Supreme Executive Council on 27 October were £10 specie for the militia artillery. *Minutes of the Supreme Executive Council. Vol. XIII: 13 July 1781 to 31 December 1783* (Harrisburg, 1853), p. 98.

<sup>515</sup> Pitman's diary is in Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence, Mss 622, box 1 folder 3.

<sup>516</sup> Quoted in <http://www.history.org/Almanack/people/bios/biowash2.cfm>

<sup>517</sup> Wayne to Morris, 26 October 1781, Rutgers University Special Collections, call No. Ac 1023.

In a letter written from Williamsburg on 16 December 1781 to Samuel Talcott, Jeremiah Wadsworth also explained the victory in terms of fortune shining on America. "Our successes here have been owing to a Number of very fortunate circumstances that could never have been expected - had Cornwallis stayed at Portsmouth he had been safe and our long & expensive March had been lost labor - had the British fleet kept out of sight of Count de Grass & not have called him out to fight then the Rhode Island Squadron had probably fallen into his hands & Cornwallis been relieved - Cornwallis with all his Military talents his Courage & experience seems not to have understood well the defense of a Place & fell an easy prey." All in all he came to the conclusion that if the siege had been much longer "it is not very probable he would have fallen into our hands as their were circumstances attending our Army that might have operated in his favor."<sup>518</sup>

The "37 Sail of the line", Admiral de Grasse' and Barras' fleets, had provided the temporary naval superiority that made the victory at Yorktown possible. But they would not stay forever: before the Royal Navy once again controlled North American waters, Washington indeed hoped to make the victory more "productive", to "improve[d]" it in the words of Wayne, with an attack on Savannah or Charleston. For once the French fleets were gone, no one knew when, if at all, they would return.

Washington, Wayne and Wadsworth knew all too well that the men taken prisoner constituted only about one fourth of the British land forces operating on the American mainland - Sir Henry Clinton still had over 10,000 troops available in New York City alone, while 10,000 more were stationed in Charleston, Canada and Louisiana. If he were to decide on some kind of offensive action, General William Heath in the Hudson Highlands with his 2,500 Continentals would be in no position to stop him.

But de Grasse would have none of it, On 27 October, St. Simon's troops began to re-embark, and on 4 November Admiral de Grasse, who never set foot on the American mainland, his fleet sailed out of Lynnhaven Bay for Fort Royal on Martinique, where it arrived on 26 November 1781. On 5 November, barely two weeks after the surrender, McDowell's Pennsylvania Regiment as well as the Maryland Regiment and the 85 recruits for the Delaware Regiment left Yorktown to join General Greene in North Carolina. Washington, who had received word on 5 November of the illness of his stepson John Parke Custis, immediately left Yorktown for Eltham, home of Anna Maria, Martha Washington's sister, and her husband Burwell Bassett, some 30 miles from Yorktown.<sup>519</sup> On 26 November, Washington and his wife arrived in Philadelphia where they took up lodging for the winter at the home of Benjamin Chew at 110 S. Third Street, between Walnut and Spruce.

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<sup>518</sup> Jeremiah Wadsworth Papers, CHS, Box 132.

<sup>519</sup> On 6 November, he wrote to Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., from Eltham: "I came here in time to see Mr. Custis breathe his last. About Eight o'clock yesterday Evening he expired."

## THE RETURN MARCH OF THE CONTINENTAL ARMY

### 12.1 Return March of the Continental Army: The Light Infantry

With Cornwallis defeated and de Grasse on the way to the Caribbean, there was no reason for the Continental Army to remain in Virginia and in the early days of November it left for the northward by water and by land.

The journey of the troops who took the waterway to Head of Elk, i.e., the Light Infantry, the Second Continental Artillery and the Sappers and Miners, was determined by the availability of watercraft and the vagaries of wind and weather. Rather than as a compact complement, they made their way north from Elkton leisurely, to judge from the times that the marches began in the morning. What they all have in common, however, is that they followed the French army route of August 1781 as they marched across Pennsylvania. Among the first to leave was Colonel Elias Dayton, who recorded in his Diary on 1 November. "Left York in a Schooner called the Rachel, with a number of Shells & about 40 sick on boards. After a disagreeable passage of seven days arrived at the Head of Elk."<sup>520</sup> The Light Infantry, the artillery and the artificers also began to embark in the days after 1 November for the journey to Head of Elk.

A detailed itinerary is preserved in the journal of Lieutenant Ebenezer Wild of the Light Infantry, who had boarded the schooner *Liberty* with a detachment of 32 invalids in Yorktown "at sunrise" on Friday, 2 November 1781. Following a short portage from Head of Elk to Newcastle in Delaware, the group embarked on a sloop on 15 November and sailed and rowed up the Delaware river until they had to cast anchor at about midnight "one mile below the lower chevaux-de-frise". The following day at about 1:00 p.m. "we came to anchor (near a wharf) at the North end of the City of Philadelphia. Went on shore with Capt. Bradford, and walked to the Coffee House. Returned to the sloop again at seven o'clk [sic] in the evening. At 10 o'clk (it being flood tide) came to sail, and beat up the river about one league and came to anchor." The following day, 17 November, storms forced the sloop onto the New Jersey side of the river where they spent the night. Unable to continue by water, Wild landed his men at Bordentown "a little after dusk" on 18 November and marched into Trenton where they "Drew six days allowance of provisions. About 10 o'clk A. M. we began our march for Prince Town [Princeton] where we arrived about sundown." On 27 November, they left Pompton for King's Ferry and crossed the Hudson on the 29<sup>th</sup>. Finally, on 8 December, "The Light Infantry arrived in camp, and joined their respective Brigades and Regiments".<sup>521</sup>

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<sup>520</sup> New Jersey Historical Society, Elias Dayton Papers, MG 94. The diary ends here.

<sup>521</sup> "Journal of Ebenezer Wild", *Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings* Second Series, No. 6, (Boston, 1891), pages 78 - 160, pp. 156-159.

As these two journals show, removal of the sick and invalid was one of the most important tasks once the siege was over. In a letter written from "Camp near York" on 23 October, Dr. James Craig informed Washington that "In the Hospitals at Williamsburg [i.e., primarily in the Governor's Palace] there are about 400 [American] sick and wounded, at Hanover Town about two hundred, and upwards of six hundred reported sick in the army. Those in Hanover Town are in Store houses without fire places and the situation unhealthy and no other houses to be procured in the neighborhood. In Williamsburg there are a number of Col. Gaskins detachment so nasty and naked that it is almost impossible to prevent contagion and many of them have but a few months to serve. ... we have a number in the small pox and they are daily increasing; more house room will be wanted in Williamsburg when the army moves all the hospitals are destitute of blankets, Shirts, Overalls and cloathing, all essentially necessary for the recovery of the sick. The Department is entirely destitute of money, there is none nor has there been a single copper to pay a nurse, or an orderly, or to purchase milk and vegetables, and in a short time stores and medicines will be wanting." Eventually Rochambeau made a cash donation to the American hospital to allow it to purchase to most needed supplies.<sup>522</sup>

Those who could be transported spent little time in and around Yorktown. Unless they had been fortunate enough to find a place on a vessel they were lodged on ox-drawn wagons and sent off to hospitals in Richmond, Baltimore, Wilmington, and even to Philadelphia, more than 300 miles from Yorktown viz.: Joseph Lewis received 58 Spanish Milled dollars for "29 days Service of a team removing the sick from Virginia to Philad. at 15/ p day".<sup>523</sup> The fact that any of the wounded survived the three- to four-week journey north on an ox-cart on the bumpy, rutted roads in the cold December weather speaks volumes about the stamina of people in the eighteenth century. Those who remained behind, French and American, had to move too when in early December, the Christopher Wren Building, site of the French hospital, was heavily damaged by fire. Then on 22 December, disaster struck when the Governor's Palace, the Continental Army's main hospital, burned to the ground. Only one of the more than 100 wounded lodged in the building perished and the survivors moved to the Capitol.<sup>524</sup>

Due to bad weather it was already 20 November 1781, two weeks after his departure from Virginia on 4 November that Thacher and the Light Infantry began the process of debarkation at Elkton. After an outbreak of smallpox on board the frigate along the way they had been forced to land several officers and about 80 soldiers "liable to receive the infection" at the Virginia shore. The men received orders "to march round by land". At Elkton "we met with our horses." On 24

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<sup>522</sup> Washington to Rochambeau, 23 February 1782. Besides the American and French wounded the Continent was now also responsible for the British sick: a tabulation in the Washington Papers dated 6 November gives their number at 1,387, among them 609 in the General Hospital on the Gloucester side of the river "impossible to move without risking their lives."

<sup>523</sup> The certificate is in Neilson, John. "Papers ... kept as DQM for NJ, 1780-1782, Box 1" Ac 589, Special Collections, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey. It has the number 8297.

<sup>524</sup> The hospital was closed in March 1782.



November, Thacher and the artillery began their march north, "[p]assed through Philadelphia, Trenton, Princeton, Bonbrook (Bound Brook) and Morristown" in quick succession.<sup>525</sup> On 7 December, Thacher crossed the Hudson at King's Ferry and moved into huts "erected the last winter by some of the Massachusetts troops, a short distance from the banks of the Hudson, and called New Boston; they afford us a very convenient and comfortable accommodation."

Concurrently with Thacher marched Thomas Graton of the Company of Artificers, who left a similarly detailed itinerary as he followed the Light Infantry route to the Hudson.<sup>526</sup> Having encamped "within 2 miles of Chester" on 26 November, Graton crossed the state line the next day and reached Philadelphia on 27 November. He passed right through the town to a campsite two miles past Frankford. The following morning, 28 November, he marched to Bristol where he encamped. On "Ye 29 marched nigh Trenton Ferry & encamped. Ye 30 Crost the Ferry to Trenton and past the town one mile and encamped." Continuing through "Princetown ... Sumerset ... Bareskin Ridge ... Hannovah, Pumpton" and the Rammapool," he reached Newburgh on 9 December. On 26 December, Graton received his discharge in Newburgh and returned home to Massachusetts.

## 12.2 Return March of the Continental Army: The Second Continental Artillery

Upon reaching Philadelphia, Colonel Lamb's Second Continental Artillery and Joseph Plum Martin's Sappers and Miners, which had also taken the sea route, remained behind and were quartered in the Barracks for about two weeks.<sup>527</sup> From there, they marched on 5 December to Bristol<sup>528</sup> and crossed the Delaware to Burlington, where they arrived on 7 December.<sup>529</sup> While Lamb's artillery took their winter quarters in the barracks, "our corps of Miners were quartered in a large elegant house which had formerly been the residence of the Governor when the state was a British province."<sup>530</sup> Col. Lamb's Artillery Regiment spent the rest of the winter in Burlington and marched to the Highlands in August 1782.

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<sup>525</sup> Thacher, *Military Journal*, pp. 301-303. Thacher sailed on the French frigate *Diligence*.

<sup>526</sup> Pension application of Thomas Graton, NARA W 14824, 34 pp. roll 1110, frames 302-325.

<sup>527</sup> The barracks in Philadelphia, built after Braddock's defeat in 1755, extended from Second to Third Street and St. Tammany to Green Street. The Parade Ground fronted Second Street, the officer's quarters were on Third Street. They were torn down after the Revolutionary War. Joseph Plum Martin described them as "very commodious. They were two stories high, with a gallery their whole length, and an ample parade in front; they were capable of sheltering two or three thousand men." *Private Yankee Doodle*, p. 246. Lamb's Orderly Book from 7 December 1781 to 4 February 1782, is preserved in the New-York Historical Society, microfilm: #152; reel 15.

<sup>528</sup> Samuel Canby of Wilmington recorded in his diary that "From the 25<sup>th</sup> of the last till the 5<sup>th</sup> of the present Month (December 1781) the New England, York & Jersey troops having been going by this place to their Winter Quarters in Jersey, the Pinsylvania Troops went from York to Join General Greene's Army." Samuel Canby Diary November 1779 to December 1796, entry for January 1783. Photostat in Historical Society of Delaware, from the original at Yale University.

<sup>529</sup> *Private Yankee Doodle*, p. 246. It marched to the Hudson in August 1782. The barracks in Burlington, built in 1758/59, were located on East Broad Street at Assicunk Creek.

<sup>530</sup> Green Bank, the estate of Gov. William Franklin, son of Benjamin Franklin and last Royal Governor of New Jersey, on the banks of the Delaware, no longer exists. On 12 April, Washington ordered the Sappers and Miners to West Point.

### 12.3 Return March of the Continental Army: Moses Hazen's Canadian Regiment (Congress' Own) and the Rhode Island Regiment

The remainder of the Continental Army, i.e., Moses Hazen's Canadians, the Rhode Island Regiment, the two New York Regiments and the New Jersey Line, who were charged with accompanying the prisoners to the north, departed from Yorktown in the days after Sunday, 4 November, as well. Upon arrival in Philadelphia, Moses Hazen's regiment branched off toward its winter quarters in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where it performed duties guarding British prisoners that had marched north with them to Pennsylvania at Camp Security. Only a very few POW camps were established during the Revolutionary War, and Camp Security is the only one of these sites that remains largely untouched. Between 1781 and the end of the war in 1783, more than 1,500 captured British soldiers and their families were confined at Camp Security.

