

THE WASHINGTON-ROCHAMBEAU REVOLUTIONARY ROUTE IN THE STATE OF DELAWARE

8.1 The March of the Continental Army through Delaware, 4 - 9 September 1781

Supplies for the Continental Army had been collected in Delaware throughout the spring of 1781. A "Return of Forage delivered by William Millan," receiver of Newcastle County, to William McClay, "Contl Storekeeper in Christiana," on 9 June 1781, lists 6 tons 7 cwts of hay, 125 bushels of rye, 92 ½ bushels of corn and 9 ½ bushels of oats.²³² McClay had forwarded these to Lafayette in Virginia, but much more would soon be required of him and his state.

Once the decision to march to Yorktown had been made on 14 August, the Continental supply system along the route shifted into high gear. As early as 16 August, John Yeates, Deputy Quarter Master of the Continental Army informed Caesar Rodney, President of the Delaware State, from Elkton that at Christiana there were presently "not provisions to subsist troops, or forage to pass teams or support any at the Post, a waggon or two is wanted to march the State troops which will be required with them during the Campaign, believe me thro' every period of the past business I have been under the utmost difficulties owing to the supplies not being made agreeable to the Stipulations." This was particularly troubling to Yeates since "I have [one word torn out] reason to expect the passage of troops soon thro' the State this happening in our present situation, it would not be in my power to give regular assistance, necessity in this case would tend to disorder and distress to individuals these considerations prompt me to pray your order and direction to any timely aid you think can be obtained. The Gentm who waits on you with this (Wm Wright) superintends the business of the post and will give you every other information in his power."²³³

²³² "Return of Forage, 1781" Delaware Public Archives (DEPA) Military Records, Revolutionary War, Record Group 1800.066, Box 2, Folder 32. *A Guide to Revolutionary War Records in the Delaware Public Archives* (n.p.,n.d., typescript available at DEPA, Dover, Delaware), p. 7.

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

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

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

16 ounces = 1 pound = 