The Rhode Island regiment remained quartered in the barracks in Philadelphia. On 24 May 1782, General Lincoln as Secretary of War informed William Moore, President of the State of Pennsylvania, that "The Rhode Island Regiment will march next Wednesday to join the troops in the highlands - which lays me under the necessity of soliciting a guard for the prisoners in the new Jail."<sup>531</sup> The regiment did not leave their winter quarters until late May, when the "Account of Public Ferriages" provided by Hugh Runyan on 31 May ferried "470 men Rhode Island Regt" for £ 2 18/9 across the Delaware. Eight four-horse waggons paid £ 1 10/, 7 horses 2/7.<sup>532</sup>

### 12.4 Return March of the Continental Army: The New Jersey Regiment

It appears that for most of the way the New Jersey and New York regiments marched a day apart with the New Jersey Regiment in front.<sup>533</sup> Samuel Tallmadge and his Second New York Regiment had received 440 prisoners on 3 November, and began the march north at 5:00 a.m. the next day. By 11 November, they reached Fredericksburg, and delivered the prisoners "to an officer of the Virginia militia".<sup>534</sup> On 25 November, the "Jersey Regiment marched to the [Susquehannah] River and Crossed, Stormy Weather prevented our Regt

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<sup>531</sup> Lincoln's letter is printed in *Pennsylvania Archives* vol. IX (1854), p. 549.

<sup>532</sup> "Account of Public Ferriages" by Hugh Runyan in folder: Official papers ca. 1780-1782, in John Neilson, Papers ... kept as DQM for NJ, 1780-1782, Box 2, Account Book beginning Trenton, 25 Sept. 1780 to 4 October 1782. Special Collections, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, Ac 589. On 16 April, John Rogers and 75 men of regiment had already crossed, another 26 men belonging to the Rhode Island Regiment crossed on 4 June. On 4 May, 25 more soldiers had crossed from Elizabethtown to Philadelphia, and on 24 April, Lieutenant Beckham had crossed with 56 recruits for the regiment.

<sup>533</sup> No Orderly Book or other primary source for the reconstruction of the march of the New Jersey regiment has been located. See William S. Stryker, *The New Jersey Continental Line in the Virginia Campaign of 1781* (Trenton, 1882), p. 26.

<sup>534</sup> Egly, *First New York*, p. 210.

marching."<sup>535</sup> Since the regiment could not cross the next day either, the New Jersey troops gained another day on the New Yorkers. Based on the itinerary of the New York Regiment (see below) that means that the New Jersey Regiment probably marched into Pennsylvania on 29 November for a camp in or near Marcus Hook. The 30<sup>th</sup> saw the regiment just outside Philadelphia, on 1 December they probably camped near Lower Dublin, and reached Trenton on 2 December.

As they returned north, the regiments once again had to cross the ferry in Trenton to get to New Jersey. Since Neilson had no more funds in November 1781 that he had had in September, the "Account of Public Persons e& Transported across the Delaware at the old Ferry by Hugh Runyan" provides an fascinating insight into the return flow of men and personnel from the 1781 campaign. On 10 November Dr. Bodo Otto arrived at the ferry with one horse. On 30 November 1781, Washington's secretary Jonathan Trumbull arrived "with 1 chaise and three horses" and was charged 2/4 for the crossing.<sup>536</sup>

The next day the troops began to arrive in force, and Neilson's expenses rose considerably. On 1 December 1781, he crossed "681 foot [soldiers] 15 four-horse waggons 4 two-horse waggons 75 saddle horses 21 eight Ox teams (Bay State [i.e. Massachusetts]) £ 12 18/3d".<sup>537</sup>

On 3 December, Lieutenant Colonel Barber certified that "about 600 men of the Jersey line under my command with seventeen four horse and ox teams and twelve riding horses" crossed the old ferry at a cost of £ 7 3/3d. Though it is known that the New Jersey regiments were ordered "take Post somewhere in the Vicinity of Morristown", for their winter cantonment, it is unknown how they marched there from Trenton or when they arrived at Morristown. But it is fair to assume that the troops preceded the two New York Regiments and quite possible that they were housed in the old Pennsylvania Line huts at Mount Kemble.

## 12.5 Return March of the Continental Army: The New York Regiments

Samuel Tallmadge and his Second New York regiment had received 440 prisoners on 3 November, and began the march north at 5:00 a.m. the next day. By 11 November, they reached Fredericksburg, and delivered the prisoners "to an officer of the Virginia militia".<sup>538</sup> By 17 November they had reached Georgetown, and on Friday, 29 November camped at Christina Bridge in Delaware. The following day, 30 November, the troops completed their crossing of Delaware and camped at Marcus Hook in Pennsylvania.<sup>539</sup> On Saturday 1 December, the regiments continued their march through Chester and Darby and camped four

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<sup>535</sup> Tallmadge, *Journal*, p. 767.

<sup>536</sup> The ferry account is also in John Neilson, Papers ... kept as DQM for NJ, 1780-1782, Box 2, Account Book beginning Trenton, 25 Sept. 1780 to 4 October 1782. Special Collections, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, Ac 589.

<sup>537</sup> These were the troops of the Light Infantry and the artificers.

<sup>538</sup> Egly, *First New York*, p. 210.

<sup>539</sup> Tallmadge, *Journal*, p. 767.

miles north of Philadelphia near the Schuylkill River. 2 December was a rest day, but at 8:00 a.m. the units "marched, pass<sup>d</sup> through Philadelphia City, and Continued our march to Lower Dublon and Encamped."<sup>540</sup> The next day, 4 December, they "Marched at sunrise Crossed the Shammony Ferry, proceeded on and marched through Brister, and halted an hour, then Resumed our march again within two miles Trenton Ferry Delaware River and Encamped." This was their last encampment in Pennsylvania.

Finally on 5 December, two days after the New Jersey regiment had crossed, Hugh Runyan ferried "345 foot, 16 four-horse waggons 1 Chase 32 Saddle horses 4 Cattle (York State)" for £ 6 8/4 minus 8/9 for errors across the Delaware. That same day the Second New York Regiment of "520 men 14 four-horse teams, 12 riding horses" crossed at a cost to the public of "£ 3 5/ + £ 2 12/6d + 3/6."

In his *Revolutionary War Memoir*, Van Cortlandt partly confirmed this scenario when he remembered how he was in charge of the New York and New Jersey Brigades delivering 700 prisoners to the Virginia Militia in Fredericksburg. From there he continued his march to "Trenton in New Jersie where the troops of that State left me." Retracing the route they had taken only a few months earlier, the New York regiments marched through Princeton on 6 December. On 9 December, the units marched to a camp on Rockaway River north of Morristown where they waited out a snowstorm on 10 December. By the time Pompton was reached on 11 December, the columns stopped moving, "the snow being about Eight Inches Deep." For the next few days the regiments "lay by", but on 14 December, they "moved on to their Hutting Ground at Pequanneck." On 23 December, Tallmadge moved into his hut where he spent the rest of the winter remained and well into the summer of 1782 before they marched to Peekskill for the meeting with the French army in September. Colonel Van Cortlandt made his headquarters in the Curtis' Tavern, better known as Yellow House. Here he hosted General and Mrs. Washington who arrived at the tavern headquarters on Thursday, 28 March 1782, and remained there until Sunday morning when they set out for Newburgh via Ringwood.<sup>541</sup>

On 1 April 1782, Washington, who had spent the winter in Philadelphia, arrived at his headquarters in the Jonathan Hasbrouck House in Newburgh to await the outcome of peace negotiations in Paris.<sup>542</sup> Over the course of the summer the Continental Army gathered in its quarters in the Highlands. Here it remained until August 31, when it marched to a new encampment with "its right resting on Fort Verplank's Point or Fort Lafayette"<sup>543</sup> to wait for the French troops marching north from Virginia.

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<sup>540</sup> Tallmadge, *Journal*, pp. 767/768.

<sup>541</sup> Cortlandt, *Memoir*, p. 65.

<sup>542</sup> On 23 March 1782, "Genl Washington with coach and 7 waggons" crossed Runyan's ferry; the public was charged £1 10/. John Neilson, Papers ... kept as DQM for NJ, 1780-1782, Box 2, Account Book beginning Trenton, 25 Sept. 1780 to 4 October 1782. Special Collections, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, Ac 589.

<sup>543</sup> Lauberdière, *Journal*, fol. 190. The Continental Army encamped there until 28 October.

## THE PHILADELPHIA CONFERENCE AND CELEBRATIONS FOR THE BIRTH OF THE *DAUPHIN*, 14 TO 24 JULY 1782

To be sure, when the *duc* de Lauzun and William de Deux-Ponts arrived in Versailles with the news of victory at Yorktown, the court was excited and glad. But just a few days after Lord Cornwallis' troops had laid down their arms outside that small seaside town on the Chesapeake, a much more exciting event had occurred in the private quarters of Queen Marie Antoinette. The birth of Louis-Joseph-Xavier-François, the long-desired *dauphin* and heir to the throne of France on Monday, 22 October 1781, overshadowed the news from America.<sup>544</sup>

Known in Williamsburg by 10 January 1782, it was celebrated with a *Te Deum* and "a great fête" on 15 January.<sup>545</sup> American newspapers ignored the birth, and it was not until 9 March 1782, that the *Providence Gazette* reported it to its readers. There the affair rested until French minister Anne César, chevalier de la Luzerne, took up the birth as "a propitious occasion to reaffirm American loyalty to the alliance." Luzerne, according to Stinchcome, "carefully studied the needs of the alliance and attempted to arrange events accordingly. ... Symbolically, the celebrations of the birth offered Americans a chance to bid farewell to the French, to recognize the value of their aid and alliance. This remained implicit in the celebrations, at least thirty to forty of which were held throughout the summer of 1782. In newspaper coverage at least eighty, and probably closer to one hundred, articles appeared in American papers describing the celebrations. No other event during the Revolution, with the possible exception of the Silas Deane affair, received so much concentrated attention in the American press."<sup>546</sup>

On 13 May 1782, four months after it was known in America, Luzerne officially informed Congress of the birth of the dauphin. In his diary, the Rev. Pitman recorded that day: "Saw the fireworks in the State House Yard in Rejoice:g for a young Prince born to the French King." The following day, 14 May, the Office of Foreign Affairs in Philadelphia sent a circular to the chief executives of all states, informing them of the event. Signed by Robert

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<sup>544</sup> The dauphin born in 1781 must not be confused with his younger brother Louis-Charles, the "lost dauphin" of the French Revolution, who was born on 27 March 1785, and died on 20 Prairial of the Year III of the French Revolution, i.e., 8 June 1795.

Guy VIII, Count of Vienne, had a dolphin on his coat of arms and was thus called *le Dauphin*, French for dolphin. The title of Dauphin de Viennois descended in his family until 1349, when Humbert II sold his lands called the Dauphiné, to King Philippe VI on condition that the heir of France assumed the title of le Dauphin. The first French prince called le Dauphin was Charles, the future Charles V of France (1349–1364). The wife of the Dauphin was known as la Dauphine.

Dauphin County, established on 4 March 1785, was named in honor of the dauphin. "Harris's Ferry", located in Dauphin County, became Harrisburg in 1791 after a brief time as "Louisbourg".

<sup>545</sup> Acomb, *Closen*, p. 171.

<sup>546</sup> The only scholarly investigation of the celebrations in America is William C. Stinchcome, "Americans Celebrate the Birth of the Dauphin" in: *Diplomacy and Revolution. The Franco-American Alliance of 1778* Ronald Hoffman and Peter J. Albert, eds., (Charlottesville, 1981), pp. 39-72, the quote is on p. 56.

Livingston, the circular expressed the hope that the people of Pennsylvania would "partake in the joy [of] an event that so nearly affects the happiness of their great and generous Ally."<sup>547</sup>

Washington and the Continental Army wanted to "partake " in the joy as well and held a grand fête on 31 May. The congratulatory address by "the Commander in Chief; the Generals and Other Officers of the American Army on the Banks of the Hudson" to Luzerne of 5 June, expressed the official position of the army.

*Sir:*

*Amid the general expression of Joy, on the auspicious birth of a Dauphin, permit us, the Officers of the American Army, to offer more than a silent approbation of these Sentiments and Congratulations, which have been presented by Congress, the representative body and sovereign power of the United States, through you, to our great and illustrious Ally, on this happy event.*

*There are circumstances, Sir, which render that, which in a degree is pleasing to all, peculiarly so to some; The harmony and friendship which subsisted between the Troops of your August Sovereign and us, during the last Campaign (when the only contention lay in endeavours to exceed each other in acts of emulation, and brotherly kindness), give us this preeminence.*

*The Blood freely offered on both sides, and which was spilt in the same Trench, and often mixed in a common stream for the support of those rights which are interesting to the feelings of humanity, and the previledges of freemen; is such a cement to the friendship of the two Nations, as nothing, but a departure from the principles of the Union, which Heaven avert! can ever dissolve.*

*Not to participate then, in the general satisfaction occasioned by an event, which adds to the felicity of a Monarch who may be viewed in the same moment as the father of his own Nation and protector of the liberties of others; and which contributes so much to the happiness of a People, to whom we are Allied in interest and Affection, would be an argument of great insensibility on our part.*

*That divine Providence may shed its choicest blessings upon the King of France and his Royal Consorts, and favor them with a*

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<sup>547</sup> That Luzerne had been working behind the scenes is obvious from a letter by Rhode Island delegates Ellery and Cornell from Philadelphia, dated 7 May 1782, in which they inform Governor Greene of an impending public audience in which Luzerne was going to inform Congress of birth of the Dauphin. They concluded by expressing their hope that "We are sure the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations will not be backward in demonstrations of joy on this auspicious event."

*long, happy and glorious reign. that the Dauphin may live to inherit the virtues, and the Crown of his illustrious Progenitors; that he may reign over the hearts of a happy and generous people; and be among the happiest in his Kingdom; is our sincere and fervent wish.*

These sentiments were not shared by everyone in the army. Thomas Foster, a private in the 7th Massachusetts Regiment and a typical New Englander, still had not yet reconciled the past with the present. In his diary he wrote on 31 May:

*"We had a grand rejoicing on the birth of a young dauphin. A bower was built which would have cost as much as any meeting house in the state. A grand entertainment was made as ever was made in America and was graced by His Excellency General Washington at the head of the bower. Fired on the occasion 173 cannon. The whole army was paraded and fired 3 rounds at 7 o'clock which made a grand show and after that was the display of the fireworks which lasted till 12 o'clock and to end all was a sup of coffee when the illumination was put out and 3 cannon fired. Such a grand scene I never saw before and it was all for one little French pickaninny, a Roman Catholic. Oh strange this from what our forefathers fled from. Would they have done the like? No, by no means. We may now see what we have degenerated to and what I fear we are coming to, which behooves us to be on a strict watch and guard."*<sup>548</sup>

Free to celebrate the event whenever and in whatever form they wanted to, Pennsylvania decided to use the upcoming meeting between Washington and Rochambeau in mid-July to conduct a formal celebration. Coming from his headquarters in Newburgh, Washington arrived in the city on 14 July, the same day as Rochambeau, who was traveling north from Virginia. The time was long overdue to finalize plans for the campaign of 1782, if there was going to be one at all.

In anticipation of the campaign, Washington left Philadelphia on 22 March and traveled via Trenton, Morristown and Pompton to Newburgh, which he reached on 1 April. On 4 May, Baron Clostermann rode into his headquarters with dispatches from Williamsburg, which he had left but five days earlier on 29 April. Rochambeau wanted to know Washington's plans for the campaign, but the American had no concrete answer for him.

*"The Plans for the Campaign, depending so entirely upon the Succours which will be sent by his most Christian Majesty, I can do nothing more than form Opinions upon certain Hypothesis. If we should have a Naval Superiority and a Force sufficient to*

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<sup>548</sup> The diary spans May 1782 - June 1783. It is an unpublished manuscript in the collections of The Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.

*attempt N York, and you have not a secure Means of transporting your Troops by Water, for their greater Ease, to the Head of Elk, the Route you propose for their March by Land, is I am persuaded, the best that can be. It is to be feared that the manœuvre your Excellency proposes will hardly have its intended Effect, as it will be performed in so short a space, as to give no Time for its Operation before the Deception you propose would be disclosed."*

All that was certain was that the French troops were no longer needed in Virginia and would have to march to the northward. Washington suggested a face to face meeting, but left the timing of that meeting as well as of the departure of his forces from Virginia to Rochambeau.

*"If your March should take place before our intended Interview, the Time of its Commencement must be determined absolutely by your Excellency, in Consequence of Advice you shall receive from your Court and knowg the Epoch at which the Succours may be expected on this Coast; to delay it beyond this point, would waste the Campaign, and to commence at an earlier period, would disclose our plans and prepare the Enemy for our Approach."*

Without instructions from France, Rochambeau hesitated for a month before he inquired again of Washington on 8 June as to his plans. In his reply of 24 June, the Commander-In-Chief was again non-committal and once again suggested a personal meeting.

*"Your Idea of not moving the French Troops, in our present state of anxious uncertainty, is quite coincident with mine; but it is left entirely to your Judgment to maintain or alter that opinion as you may find necessary on further consideration, or from any good reasons, which may occur from further intelligence or Information you may receive."*

By the time he received Washington's response on 4 July at Hanover Town, Rochambeau had taken matters into his own hands and was on the march. At 1:00 p.m. that day, he informed Washington that "as we have come to the 1<sup>st</sup> of July without any plan of campaign being arrived or any of the officers whom I had sent to France being returned, and the season being very much advanced, it has been necessary to resolve upon some thing or another, from a mere guess of what might be done, and try to do for our best."

Besides not having received any instructions from France, there had been another reason, not mentioned in the correspondence, that had kept Rochambeau from moving: money.

On 4 June, Wadsworth' business partner Carter received this note from Chastellux:



*"M de Rochambeau has this instant been talking with me my dear Carter, I wait for you at his House, the Object is a March to the Northward, it will depend very much on you to effect it, come the Moment you Receive this Note."*

In a letter to Wadsworth the following day, Carter explained what Chastellux meant by "effect[ing] it": Rochambeau needed a loan from his supplier to cover his expenses for the march. Once the loan, to be repaid with the next shipment of funds from France, was arranged, Rochambeau was ready to depart.<sup>549</sup>

Rochambeau's letter of the 4<sup>th</sup> from Hanover reached Newburgh on 11 July.<sup>550</sup> Washington immediately informed General William Heath of his decision to travel to Philadelphia.

*Dear Sir:*

*I have this moment received a Letter from Count De Rochambeau (by one of His Aids in five days from Williamsburg) informing me that he is on his way to Philadelphia; that he will be there the 13th. or 14th, and wishes for an Interview with me, for this purpose I shall set out in the Morning very early, and have only to request your usual attention. I am etc.*

Before the conference could begin, however, the city was determined to have its celebrations for the birth of the dauphin. On 15 July, Hiltzheimer recorded that "Some fine fireworks were exhibited to-night, and several hundred lamps lit in the square opposite the French Minister's house, in honor of the birth of the Dauphin."<sup>551</sup> Within the house, festivities were much more elaborate. In a letter to his friend St. George Tucker of 24 July 1782, Virginia delegate Theodorick Bland described the festivities thus:

*Dr. Sr.*

*We have had a Splendid Entertainment on acct. of the Birth of the Dauphin given by the Minr. of France at which was present about seven Hundred of the Gentelest Gentn & Ladies that could be found, in this City & its Environs, a Magnificent building was erected on the occasion beautifully adorn'd with emblematic paintings, alluding to the occasion- grand illuminations were displayd, and fireworks playd off. A Supper was provided for the*

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<sup>549</sup> The correspondence and contract are in Wadsworth Papers, Box 133, CHS. The next shipment of funds, transported on the *l'Aigle* and *la Gloire*, almost fell into British hands and reached Rochambeau only when he was already in Crompond, today's Yorktown Heights.

<sup>550</sup> Washington must be talking about the letter Rochambeau wrote on 4 July from Hanover as no letter of 6 July from Williamsburg is in the Rochambeau Papers.

<sup>551</sup> Hiltzheimer, *Diary*, p. 50.

*whole company to Sup at once under a Beautiful Pavillion erected adjacent to the aforementioned Ball Room-which Ball room is upwards of Seventy feet long and supported by two ranges of beautiful Ionic Columns. The Gardens adjacent to the ministers Hotel were laid off in as good a taste as the extent of the ground wd. admit-universal Satisfaction, and good order prevaild among the Company within as well as the Spectators without. ... God Bless you all, Adieu*

Finally, on 19 July, Washington and Rochambeau sat down together for their forth and final strategy conference.<sup>552</sup> Rochambeau was accompanied by his *aide-de-camp* Axel von Fersen, who only left a very brief description of events in a letter to his father of 8 August 1782 to his father in Sweden.<sup>553</sup>

*"The last letter I had the honor to write you, my dear father, was of the 16<sup>th</sup> July, also from Philadelphia.<sup>554</sup> I was there with M de Rochambeau, who had appointed a rendezvous with General Washington to confer together on the operations of the campaign."*

General Washington was accompanied by his aide-de-camp Benjamin Walker: Rochambeau's statements in the minutes of the meeting in the Washington Papers are translations in the writing of Walker.

Though it is unknown is where the meeting took place in Philadelphia, the proceedings at the conference are familiar. As they had done before at Hartford in October 1780, in Wethersfield in May 1781, and at Dobbs Ferry exactly one year earlier on 19 July 1781, Washington wrote his queries in a column on the left side of a sheet of paper while Rochambeau wrote his answers in column form on the right.

*Philadelphia, July 19, 1782.*

*Having no data, upon which a plan of Campaign can be determined, I could only give opinions upon certain Hypothesis. These His Excellency Count De Rochambeau has had an oppertunity of examining, fully.*

*New York, in my judgment, has ever been, and ought to be, the primary object of our Arms. Ch[arle]s. Town, for certain political considerations (wch. I have stated at large) may come in as the second. But as the first will be very difficult, if at all practicable, without a decided Naval superiority; and the second morally impossible, unless our Siege artillery, Ordnance and other heavy*

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<sup>552</sup> Rochambeau's statements are translations in the writing of Benjamin Walker.

<sup>553</sup> Fersen, "Letters", p. 443.

<sup>554</sup> This letter unfortunately seems to have been lost.

*Stores, cou'd be transported by Water, we are reduced to the alternative of threatening New York, to prevent them from detaching; or, to Enterprise (upon the principles I have ennumerated in my statement of matters) an offensive operation, into the Bowels of Canada.*

*For either of these purposes, or indeed for the better, and more effectual cover of the Country, a junction of the two Armies on the No. River is necessary.*

*For these reasons it is, as the French Corps has already left their Cantoments, and proceeded to Maryland; and because Baltimore is not within supporting distance of York Town, and west point in Virginia. and too far from the Enemy's principal post of New York, to prevent detachments; that I have advised Count de Rochambeau to continue (by slow and easy movements) his March to the No. River.*

*It is for these reasons also, I readily assented to the propriety of removing the Artillery and Stores from York Town, and West point, and to the evacuation of those Posts.*

*I am perfectly in sentiment with Count de Rochambeau when he says, that our means must be competent to the end; or, that the Enterprise against Canada would recoil upon ourselves, and terminate in disgrace, perhaps in ruin.*

*I am also clear, that the attempt, upon my plan, must be as rapid as it is secret. In a word, that the annunciation, and the execution, should be in the same moment; or the enemy in that Country, would no longer be in a state of seperation; but be prepared to meet us with their whole force at one point. It was not my idea therefore, to announce this project till the moment of its execution. and if Count de Rochambeau had conceived himself at liberty to cooperate in this Expedition, there would have been no necessity for it. As he is not. the delay, consequent of his application to his Court, will, in all probability, plunge us too far into the cold season, and will deprive us of the advantages which I proposed from secrecy and a sudden manoeuvre.*

*If such an Expedition as this, had been the ultimate project, or denier resort of the Campaign, after our resources should have been unfolded, I should, in that case, have entreated Count de Rochambeau, and the Chevalier de la Luzerne, to have employed all their influence at the Court of France to obtain a Naval*

*superiority, that reinforcements of Men and Means to the enemy, might be cut off from them in the Spring.*

These thoughts were nothing new for Rochambeau: ever since they had first met at Hartford, Washington had advocated an attack on New York City, the center of British power in North America. In his replies to Washington's exposé, Rochambeau agreed that following their junction with the Americans on the North River the combined armies would be in a position to once again threaten New York, though without a navy this would remain little more than a threat.

As far as an attack the upper parts of Canada was concerned, Rochambeau cautioned that he would have to await authorization from the France before such an operation could commence, which would be in 1783 at the earliest. Such a campaign would also come extraordinarily dear - it would be expensive to maintain the French and American Armies in Canada. But in view of the many unknowns, first and foremost the lack of a naval force as it had been available in 1781, Rochambeau agreed with the proposal of a junction of the allied armies on the Hudson and the removal of the stores from Yorktown.<sup>555</sup>

In essence the two generals had called off the campaign. With the victory at Yorktown the relative importance of the theatres of war for France had shifted to the Caribbean and to India. For France, as well as for Britain, the war on the American mainland had become secondary. American independence by itself brought no material gain for France, conquests in the Caribbean and India would. This is also the impression that Fersen came away with from the meeting. In the letter to his father he wrote

*"As a result of this conference I was sent on the 19<sup>th</sup> to York, in Virginia, on a mission then secret but no longer so; this was to embark, as soon as possible, our siege artillery, which we had left at West Point, 8 leagues above York on the same river, and move it up the Chesapeake Bay to Baltimore. ... nothing is left us to do in this country but the siege of New York, and we are too weak for such an enterprise, which depends wholly on a naval superiority; this we have not. Admiral Rodney has look to that".*<sup>556</sup>

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<sup>555</sup> The meeting of the two generals hardly appears in the writings of the delegates to Congress. At best one finds a brief note such as this in a letter by James Madison to Edmund Randolph of 16 July: "Genl Washington & Ct. Rochambeau met here on Saturday evening. The object of their consultation is among the arcana of war." The Rhode Island delegates wrote to Governor Greene on 19 July: "His Excellency the Commander in Chief has been a week in this City, his journey to this place was in consequence of a previous appointment to meet the Count De Roshambau, their meeting was according to the appointment. Several Committees of Congress have had conferences with the General since he has been in this place on business of importance And we have the pleasure to assure you that we have every reason to suppose that the most perfect harmony subsists between him and Congress at this time his stay from the Army will be short."

<sup>556</sup> Fersen, "Letters," p. 443. He is referring to the Battle of the Saints of 12 April 1782, where de Grasse had been defeated and was taken prisoner.

Rochambeau left Philadelphia and on 28 July re-joined his troops, who were by now encamped in Baltimore.<sup>557</sup> Washington too left Philadelphia on 24 July to return to Newburgh. His expense account shows that from Philadelphia he first traveled to Pott's Grove, then Bethlehem, Bethlehem Ferry, Easton, Warwick, Robinson's Ferry, Moravian Mills (i.e. Hope, NJ), Johnsonsburg, Newton, Goshen to Newburgh.<sup>558</sup>

The "sincere and fervent wish" of the address by the Continental Army "that the Dauphin may live to inherit the virtues, and the Crown of his illustrious Progenitors" and "that he may reign over the hearts of a happy and generous people; and be among the happiest in his Kingdom" would not come true. The dauphin, baptized Louis-Joseph-Xavier-François, died not even eight years old on 4 June 1789. The kingdom of his father was in turmoil and shaken to its very foundation. On 20 June 1789, two weeks after the young dauphin's death, the *Estates Générales* pledged in the Oath of the Tennis Court that they would not disband until they had given France a constitution.

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<sup>557</sup> Acomb, *Closen*, p. 216.

<sup>558</sup> The expense account is available on-line in the Washington Papers of the Library of Congress.

"On July 25, 1782, General Washington and two aides without escort rode from Philadelphia to Bethlehem, where he passed the night. The next morning, escorted by the Moravian clergyman, John Etwein, he left Bethlehem, passing by way of Easton and to Hope." James P. Snell, *History of Sussex and Warren Counties, New Jersey: with illustrations and biographical sketches of its prominent men and pioneers*. (Philadelphia. Everts & Peck. 1881),

Moravian Mills was a grist mill built in 1769-70 and operated until 1951. The mill complex includes the miller's house, a blacksmith shop, and the wheelwright's house. In 1951, the mill was converted to a restaurant. The whole town of Hope is on the National Register of Historic Places.

## THE RETURN MARCH OF THE FRENCH ARMY, 29 AUGUST TO 6 SEPTEMBER 1782

### 14.1 The March of Rochambeau's Infantry

As they were about to enter winter quarters at the beginning of November, French forces in Virginia had the following strength.<sup>559</sup>

Regiment	Commanding Officer	Men
Bourbonnais	<i>marquis</i> de Montmorency-Laval	ca. 70 officers and 1,025 men, incl. 221 detached and 105 sick
Soissonnais	<i>comte</i> de Saint Maisme	ca. 70 officers and 1,044 men, incl. 28 detached and 68 sick
Saintonge	<i>comte</i> de Custine	ca. 70 officers and 1,030 men, incl. 47 detached and 69 sick
Royal Deux-Ponts	Christian <i>comte</i> de Deux-Ponts	ca. 70 officers and 1,029 men, incl. 218 detached and 129 sick
Auxonne Artillery	de la Tour	ca. 50 officers and 497 men, incl. 210 detached and 48 sick
Mineurs	Captain de Chazelles	1 officer and 22 men
Workers	de la Chaisse	1 officer and 26 men, incl. 17 detached
Lauzun's Legion	<i>duc</i> de Lauzun	Ca. 45 officers and 550 men, incl. 8 sick
Total:		Ca. 375 officers and 5,293 men, incl. 741 detached and 427 sick

The French forces spent the winter of 1781/82 in and around Williamsburg, which became the site of the Rochambeau's headquarters and his staff; Rochambeau moved into the Wythe House once Washington had departed from Williamsburg. It also provided quarters for the Bourbonnais regiment, seven companies of the Royal Deux-Ponts, and part of Auxonne artillery. Jamestown hosted the remaining three companies of the Royal Deux-Ponts. Yorktown was the site for the Soissonnais regiment, and the grenadiers and chasseurs of the Saintonge regiment; the remainder of the Saintonge was quartered at Halfway House (on the road from Yorktown to Hampton and Back River). This regiment relocated to Hampton in February 1782, when the Lauzun's Legion vacated Hampton for Charlotte Court House. Hampton had been the camp of Lauzun's

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<sup>559</sup> The total strength of Rochambeau's forces at the beginning of the siege in September 1781, was somewhat larger once losses incurred during the siege, ca. 75 officers and men, and about 75 staff officers, aides-de-camp, officers serving *à la suite*, and support personnel are added to the total presented here.

Inspection reports for 9-12 November 1781, in Fonds Vioménil. Académie François Bourdon, Le Creusot, France. The strength for Lauzun's Legion, stationed in Gloucester, is taken from a review of 1 October 1781 in Colonies D2c32, Archives Nationales, Paris, France.

It is unknown where the 741 detached men were stationed or what duties they performed.

Legion until at the request of General Greene, the Legion relocated to the North Carolina border. At the time Choisy commanded the Legion, since the *duc de Lauzun* had departed for France with news of the victory at Yorktown. The Legion remained in the vicinity of Charlotte Courthouse, Virginia, until June 1782, when it returned north, staying briefly at Petersburg before marching with the French Army back to New York and Boston.<sup>560</sup> Gloucester was the site for a detachment of 50 men and an artillery company and there were several other scattered camps for outposts and to establish courier services. There were several scattered, isolated camps for outposts and to establish courier services, e.g., between New Kent CH, New Castle [near present Old Church], and Lynch's Tavern.

Ten months after their arrival, on July 1, 1782, Rochambeau's forces broke camp and began their return march. Organization, schedule, and campsites were almost identical to that of the previous year though this time the troops marched the whole distance rather than cover parts of the route by boat. Until Fredericksburg was reached, the infantry marched again in four divisions a day apart; thereafter they marched in brigades:

- 1) The Bourbonnais under the command of the chevalier de Chastellux
- 2) The Royal Deux-Ponts under comte Christian de Deux-Ponts
- 3) The Soissonnais under the vicomte de Vioménil
- 4) The Saintonge under the comte de Custine.<sup>561</sup>

This time, the siege artillery and 150 men of the Auxonne artillery remained at West Point, Virginia, as did 400 men, 100 each from each regiment, as a garrison at Yorktown and the sick. Because of the excessive July heat, the troops frequently began their march at 1:00 a.m., marching through the night.

The first camp was at Drinking Spring from 1-4 July (present vicinity of Norge); the 2<sup>nd</sup> was about two miles south of current Barhamsville, the 3<sup>rd</sup> at "Rarcliffe House," an uncertain location between modern Barhamsville and New Kent. Camp 4 from 4-7 July was at "Hartfield", a location believed to have existed about 3 miles northwest of New Kent Court House. The next camp was at New Castle, 5-9 July, where each division had an extra rest day, so two divisions shared the camp on 6, 7, and 8 July. The community has disappeared. It is believed to have been about a mile east of the modern bridge over the Pamunkey River on US 360. The next stop was Hanover town, which is also no longer on modern maps (about 10 miles southeast of Hanover Court House). On 8 July the First Division reached Little Page's Bridge, also known as Graham's House, near

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<sup>560</sup> The only eyewitness account of Lauzun's Legion in the American War is the journal kept by its Lieutenant-Colonel Hugau and edited by Massoni. On the stay at Charlotte Court House see Timothy S. Ailsworth et al., *Charlotte County. Rich Indeed* (Charlotte County, 1979), pp. 118-122.

<sup>561</sup> Maps of the campsites and itineraries, where they vary from the 1781 march, can be found in Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 2. The route of the return march was identical with the route taken by the wagon train in 1781.

Hanover Court House, on the north bank of the Pamunkey. Here Lauzun's Legion joined the army and assumed the vanguard position in the march.

Burk's Bridge, also known as Kenner's Tavern, camp 8, was located to the north of the Mattaponi river, most likely in line with the present US 301. Bowling Green, 10-13 July, Charles Thornton's House, 11-14 July, about 2 miles south of present day Villboro, on State Route 2, Falmouth, on the north bank of the Rappahannock River, Payton's Tavern or Payton's Ordinary, a few miles north of present day Stafford on US 1, were the next stops before Dumfries, where French troops camped on 15-18 July on the north bank of the Quantico Creek, near modern US 1. Next came Colchester, from where some French officers, such as Lauberdière, visited Mount Vernon to meet Martha Washington.<sup>562</sup> Alexandria, 17-20 July 1781, was the final camp of the march north in Virginia.

On 24 August, the First Division, i.e., the infantry regiment Bourbonnais, departed Baltimore for White Marsh Forge, then came the camp at Lower Ferry and camp 24 at Head of Elk. Coming from Head of Elk, the First Brigade of the French forces camped on 29 August near Newport and was followed by the Second Brigade on 30 August. Without stopping again in Delaware, the French forces crossed over into Pennsylvania from 29 August to 3 September 1781.

The First Brigade entered its Camp 26 at Chester in Pennsylvania on 30 August. On the 31<sup>st</sup>, the Bourbonnais approached Philadelphia, followed by the Royal Deux-Ponts on 1 September. Once again, French forces marched through the city in their full splendor on 2 and 3 September and camped to the north of the city. Almost exactly a year to the day that they had left New Jersey, French forces reached the Red Lion Inn for the night of 4/5 September. On 30 August, the Pennsylvania Council had prepared for an unproblematic crossing over to Trenton when it instructed Colonel Clement Biddle, QMG of the state, to "provide a Sufficient number of boats to transport the French Army under Count Rochambeau over the River Delaware - and owners of the several ferries on the said river and all other persons are required to give every necessary assistance on the above occasion." Following the crossing into New Jersey Rochambeau's troops rested in Trenton on 5 and 6 September.<sup>563</sup>

Observations by French officers and enlisted men on the return march from Virginia are much shorter and far fewer than for the 1781 march. Typical are entries such as this by Blanchard (p. 173): "On the 2d, encampment at Chester, a small borough situated on the Delaware, fifteen miles from Philadelphia and in Pennsylvania. ... on the 3d we were at Philadelphia. M. de la Luzerne, who was still there as ambassador of France, offered me a lodging at his house, which I

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<sup>562</sup> See Lauberdière's description of the visit in my "America the Ungrateful: The Not-So-Fond Remembrances of Louis François Dupont d'Aubevoye, comte de Lauberdière" *American Heritage* Vol. 48, No. 1, (February 1997), pp. 101-106.

<sup>563</sup> Pennsylvania Revolutionary Council Minute Book for 30 August 1782, p. 328, RG 27, microfilm reel 691, Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg.



accepted; I remained there until the 5<sup>th</sup>." Only Verger, who had sailed to Virginia in August 1781 with the artillery and who had not been to Pennsylvania before, provides more detailed descriptions.<sup>564</sup>

New Jersey was crossed quickly following the same route the French forces had taken the previous year and the New York State Line was reached on 13 September where the First Brigade of the French forces camped in Suffern. With that, the French forces were back at the New York State line from where they had begun their march to victory almost exactly 11 months earlier. On 13 September the First Brigade crossed into New York and encamped in Suffern (on the east side of Washington Avenue. Following the route (in reverse) it had taken the previous year, it marched the next day through Kakiat to Haverstraw, its 36<sup>th</sup> camp, where it rested for the next three days from September 14 to 16, at the same spot it had camped in August 1781. Rochambeau established his headquarters in the Smith House.<sup>565</sup> The Second Brigade camped for two days, September 15 and 16, a bit further south along Railroad Avenue in West Haverstraw. On the 16<sup>th</sup>, Rochambeau crossed the river to inspect the camp laid out to the left of the Americans with the Saintonge forming the far left of the allied camp along the road to Yorktown Heights.<sup>566</sup> As Rochambeau's forces crossed the Hudson a review on 17 September showed this strength:<sup>567</sup>

REGIMENT	PRESENT OFFICERS AND MEN	ABSENTEES	TOTAL
Bourbonnais	758	214	972
Soissonnais	768	228	996
Saintonge	799	195	994
Royal Deux-Ponts	798	172	970
Auxonne Artillery	312	190	502
Mineurs	0	22	22
Ouvriers	476	80	556
	3,911	1,101	5,012

Once across, the troops marched past the Continental Army encamped close to the ferry landing via King's Ferry Road and the Albany Post Road to camp 37 of the return march, which was on the same spot where the Continental Army had

<sup>564</sup> These descriptions are enclosed as photocopies following this page.

<sup>565</sup> Acomb, *Closen*, p. 239.

<sup>566</sup> "General headquarters was established at Peekskill Landing: the ovens for supplying the army were also built there. The administration and hospitals were housed in Peekskill Meeting-house." Ibid., p. 241.

<sup>567</sup> These data are based on Keim, *Commemoration*. 477 of the absentees were on special assignments and 631 were in hospitals. Rochambeau's troop contingent is about 1,000 men larger than on the march south, when the army had stood at about 3,400 officers and men. Since neither the siege artillery, the sick, nor Lauzun's Legion made the march to Boston, Rochambeau left Crompond with about 3,700 men.

encamped in July 1781 on its way to the Philipsburg encampment.<sup>568</sup> From 17 to 23 September 1782, the French forces, with Lauzun's Legion nearest the Hudson, occupied the hills along the north side of Crompond Road between Washington Street and Lafayette Avenue.<sup>569</sup>

On the other side of the river, according to Clermont-Crèvecœur, "we found 8,000 of the American army. Now they were all uniformed and well groomed. We were struck with the transformation of this army into one that was in no way inferior to ours in appearance. Their officers too were well turned out."<sup>570</sup> Verger described the American camp thus: "The whole color-line of the American camp was bordered by a very beautiful arbor, decorated with various designs and coats of arms (which were very well executed) representing the different regiments. The American soldiers do not stack their arms in piles like ours but simply lean them against three posts set up in the form of a scaffold before their tents, which they erect on one line. From there we marched 4 miles to our camp at Peekskill. This was on top of an arid mountain surrounded by wilderness."<sup>571</sup>

On the 20<sup>th</sup> the French army passed in review before General Washington, and then, on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Clermont-Crèvecœur and his fellow officers "went to watch the maneuvers of the American army and were truly impressed. This proves what money and good officers can do to make good soldiers."<sup>572</sup> Dr. Thatcher described the scene thus: "The whole army was paraded under arms this morning in order to honor his Excellency Count Rochambeau on his arrival from the southward. The troops were all formed in two lines, extending from the ferry, where the count crossed, to headquarters. A troop of horse met and received him at King's ferry, and conducted him through the line to General Washington's quarters, where, sitting on his horse by the side of his excellency, the whole army marched before him, and paid the usual salute and honors. Our troops were now in complete uniform, and exhibited every mark of soldierly discipline. Count Rochambeau was most highly gratified to perceive the very great improvement, which our army had made in appearance since he last reviewed them, and expressed his astonishment at their rapid progress in military skill and discipline. He said to General Washington, "You have formed an alliance with the King of Prussia. These troops are Prussians." Several of the principal officers of the French army, who have seen troops of different European nations, have bestowed

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<sup>568</sup> Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 2, p. 186, based on a note written on a map of the Peekskill camp drawn by Rochambeau's aide-de-camp Cromot du Bourg.

<sup>569</sup> See John Curran, *The Attack at Peekskill by the British in 1777* (Peekskill, 1998), pp. 91-93, and Chester A. Smith, *Peekskill, A Friendly Town: Its Historic Sites and Shrines: A Pictorial History of the City from 1654 to 1952* (Peekskill, 1952), pp. 46, 125, and 148.

<sup>570</sup> Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, p. 78. Lauberdière estimated the distance between the French camps in Stony Point and Peekskill at 7 miles.

<sup>571</sup> Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 165, with more descriptions of the American camp.

<sup>572</sup> Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 78. These reviews took place on Washington Hill on land behind St. Mary's Cemetery.

the highest encomiums and applause on our army, and declared that they had seen none superior to the Americans."<sup>573</sup>

On September 22, the day of the review, the *duc* de Lauzun, the *comte* de Ségur, son of the war minister, together with a large group of French officers returned from France with orders from court.<sup>574</sup> Before the two armies parted, Washington had the opportunity to decorate a number of French officers. Ségur had brought a number of crosses of the Order of St. Louis. Rochambeau asked Washington to do the honors and the American gladly attached the insignia of the military order to chests of the French officers.<sup>575</sup>

Once the two allies had completed their farewells, the French troops departed on the 24<sup>th</sup> of September "in a single column" for an eight-mile march to Crompond/Yorktown Heights where they entered their 38<sup>th</sup> camp of the march from Virginia around Hunt's Tavern, where they would remain until October 22. Lauzun's Legion encamped on a hill about 2 to 3 miles to the south near Hanover Farms from where it could patrol the Croton and the crossing at Pines Bridge.<sup>576</sup>

Following this one-month rest at Crompond, Rochambeau regrouped his troops into brigades for the impending march. His instructions indicated that in case the British were to evacuate either Charleston or New York, he was to take the army to Santo Domingo to await further orders. While a British evacuation of New York was remote, the evacuation of Charleston seemed imminent and eventually took place in December.

On 22 October, the First Brigade, consisting of the Bourbonnais and Royal Deux-Ponts, broke camp and began the march through Connecticut to Boston. On 29<sup>th</sup>, the First Brigade arrived in East Hartford and was joined by the Second Brigade the next day.

In East Hartford, Rochambeau announced to the troops that they were to march to Boston and embark for the West Indies while he would return to France. To accelerate the march "the artillery obtained permission to march, from now on, one day in advance of the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, for convenience, and set out early on its way" on 30 October. On 10 November the First Brigade reached Providence, and on 6 December, the French forces marched into Boston. In the morning of the 24<sup>th</sup>, Christmas Day, the French fleet raised anchor to sail to the West Indies, where news of the signing of the Preliminaries of Peace on 30 November 1782 reached the troops in mid-February 1783. In mid-April the troops sailed back to France, where they arrived in late June.

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<sup>573</sup> Thacher, *Journal*, p. 322. See also Verger's description in Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 2, p. 166 and note 154. The Continental Army was between 5,500 and 6,000 men strong at the time.

<sup>574</sup> They had sailed on the *Aigle* and the *Gloire*, which were pursued into the Delaware Bay by the British. Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, vol. 1, pp. 79/80.

<sup>575</sup> Lauberdière, *Journal*, fol. 194.

<sup>576</sup> Acomb, *Closen*, p. 243.

## 14.2 The March of Lauzun's Legion

Having been sent to Charlotte Court House on the North Carolina State Line in February 1782, Lauzun's Legion joined up with Rochambeau's infantry at Petersburg. Thereafter it formed the advance of Rochambeau's forces, the first of five divisions into which Rochambeau had divided his troops, through Maryland, Delaware and Pennsylvania to the river crossing at Trenton. Once the Legion was across, however, and the French army was getting closer to New York City, it took over its usual role was covering the (right) flank of the French army. Reconstructing its route, however, is difficult in the absence of an eyewitness account or route description. Lauzun was still in France, and few French officers devoted much space to the movements of the Legion in their accounts, and Dumas is already an exception to the rule when he even mentions the Legion in his *Memoirs* after the crossing of the Delaware. "The cavalry of the legion of Lauzun, commanded by Count Robert de Dillon, covered our right flank at the back of the eminences at the foot of which we marched."<sup>577</sup> On 29 August, the Legion camped in Chester, reached Philadelphia on 30 August and had a rest day on the 31<sup>st</sup>. The Red Lion Inn was reached on 1 September, and on 2 September the Legion arrived in Trenton.<sup>578</sup> The following day, the Legion, still following in reverse the route French forces had taken the previous year, "proceeded 3 miles beyond Princeton, to a place named Kingston, where it where it took up a position beyond the Millstone River, on a height overlooking the Brunswick Road."<sup>579</sup> Along the way it established posts at New Market, i.e., Quibbletown, and Rocky Hill. The legion remained in Kingston until 7 September, when it marched to Brunswick, where it camped behind a bridge across the Raritan River.<sup>580</sup> From there it marched to Scotch Plains on 8 September, and to Chatham on the 9<sup>th</sup>. Baron Closen, who had accompanied Rochambeau to Chatham to see Greene's positions as well, still "found the legion encamped" in Chatham on 11 September. During the night of 12/13 September, the Legion received orders to advance 8 miles to Paramus, where it camped on 12 September. Marching north from Paramus the Legion possibly took up a post near Kakeat (i.e., New Hampstead) on 13 September, where it acted as the rear-guard of the army. It remained in Kakeat until 18 September when it rode to Stony Point to crossed the river late that day.<sup>581</sup> From there it was on to the month-long camp at Crompond, modern-day Yorktown Heights.

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<sup>577</sup> Dumas, *Memoirs*, p. 78.

<sup>578</sup> See the photocopy of the route from the Vioménil Papers on the next page. No information on the campsites exists since the Legion is not included on the itineraries and campsite maps published in Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, vol. 2.

<sup>579</sup> Acomb, *Closen*, p. 234. See also Massoni, *Details*, p. 185.

<sup>580</sup> In his brief account of the return march dated "Camp de Pines Bridge, sur le Croton, 12 27 7bre 1782", Hugau wrote that the Legion camped "en arrière d'un pont qui est sur la rivierre Raritan," i.e., behind a pond that is on the Raritan River." The account is published in Massoni, *Details*, pp. 219-227, the quote on p. 223.

<sup>581</sup> Massoni, *Details*, p. 224.

## THE MARCH OF THE PASSENGERS OF THE L'AIGLE AND LA GLOIRE TO PHILADELPHIA, SEPTEMBER 1782

Charged with bringing the news of the Yorktown victory to France, the *duc* de Lauzun had left Yorktown on the frigate *Surveillante* on 24 October 1781, and anchored in Brest on the evening of 19 November 1781. Count William de Deux-Ponts, who sailed from Virginia on the frigate *Amazon* on 1 November, reached France even faster after a 20-day crossing. In February 1782, the baron de Vioménil, Rochambeau's second in command, also sailed for France with a list of needed supplies and a request for instructions for 1782. While Rochambeau was waiting impatiently to hear from Versailles, it was not until late April 1782 before War Minister Ségur handed Vioménil his instructions for Rochambeau. If the British should evacuate either New York or Charleston, he was to embark his troops on the ships of the marquis de Vaudreuil and sail for Santo Domingo. From there he was authorized to hand his command over to Vioménil and return home.

Unbeknownst to Ségur or Vioménil, the instructions Vioménil took with him to America when he set sail from Brest on the frigate *Gloire* on 19 Mai had already been surpassed by events in the Caribbean. Without instructions from France, yet realizing that the disastrous defeat of Admiral de Grasse in the Battle of the Saints on 12 April had voided whatever instructions he might receive from Versailles for the 1782 campaign, Rochambeau began his march to the north in July 1782. Still without a word from France, Rochambeau set up camp on 23 September in Crompond, today's Yorktown Heights. Three days later Vioménil finally rode into camp.<sup>582</sup>

From the very start Vioménil's journey had not stood under a good star. On 19 May, the *Gloire*, a frigate of 26 cannon launched at St. Malo in July 1778 and commanded by the chevalier de Vallongue, sailed from Brest, but violent storm forced her into the harbor of Paimbœuf near Nantes for repairs.<sup>583</sup> While in harbor she received orders to sail for La Rochelle to meet up with the 40-gun frigate *l'Aigle*. Commanded by the *chevalier* de la Touche, a crew of 750 and "near three hundred Tons burthen more than the *Warwick*," the *l'Aigle* was "the largest Frigate ever built."<sup>584</sup> Deep in the bowels of each the two ships were casks containing

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<sup>582</sup> See Scott, *Yorktown to Valmy*, pp. 96-99, Kennett, *French Forces*, pp. 158-162, and René Georges Pichon, *Contribution à l'Étude de la Participation Militaire de la France à la Guerre d'Indépendance des États-Unis 1778-1783* Thèse pour le Doctorat du Troisième Cycle (Paris, 1976), pp. 599-600.

<sup>583</sup> Dull, *French Navy*, p. 357, lists the *Gloire* with 26 guns; Broglie and Feilding give her 32 guns. See William Feilding to Basil Feilding, Earl of Denbigh, 8 October 1782, in: Marion Balderston and David Syrett, *The Lost War: Letters from British officers during the American Revolution* (New York, 1975), p. 220. Feilding was the captain of the 50-gun *Warwick*, which participated in the capture of the *l'Aigle*.

<sup>584</sup> Feilding, p. 221. The *l'Aigle* had only been purchased in March 1782. Dull, *French Navy*, p. 357.

between 1.2 million and 1.3 million livres in cash destined for Rochambeau. On 22 June, the *Gloire* anchored in La Rochelle, and on 15 July the two frigates finally left port. Two days out at sea, the *l'Aigle* collided with the frigate *Cérès*, which was escorting a convoy of merchant ships and sustained considerable damage.<sup>585</sup>

A full three weeks later, the two frigates reached the Azores, where they put in for three days on 5 August to replenish their supplies and give their sick time to recover.<sup>586</sup> On the night of 4/5 September, the two frigates fell in with the 74-gun ship *Hector*, a French ship of the line which had been taken by the British in the Battle of the Saints. They were badly damaged in the unequal contest and lost 12-15 dead and some 20 wounded.<sup>587</sup> The lookout had just sighted the coast of Delaware around 6:00 a.m. on 11 September, when they noticed a British squadron on the horizon. When a small British corvette leaving Delaware Bay mistook them for British vessels and ventured too close, de la Touche gave chase and took the prize. The capture of the *Racoon*, which took over two hours, was the "cause of our misfortune. We lost time."<sup>588</sup> Later that day, four months after the *Gloire* had first attempted to clear the coast of France, the frigates approached Delaware Bay. But the wind had changed and they were forced to anchor between Capes May and James to await a favorable wind before entering.

Later that evening, de la Touche sent a boat ashore to pick up pilots for the passage. Due to the strong winds and choppy seas, the boat capsized and most of the sailors drowned. The survivors returned to their ship without a pilot. At daybreak of 12 September, French lookouts saw the British squadron consisting of the *Lyon* of 64 guns, the *Centurion* of 50 guns, the *Warwick*, another 50-gun ship, two frigates, i.e., the *Vestel* of 28 guns and the *Bonetta*, and two smaller vessels bearing down on them. It stood under the command of George Keith Elphinstone, who had Prince William, third son of George III, as a midshipman on his flagship *Centurion*.<sup>589</sup>

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<sup>585</sup> Ségur, *Mémoires* Vol. 1, pp. 302.

<sup>586</sup> For an account of the stay on the Azores see Ségur, *Mémoires*, Vol. 1, pp. 284-302. The fault for this long journey to the Azores lay with de la Touche. Hopelessly in love yet unable to board his mistress on the *l'Aigle* (it was against navy regulations to have women on frigates) she had embarked on a merchant vessel following *l'Aigle*. As the vessel was much slower than the frigate, de la Touche took her in tow. Realizing the impossibility of towing her all the way across the ocean, he abandoned her in the Azores, from where the two ships took separate routes. Finding more favorable winds than the *l'Aigle*, the merchant reached the Delaware the same day as the frigates and was captured, with de la Touche's mistress, by Elphinstone.

<sup>587</sup> Montesquieu numbered the losses at 20 or 25 dead. Beuve, "Montesquieu," p. 260.

<sup>588</sup> Beuve, "Montesquieu," p. 259. Ségur called it "a delay that proved fatal to us."

The corvette was the *Racoon* of 14 guns. Built in 1780, she was commanded by Lieut. Edmund Nagle. With the capture of the *l'Aigle*, the crew returned to British service, but the *Racoon* made it safely to Philadelphia with the *Gloire*.

<sup>589</sup> The list of Elphinstone's squadron is taken from Feilding, p. 220. Ségur listed one ship of 64, one of 50, two frigates and two other ships. Montesquieu counted twelve sails, a report in the *Pennsylvania Packet* of 19 September claims that eight British ships were involved.

Born in 1765, Prince William became King of England as William IV in 1830.

Still without pilots, de la Touche and de Vallongue immediately cut their cables and headed up the bay. They ended up in the wrong channel and the larger *l'Aigle* struck ground repeatedly. As Elphinstone was gaining ground, de la Touche prepared for battle. When Elphinstone's larger ships touched bottom too, he suspended the chase. This gave the French time to procure two pilots, but their assessment of the situation spelled doom for the *l'Aigle*.<sup>590</sup> Within a short distance the river would become impassable. There was no hope that the *l'Aigle* would reach Philadelphia, but the smaller *Gloire* might be able to slip over the sandbanks. Vioménil called a council of war on board the *l'Aigle* around 3:00 p.m. It decided that the infantry officers should debark immediately and try to procure boats and wagons. Under cover of darkness the sailors would transport the casks containing the 2.5 million livres in cash for Rochambeau's army ashore and hand them over to the officers. The naval officers and ship crews would remain on board their frigates and fight.

Around 6:00 p.m. on 13 September, Broglie set foot on American soil "without servants, without coats, and with the lightest baggage imaginable." He and Vioménil found lodging with a "gentleman called Mandlaw" where Vioménil decided to put up his quarters.<sup>591</sup> Ségur and Lameth "together with the other passengers of *la Gloire*, set out with a negro guide to seek and to detain some boats." After about two hours they arrived "at the tavern of an American, named Pedikies, a short distance from the little river," who assisted them rather reluctantly. Only after numerous bribes could Ségur "induce the masters of several boats to execute our project" of transporting the money casks and personal belongings of the officers on shore. "They directly set out upon being paid, and descended the river; when the sight of the English frigates alarmed them, and they either would not, or could not fulfill their promises."<sup>592</sup>

In the meantime Broglie and Montesquieu scoured the countryside for wagons to transport the money. Some 12 miles from "Mandlaw" Broglie encountered "*Outh's Tavern*." Here he managed to hire three wagons drawn by four horses each and a horse for himself and at 4:00 a.m. set out for Mandlaw's place. Along the way he encountered Lauzun, who informed him that about half of the money had already been brought ashore and put on a wagon obtained by Vioménil when two boats filled with about 100 "réfugiés" had appeared. Unable to transport the rest of the casks to shore, Vioménil had thrown them into the bay and set out for Dover, which lay about 17 miles away. Broglie paid off his wagons and together with Lauzun set off to look for Vioménil.

By early morning of 14 September, Ségur, Laval, Lauzun, Talleyrand and the officers who had joined up them were about half-way to Dover when they

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<sup>590</sup> William West, the pilot on the *Gloire*, received a certificate praising his services. A copy made from the original in the French Navy Archives is in the Mustard Collection Box 3 Folder 22, HSD.

<sup>591</sup> This account is based on Broglie, "Journal," p. 29ff. Mandlaw told Ségur "that we were in a small division of the state of Maryland." Ségur, *Memoirs and Recollections*, p. 313.

<sup>592</sup> Ségur, *Memoirs and Recollections*, p. 314.

encountered Vioménil's wagons which were escorted by Broglie, Vioménil's aide-de-camp Joseph Friedrich *Freiherr* von Brentano, a few soldiers and Broglie's American guide. They informed them that since the British as well as the refugees had disappeared, Vioménil had decided to return to the bay and to retrieve the seventeen casks containing approximately 500,000 livres from the water. Ségur, Lauzun, who was sick with fever, and Broglie were instructed to escort the almost two million livres to Dover where they were to await Vioménil's return. They reached the city "at three in the afternoon" and took quarters in Elizabeth Battle's tavern, where Vioménil joined them at around 11:00 p.m. on 14 September. Fortunately "he had succeeded in saving the rest of our millions."<sup>593</sup>

The *l'Aigle*, however, was lost. As predicted by her pilots, the *l'Aigle* had run aground in the evening of 14 September. Facing superior British firepower and unable to escape, de la Touche cut down her masts and tried to scuttle her in five different places but was unsuccessful: stuck on a sandbank, she could not sink any further. De la Touche, and his crew, about 630 men in all, were taken prisoners. The following day British sailors had patched up the frigate enough to tow her out to sea.<sup>594</sup> The passengers on the *l'Aigle* had lost everything, or almost everything: Ségur was left with but four servants and "twelve or thirteen trunks."<sup>595</sup>

Ségur, Broglie, Lauzun, Vioménil and the officers spent the night of 14 to 15 September in Dover. Ordered by Vioménil to take the dispatches from Versailles to La Luzerne in Philadelphia, Broglie and Ségur departed from Dover on 15 September. Before he could depart from Dover, Vioménil felt obliged to inquire of the fate of the *l'Aigle* and her captain and crew. On 15 September he sent a flag and a letter to Commodore Elphinstone inquiring about the condition of de la Touche, of de la Touche's younger brother, and of a Naval officer named du Quesne and requested that Elphinstone would "honor them" with all the attention they had earned "by their gallantry and their zeal for the king's service." In return he assured the Englishman that "all the attentions Mr. de la Touche will meet with in his present situation, will be looked upon by us as if they were personal to every one of us; and I beg your excellency may be persuaded, that we shall remember them forever with the warmest acknowledgments." And while he was on the subject, he asked, that "If you find no inconveniency to return to the officers, who were passengers in this frigate, all the servants belonging to them, you will render them a service they will never forget."

Elphinstone obliged immediately and in a letter of the same day assured Vioménil that he had "studied to render the situation of that brave and distinguished officer as comfortable as the confusion of my situation would permit." Elphinstone apologized that "much will be lost" of the personal effects of

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<sup>593</sup> Broglie, "Journal," p. 34.

<sup>594</sup> Feilding, p. 221. Feilding claimed that "we got the Ship off & have brought her safe to New York." On 14 April 1783 he wrote that "the *L'Aigle* Frigate ... is gone to Antigua, she having sprung all her Masts in a gale of wind of Bermuda." Ibid., p. 225, but there is no record that she ever entered British service.

<sup>595</sup> Ségur, *Mémoires* Vol. 1, p. 376. Vioménil estimated his losses at 20,000 écus or 120,000 livres.



the passengers even though "my orders have been express to save every thing for the owners." The *l'Aigle* had been plundered by its crew and one suspects by some of his men as well, though Elphinstone put it much more diplomatically. The losses were "owing to the great number of men on board, and their being of different nations, left the whole night by themselves, as my men were all employed to save our frigates, which were both aground; since which time a variety of things have been thrown over-board in attempting to get off *l'Aigle*."

In the ultimate but fully expected courtesy of eighteenth-century warfare amongst civilized nations, Elphinstone informed Vioménil that "M. De la Touche, M. Son frere, and mons. Du Quesne have their paroles; and the necessity of getting upon my station prevents me from permitting all the other officers to depart on the same terms."<sup>596</sup>

Having met his obligations to de la Touche, the rest of the officers too departed from Dover for Philadelphia. Dominique Sheldon's expense account in the Vioménil Papers traces the route in great detail.<sup>597</sup> The first day's journey went only from Dover to "Duck Creek," modern-day Smyrna. Expenses for dinner and lodging ("souper, coucher") and firewood for the first night amounted to 149 livres. Lunch at Cantwell's Bridge, modern-day Odessa, cost 90 livres and was followed by dinner and lodging from 16 to 17 September in Christiana. Including drink for the militia, the bill ran to 150 livres, almost nine months wages for a common soldier. Then came lunch in Wilmington for "tout le monde," the "whole world," at 155 livres, and supper, again for "tout le monde" in Chester.<sup>598</sup>

As they traveled from Chester toward Philadelphia the next day, they saw Luzerne waits for them on the road.<sup>599</sup> The French minister had good reason to be as polite as possible to the approaching party. Vioménil was accompanied by a veritable "Who's Who" of the French court nobility the likes of which Philadelphia had never seen before and would not see again. The victory at Yorktown had taken pro-American sentiments in Versailles to new heights. Everyone wanted to see the New World. Vioménil's entourage of twenty-nine officers not only included his 15-year-old son Charles Gabriel, but also the duc de Lauzun, who had wanted to return to America,<sup>600</sup> and Anne Alexandre de Montmorency, marquis de Laval, the former colonel of the Bourbonnais who returned as a brigadier. There was Charles Louis Victor prince de Broglie, the 26-year-old son of the maréchal de Broglie and new colonel-en-second of the Saintonge.<sup>601</sup> Broglie's travel companion was 29-nine-year-old Louis-Philippe

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<sup>596</sup> The correspondence is printed in the *Pennsylvania Packet* of 21 September 1782. Despite Elphinstone's assurance of a parole, de la Touche was not released.

<sup>597</sup> The expense account reproduced on the following page is in the Vioménil Papers.

<sup>598</sup> Unfortunately it is unknown in which tavern the feast took place.

<sup>599</sup> Ségur, *Mémoires ou Souvenirs*, p. 329.

<sup>600</sup> Lauzun's account of the journey is in Pilon, *Memoirs*, pp. 214-218.

<sup>601</sup> Broglie's account of the journey is printed in "Journal du Voyage du Prince de Broglie colonel-en-second du Régiment de Saintonge aux États-Unis d'Amérique et dans l'Amérique du Sud 1782-

comte de Ségur, son of the war Minister and recently appointed colonel-en-second of the Soissonnais.<sup>602</sup> Also in the party were Charles-Louis baron de Secondat de Montesquieu, the 32-year-old grandson of the famous philosopher who became colonel-en-second of the Bourbonnais in November 1782,<sup>603</sup> and 18-year-old Boson comte de Talleyrand-Périgord, Chastellux' aide-de-camp, whose brother, the bishop of Autun, would become one of the most famous personages of his age. Colonel comte de Vauban, the 28-year-old great grand-nephew of the famous marshal, came to serve as an aide-de-camp to Rochambeau. Also of that segment of the nobility which had had the "Honors of the Court" were Louis Alexandre Andrault, comte de Langeron, 22-year-old Alexandre chevalier de Lameth, Jean-Louis de Rigaud, vicomte de Vaudreuil, a cousin of the admiral, 21-year-old André Arsène de Rosset, vicomte de Fleury, the son of the duc de Fleury, 20-year-old Jean Frederic de Chabannes, marquis de la Palice, and Gabriel Marie vicomte de Riccé.

Below this elite of the French nobility stood members of the "noblesse d'épée" such as Claude Bernard Loppin, marquis de Montmort, Vioménil's son-in-law, the vicomte Alexandre de Loménie, Edouard Arnoult chevalier de Fontenay, Louis Pierre Drummond, vicomte de Metfort, whose ancestors had followed the Stuarts to France, Dominique Sheldon, a 22-year-old Irishman attached to Lauzun's Legion as a colonel, and Charles Laure MacMahon, who had come to serve as Lauzun's aide-de-camp. From the lower ranks of the nobility came officers such as Philippe de Verton, Deslon De Montmeril, Louis de Champcenetz, and Mathieu Tisseul d'Anvaux. Carl Pontus Lillienhorn had been an aide-de-camp to the King of Sweden, and Vioménil's aide-de-camp Joseph Friedrich Freiherr von Brentano hailed from Regensburg in Bavaria. Also on board was Jean Ladislas Pollerescky, the Major of Lauzun's Legion who returned from Europe.<sup>604</sup>

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1783" in: *Mélanges publiés par la Société des Bibliophiles Français (Deuxième Partie)* (Paris, 1903), pp. 15-148, pp. 15-53.

<sup>602</sup> Ségur's account is printed in *Memoirs and recollections of Count Segur: ambassador from France to the courts of Russia and Prussia* 3 vols., (London, 1825)., vol. 1 pp. 274-345. It was published concurrently in French as *Mémoires, ou, Souvenirs et anecdotes* 3 vols., (Paris and London, 1825-26). See also "Extraits de Lettres écrites d'Amérique par le comte de Ségur colonel en second du Régiment de Soissonnais à la comtesse de Ségur, Dame de Madame Victoire 1782-1783" in: *Mélanges publiés par la Société des Bibliophiles Français (Deuxième Partie)* (Paris, 1903), pp. 159-205, pp. 160-168.

<sup>603</sup> Montesquieu, who had already fought at Yorktown, had sailed with Lauzun to France in November 1781. A biographical essay can be found in Raymond Céleste, "Un Petit-Fils de Montesquieu en Amérique (1780-1783)" *Revue Philomathique de Bordeaux et du Sud-Ouest* Vol. 5 No. 12 (December 1902), pp. 529-556. A brief account of his 1782 journey is published in Raymond Céleste, "Charles-Louis de Montesquieu à l'Armée (1772-1782)" *Revue Philomathique de Bordeaux et du Sud-Ouest* Vol. 6 No. 11 (November 1904), pp. 505-524, pp. 519-523. His letters describing the journey are published in Octave Beuve, "Un Petit-Fils de Montesquieu. Soldat de l'Indépendance Américaine (d'après des documents inédits)" *Revue historique de la Révolution Française et de l'Empire* Vol. 5 (January-June 1914), pp. 233-263, pp. 253-263. On 6 July 1782, Montesquieu wrote from Rochefort that there were seven colonels, two majors, and 13 aides-de-camp waiting to board the *Gloire* with Vioménil. Beuve, "Montesquieu," p. 253.

<sup>604</sup> Biographical information on these officers can be found in Bodinier's, *Dictionnaire*. On Pollerescky see below. Ségur counted 22 officers on the *l'Aigle* and eight on the *Gloire*. If

Having crossed the Schuylkill River, the officers rode into Philadelphia during the next few days - Montesquieu on 15 September, Vioménil on the 16<sup>th</sup>, and Sheldon's group late at night on 17 September. American authorities were equally eager to welcome the illustrious guests. General Lincoln, the newly-appointed Secretary of War, sent Vioménil a letter welcoming him to Philadelphia and informed the Frenchman that the captain delivering the letter was at his disposal. Broglie's list of visits included not only the hospital and the prison, but also Constitution Hall and Christ Church as well as the homes of Robert Morris, Robert Livingston and François Marbois.<sup>605</sup>

Since none of the diarists record a date of their departure from Philadelphia, it is difficult to determine the length of their stays. But as it would be befitting to the rank and status of these members of the highest nobility, they departed once they had seen all they had wanted to see and met everyone they had wanted to meet. Lauzun himself did not arrive in the camp at Crompond until mid-October.

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Montesquieu's total is correct, 28 of these 30 passengers are identified by name in the primary and secondary sources used in this report.

<sup>605</sup> Broglie, "Melanges," pp. 36-48. The lengthy accounts of Philadelphia kept by these officers and of their activities there are included in this report as photocopies beginning on the next page.

## THE RETURN MARCH OF LAUZUN'S LEGION TO WINTER QUARTERS IN WILMINGTON, DECEMBER 1782

As Rochambeau's troops departed from their camp at Crompond/Yorktown Heights for Boston and the Caribbean, Rochambeau, who did not foresee any use for cavalry in the campaign, suggested to Washington that the Legion, together with the siege artillery, remain behind. On 21 October 1782, the First French Brigade left its camp at Yorktown Heights for Salem. Lauzun's Legion stayed behind. "It was to leave in a few days, to re-cross the North River and return, by the same route by which the army had come, to Wilmington, where it is to spend its winter quarters, since the State of Delaware is within close reach of our detachment in Baltimore, and Pennsylvania, which abounds in excellent food and forage."<sup>606</sup> Rochambeau left clear instructions for Lauzun. He was to remain on the American mainland as commanding officer of his Legion, which by now numbered about 550 officers and men. The siege artillery under the marquis de la Valette in Baltimore and the sick together formed another corps of about six hundred officers and men, which brought the total of French forces on the American mainland to about 1,150. He was to receive his orders from Washington, who had agreed to place his corps into winter quarters in Wilmington, though Lauzun was free to investigate other possibilities for winter quarters in Delaware or along the Chesapeake Bay as long as they would be close to the troops in Baltimore. Until the departure of Washington's army for winter quarters, Lauzun was to take up a defensive position near Peekskill. If he should receive information from Admiral de Vaudreuil that there would be enough shipping space available for him to sail to the Caribbean he was to obey these orders and join Rochambeau. Rochambeau promised to leave him enough funds until January; thereafter he was to approach French minister de la Luzerne in Philadelphia for additional funds.<sup>607</sup>

Lauzun and his men immediately broke camp as well. Having crossed the Hudson on 27 October,<sup>608</sup> and following the instructions of taking "the same route by which the army had come", they followed the by now well-known route to Suffern and into New Jersey. Following a brief stay at Whippany the legion moved to Hanover Court House, where a review of 1 November showed it with a staff of six officers and six NCOs. The two hussar squadrons were 133 and 134 men strong, grenadiers numbered 98 men, there were 96 men in the chasseur company, and 95 artillerymen for a total of 568 officers and men.<sup>609</sup>

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<sup>606</sup> Acomb, *Closen*, p. 259.

<sup>607</sup> "Instructions laissées a Mr Le Duc de Lauzun par Mr le Cte de Rochambeau au camp de Crompond le 21 8bre 1782." Viomenil Papers, LB0075 No. 95. There is also a copy in Rochambeau to Lauzun, 22 December 1782, Rochambeau Papers, Library of Congress, vol. 11.

<sup>608</sup> *New Jersey Gazette*, 6 November 1782.

<sup>609</sup> The review is in Archives Nationales de France, Colonies D2c32, Paris, France.

Over the next week, they retraced their steps following the road to the southward through Liberty Corner, Bound Brook, Kingston and Princeton to Trenton. Rather than cross the Delaware and march through Philadelphia to Wilmington, he instead rode with his Legion on to Burlington, New Jersey. From Burlington, Lauzun wrote to Rochambeau that his Deputy Quartermaster Collot had conducted "reconnaissances" in Wilmington and Burlington concerning winter quarters. Lauzun thought that Burlington offered the possibility of setting up without great expense very comfortable quarters for the cavalry since there were already "excellent barracks for the men". Burlington was "in all respects better than Wilmington".<sup>610</sup> The chevalier de la Luzerne agreed with Lauzun's assessment, but Lauzun was having second thoughts. Crossing the Delaware either at Bristol Ferry or Cooper's Ferry might prove too difficult during the winter and make it impossible to get quickly to Baltimore and to the siege artillery in an emergency. More importantly, however, the "inhabitants of Burlington agreed to lodge the officers only after having made the greatest difficulties and with the greatest ill will". That did not bode well, especially since across the river the situation was very different. "The inhabitants of Wilmington appear to be willing to deliver us (from our problem) by being disposed to do everything that suits us. But it will be necessary to completely build our quarters, and this expense, as we know from the reconnaissance of M Collot, will cost around eight hundred dollars." Lauzun hoped that for a reasonable amount of money the Governor of New Jersey would allow him to dismantle the stables and ship them to Wilmington. In the meantime he lodged his troops in the barracks and requested instructions from Rochambeau on how to proceed.<sup>611</sup>

Rochambeau's response to this inquiry has not survived, and Lauzun decided on Wilmington for winter quarters. When the Trustees of the Academy there refused to grant permission for the use of the building, Collot and Lauzun traveled to near-by Philadelphia<sup>612</sup> where on Monday, 16 December 1782 they in obtained a Congressional Resolution ordering the quartering of the Legion.<sup>613</sup>

*"On motion of Mr. [Richard] Peters, seconded by Mr. [Thomas] McKean,*

*Resolved, That the honorable the executive of the State of Delaware be, and hereby are requested to give the necessary directions for providing quarters for the troops of his Most Christian Majesty, serving with the army of the United States, now on their march."*

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<sup>610</sup> The accommodations described by Lauzun were the barracks in Burlington used by Colonel John Lamb's Second Continental Regiment of Artillery during the winter of 1781-82.

<sup>611</sup> Lauzun to Rochambeau, 9 November 1782, Rochambeau Papers, Library of Congress, vol. 5.

<sup>612</sup> On 4 December 1782, Lauzun wrote a letter to Governor Livingston from Philadelphia.

<sup>613</sup> The resolution is in the Journals of the Continental Congress at <http://memory.loc.gov>.

Armed with the resolution of 16 December, Collot on 17 December paid a visit to John Lea, one of Wilmington's Justices of the Peace, Burgess Thomas Kean, and City Assessor Jacob Broom, who informed John Cook, Vice-President of Delaware.<sup>614</sup> The Legion would spend the winter in Delaware. Back in Burlington on the 19<sup>th</sup>, Lauzun wasted no time. Two days later the Legion was on its way.

Having crossed the Delaware from Burlington to Bristol, a first detachment of the Legion spent the night of 21/22 December in Philadelphia before moving on to Chester the next day. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> the remainder of the Legion arrived to spend the night in Philadelphia. Then, on 23 December, Hiltzheimer recorded in his diary that "This morning the last of the French Legion left for Delaware."<sup>615</sup> Once the Legion was re-united Lauzun took stock of his unit; the first review of the Legion in Wilmington, is dated 24 December 1782. That day, the First Squadron of Hussars consisted of seven officers (including a *cadet-gentilhomme*), 10 NCOs, the *fourrier-écrivain*, two trumpets, a medic, a farrier, and 118 hussars, five of whom were in the hospital, for a total of seven officers and 133 rank and file. The Grenadier Company had six officers, 15 NCOs, two tambours, and 79 grenadiers, five of whom were in the hospital. The Artillery Company had six officers, 18 NCOs, two drummers and 76 rank and file. The company was harder hit than the others were by disease: two sergeants, one corporal, one of the drummers and two of the enlisted men were in the hospital. The Chasseur Company had its full supplement of seven officers though two officers are listed as absent. There were 18 NCOs, two drummers, and 76 chasseurs, two of which were in the hospital. The Second Squadron of Hussars finally numbered seven officers, 13 NCOs, two trumpets and 120 hussars, nine of who were in the hospital. Since the review at Yorktown Heights on 17 October 1782, the artillery and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Squadron of Hussars had received one recruit each. The staff consisted of eleven officers (three are *à la suite*) and three enlisted men; three officers were absent, and the position of Major is listed as vacant. On Christmas Day 1782, Lauzun's Legion in Wilmington numbered 39 officers, 559 rank and file, and 281 horses.<sup>616</sup>

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<sup>614</sup> Revolutionary War, Box 32 No. 9, HSD. Born 20 March 1750, Henri Victor Collot joined the Chamborant Hussars in October 1765 and served as *aide-maréchal général des logis* in Rochambeau's army with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Governor of Guadeloupe in 1792, he briefly came to the US as a British prisoner of war on parole after the surrender of the island in April 1794. Paroled in Philadelphia in 1796, he was approached by Pierre Adet, the French minister to the United States, to survey the lands west of the Appalachian Mountains and investigate how they could be claimed for France. Having completed his journey along the Ohio and Mississippi he returned to Paris from Louisiana in December 1796. Based in part on Collot's report Napoleon acquired the Louisiana Territory from Spain on 1 October 1800, but sold it to the United States 2 1/2 years later. Collot died in Paris on 13 May 1805. Bodinier, *Dictionnaire*, p. 119; Neil A. Hamilton, "A French Spy in America. French Cartographer Victor Collot." *American History* Vol. 34 No. 3, (August 1999), pp. 22-27, and Clifford M. Lewis, "The Reconnaissance Expedition of two French Navigators." *West Virginia History* Vol. 43 No. 1, (1981), pp. 21-38.

<sup>615</sup> Hiltzheimer, *Diary*, p. 52. CTHS JW Papers, Box 144 Folder November 1782, contains numerous receipts for wood and other supplies signed in Burlington during November 1782, viz. Edward Collins on 8 November 1782, supplied 820 lbs beef for which he received £ 20 10/. Another account with Starr covers the dates of 2 November to 27 November. There are receipts dated as late as Burlington, 21 December, when Edward Collins sold 44 lbs beef French weight.

<sup>616</sup> The review can be found in Archives Nationales, Paris, under Colonies, Marine D2c32.

## THE RETURN MARCH OF ROCHAMBEAU TO BALTIMORE VIA NEWTON AND PHILADELPHIA, DECEMBER 1782

Though Rochambeau had accompanied his forces from their encampment at Crompond (Yorktown Heights) through Connecticut to Rhode Island, it had been decided that he would not accompany them to the Caribbean but return to France. While quartered in Providence, Rhode Island, the *comte* de Lauberdière on 1 December 1782, wrote in his journal, "we embraced our friends who were about to betake themselves where their desires called them and M de Rochambeau, his son, the *comte* de Vauban, and I mounted our horses to betake ourselves to Philadelphia. The Chevalier de Chatellux and his aides de camp, M. de Béville and a number of officers of the staff of the army. M de Choisy etc took the same route on different days with the same intention."

From Providence, the group reached Newburgh on 7 December but only spent one night in the Highlands. On 8 December, Rochambeau left Newburgh again in a heavy snowfall and reached Warwick on the New York - New Jersey State Line in the evening, where they spent the night, possibly at the inn kept by Mr. Smith frequented by Chastellux.<sup>617</sup>

Following breakfast at Beard's Tavern, i.e., a tavern kept by Francis Baird across the State Line in New Jersey, the group spent the night of 9/10 December at Sussex Court House, today's Newton in Sussex County, after having traveled 14 miles that day. Newton had all of eight or ten houses, the Court House itself was described by Lauberdière as "un vilain Batiment," a bad building, but the tavern of Jonathan Willis was known as a good - and the only - place to stay.

From Newton the group took the road toward what is today Johnsonburg and Hackettstown through "bad country, mountainous, few inhabitants, much forest". Next came a place called "Johnson's Mill" and then "Burkirts's Tavern", where the group spent the night of 10/11 December. The following day, the group crossed the Delaware at "Robert's Sons Ferry"<sup>618</sup> and spent the night of 11/12 December

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<sup>617</sup> Chastellux (as well as Martha Washington) also stayed at this inn, the second oldest home in Warwick, built by Francis Baird in 1766. It is still standing at the intersection of Colonial Avenue, Main Street and Maple Avenue. See Chastellux, *Travels*, Rice, ed., vol. 2, p. 517 and p. 642, fn. 22. Smith was renting the tavern from Baird when the group breakfasted there the next morning.

<sup>618</sup> Though it is also mentioned in Washington's itinerary of the march back from the Philadelphia Conference I have been unable to identify a "Robert's Sons Ferry."

This itinerary is almost identical to that followed by Major DePrez of the Royal Deux-Ponts in August 1781 when he transported funds for Rochambeau's army from Boston to Philadelphia. (Rochambeau Papers, Library of Congress, vol. 9.) The only difference is that DePrez was instructed to cross the Delaware at "Coriel's Ferry", today's New Hope, which was the terminus of the Old York Road. New Hope had been founded in 1681, as Wells' Ferry. In 1770 it became Coryell's Ferry after Emmanuel Coryell, whose family had for decades held the ferry rights on the New Jersey side of the river. When the whole town burned down in 1789, Benjamin Parry, a wealthy miller and the town's leading citizen, lost both his grist mills, but he rebuilt them and

at Benet's Tavern in Pennsylvania, seven miles from the ferry and twelve miles from Philadelphia.<sup>619</sup> On the evening of the 12<sup>th</sup>, Rochambeau rode into to Philadelphia and had dinner with French ambassador the *chevalier* de la Luzerne.

During his stay in Philadelphia, the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania on 23 December 1782, awarded four honorary degrees officers in Rochambeau's army: the *chevalier* de Chastellux received an honorary Doctor of Laws, Jean Francois Coste, the French physician general, was awarded an honorary Doctor of Medicine,<sup>620</sup> Marie Bernard Borgella, "a Physician of Rank," was also awarded an honorary Doctor of Medicine; and Fiacre Maximilien Robilliard, the French surgeon general, received an honorary Master of Arts. Concurrently French diplomat François Barbé-Marbois received an honorary Doctor of Laws.<sup>621</sup>

On the evening before his departure for Annapolis on 2 January 1783, Elias Boudinot as President of the Continental Congress sent him this letter expressing the gratitude of Congress and the United States.

*Philadelphia, 1st Jan. 1783*

*Sir,*

*Among the most agreeable duties of my office, the communicating the approbation of Congress to such worthy characters as are entitled, by their merit and services, to these Tokens of public Respect, is not the least.*

*Be assured, Sir, that the honor I now have to enclose your Excellency the warm and affectionate testimony of the United States in Congress Assembled, to the valour, discipline and good conduct of His Excellency The Count de Rochambeau and the Army under his command, gives me sensations of the most delicate nature, and I shall esteem it among the favorable circumstances of my administration to have the honor of this communication.*

*Permit me, in the most cordial manner, to wish your Excellency, and the worthy Officers who attend you, the most prosperous*

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named them the "New Hope" mills because, he said, they offered new hope. See "Coryell's Ferry in the Revolution. Portions taken from an address by Oliver Randolph Parry in 1915" at [http://www.newhopepa.com/History/Coryells\\_Ferry/coryell\\_hist\\_1.htm](http://www.newhopepa.com/History/Coryells_Ferry/coryell_hist_1.htm)

The ferry crossing locations on the map reproduced at the same web-site are derived from Terry A. McNealy, *Bucks County - An Illustrated History* (Doylestown, 2001).

<sup>619</sup> Richboro at the intersection of PA-SR 232 and PA-SR 332 was known in the eighteenth century as "Bennetts" or "The Bear" or "The Black Bear" after its tavern-keeper and sign.

<sup>620</sup> The previous winter he had received an honorary degree from the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg.

<sup>621</sup> *Minutes of the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania*, vol. 3, p. 143 (23 December 1782). There are no other mentions of Rochambeau or any Frenchmen in the *Minutes*. I am grateful to Mr. Mark Lloyd of the University of Pennsylvania for pointing out this information to me.



*voyage, with a happy sight of your Country and Friends, and particularly the deserved approbation of your Royal Master.*

*I have the honor to be, with every sentiment of the profoundest respect & esteem,*

James Madison's *Notes of Debates* for Wednesday, 1 January 1783, record that "The vote of thanks to Ct. Rochambeau passed with unanimity & cordiality & afforded a fresh proof that the resentment agst. France had greatly subsided."

Taking the by now familiar route via Chester in the morning of 2 January, Rochambeau spent the nights of 2/3 January, in Wilmington, 3/4 January in Christiana, and 4/5 January Head of Elk. He reached Baltimore on 5 January, and departed on the *Romulus* for Annapolis the same day. On 8 January 1783, Rochambeau, Chastellux, Choisy, Bévillie, 17 officers in all, embarked on the frigate *Emeraude*. Aware of British vessels lying in wait on the ocean, the frigate, using a strong north-easterly wind, after a six-day wait, sailed out of the bay about two hours before nightfall on 14 January 1783 with British frigates in hot pursuit.<sup>622</sup> After a very fast crossing the vessel arrived at Saint-Nazaire on 10 February 1783.

On 16 April, Jacob Hiltzheimer "went to the Court House, where the City Magistrates appeared and caused William Will, Sheriff, to proclaim to the people at large that all hostilities by land and on sea are at an end between America and Britain."<sup>623</sup> A few days later only, on 29 April, the Rev. Pitman witnesses the first ship flying a British flag sail into Philadelphia..

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<sup>622</sup> "Journal de notre navigation" Rochambeau Papers, Library of Congress, volume 13.

<sup>623</sup> Hiltzheimer, *Diary*, p. 55.

## CONCLUSION

The war was over, but before Lauzun and his Legion could depart for France, it needed to dispose of its animals and no longer needed equipment. On 18 April already, Hiltzheimer and his son Thomas went to Wilmington at the request of John Holker to examine the 249 horses the Legion needed to sell.<sup>624</sup> Three weeks later, the legion was once again gathered in Philadelphia, ready to board the vessels that would take them back to France. On 11 May 1783, the 528 men left of the *légion*, and most of the remnants of the *expédition particulière* sailed from Philadelphia for Europe. The five frigates that took the remnants of Rochambeau's forces to Europe -- *la Gloire*, *la Danaë*, *l'Astrée*, *l'Active*, *Le St. James* -- carried 62 officers, 636 enlisted men, five "femmes de soldats" and 51 domestics to Brest, where they docked around 11 June.<sup>625</sup> The *expédition particulière* was over.

In an interview with *American Heritage* historian David McCullough declared: "We wouldn't have a country if it weren't for [the French]." And though historians should not speculate about "what ifs", the facts show that French support was indeed vital to the success of the Revolutionary War.

The shots fired at Lexington and Concord had hardly been heard in Paris when French financial and military aid began flowing to the rebellious colonies. Almost 100 volunteers provided crucial expertise for American artillery, engineering, and map-making. In February 1778, France became the first foreign country to recognize the United States as an independent nation. In the spring of 1780, the *comte* de Rochambeau brought over 5,000 officers and men across the ocean and forced the surrender of Lord Cornwallis fifteen months later. Rochambeau's forces had decided the outcome of the war.

In July 1780, Rochambeau arrived in Newport with over 5,000 officers and men; the ships that left Boston on Christmas Eve 1782 carried about 1,000 fewer men. About 700 men remained behind, the last of whom returned to France in November 1783. A final transport of 85 sick soldiers left Baltimore on 5 October 1783.<sup>626</sup> During the 30 months that the 492 officers and 6,038 men of the *expédition particulière* had been in, or on their way to and from America, about

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<sup>624</sup> Hiltzheimer, *Diary*, p. 55. Among materials still to be disposed of were powder and lead of the French artillery stationed in Baltimore. On 7 June 1783, Philadelphians Tench Coxe, George Meade and David Franks and Jacob Broom of Wilmington purchased from *commissaire de guerre* Pierre de Chesnel almost 73,000 lbs of powder for 9 sols per (French) pound and seven hundred of the 42,659 1/2 lbs of lead in Baltimore, 3,330 lbs of which were bars, the rest already melted into musket balls. Tench Coxe Papers, HSP.

<sup>625</sup> The embarkation list is in Archives Nationales, Paris, Marine B/4/185. A final transport of 85 soldiers under Captain François Xavier Christophe baron de Hell of Lauzun's Legion sailed from Baltimore on the *Pintade* 5 October 1783, and entered Brest on 10 November 1783.

<sup>626</sup> Amblard de Noailles, *Marins et Soldats Français en Amérique pendant la guerre de l'Indépendance des États-Unis* (Paris, 1903), pp. 407-408.

600 men (including 70 in the six months following the return in 1783) died, though only about 75 of them from battle or battle-related wounds. Seven were executed, 316 men, of whom only 26 were native, French-speaking, soldiers, deserted. So did 80 men recruited in America. 140, including 30 "American" recruits, were discharged. Thirty-one officers and 14 enlisted men retired with military pensions in the New World. To put these figures into perspective: within six months of returning to France, Rochambeau's units discharged 832 men whose enlistment had expired!<sup>627</sup>

Rochambeau's troops were not the only French forces to fight in America before, or after, Yorktown. In fact, they represent only a fraction of the total number of Frenchmen fighting for American Independence, which historians have estimated at 18,000 soldiers and 31,000 sailors. In 1776, France had stationed 19 battalions of infantry in her Caribbean possessions; in the course of the war she sent another 29 battalions there for a total of 48 battalions. Rochambeau brought all of 8 infantry battalions with him in 1780. At Yorktown, Rochambeau suffered not even 200 casualties in dead and wounded. Between March and December 1781, the French navy operating in the Caribbean suffered over 5,000 casualties, the equivalent of almost the entire force under Rochambeau's command. In the defeat in the Battle of the Saints in April 1782, de Grasse suffered over 3,000 casualties, more than fifteen times those of Yorktown.

The French contribution to American victory becomes even more obvious when we look at the role of the French navy. It was Admiral de Grasse' fleet which kept the Royal Navy from making contact with Cornwallis when it sailed out to meet the challenge in the Battle of the Capes in early September 1781. Without the French fleet, British Admiral Graves might just have succeeded in rescuing Cornwallis from Yorktown. The Continental Navy would have been unable to stop him: in 1781, the Royal Navy had about 140 ships of the line of 74 guns or more, the French had 67 capital ships, Spain had 58, the Dutch 19, and the United States had none.

French expenditures for the war were enormous: Robert D. Harris sets the cost of the war for the years 1776-1782 at 928.9 million livres (as opposed to 2,270.5 million livres for the British), with another 125.2 million to be added for the year 1783. At the same time, the total ordinary income of the French crown stood at 377.5 million livres for the year 1776. 91 per cent of the cost of the war was funded by loans, and by the end of 1782, the total constituted debt of the French monarchy had reached 4,538 million livres. Even if the outlays for the war were not the primary cause of the French Revolution, there can be no doubt that an extra billion livres in debt and annual expenditures of some 207 million livres just to service the debt, did nothing to enhance the financial situation of the monarchy between 1783 and the outbreak of the revolution in 1789.<sup>628</sup>

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<sup>627</sup> Over one fourth of all desertions in the French forces occurred in the last three months before departure.

<sup>628</sup> All figures from Harris, "French Finances," pp. 233-258.

But within the overall French war effort expenditures on the American war were minimal. According to Claude C. Sturgill, "all of the monies directly appropriated for the entire cost" of Rochambeau's forces amounted to exactly 12,730,760 livres or a little over 1 per cent of the total cost of the war.<sup>629</sup> In addition the American rebels received 18 million in loans, to be repaid after the war, as well as outright subsidies of about 9 million from the foreign affairs department and other aid for a total of about 48 million livres spent in support of the American Revolution.

But whatever Royalist France did to support the America's struggle for Independence, nothing can alter the fact that it was American colonists who first challenged British authority. It was American colonists who first proclaimed that "All men are created equal." It was American colonists who risked their lives and their properties to fight for the "truths" which they, and after them the whole world, considered "to be self-evident". It was on their soil that the war was waged. It was they who suffered the devastation and hardships of the war. That no matter where their ancestors had come from in their search for freedom, they would stand together under the leadership of General George Washington and in the crucible of war create their own nation.

Every colony, large or small, from Massachusetts to Virginia, contributed to the success of this struggle. Pennsylvania and Philadelphia, the *de facto* capital and seat of government of the young nation, played an indispensable role in that victory. Here the two Continental Congresses had met, here the Declaration of Independence had been passed, signed and proclaimed, here the French minister had taken his seat after the treaties of Amity and Friendship and of military cooperation had been signed in France. Her political importance was matched by her geographic position at center of the only available land-route from New York to Elkton, which placed her, the largest city on the North American Continent in American hands, in a crucial position for the Yorktown campaign of 1781. The support of her citizens was crucial, and they did not fail her. Pennsylvania can be proud of her contribution to the success of the Yorktown campaign and to American Independence.

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<sup>629</sup> Sturgill, "Observations", p. 183.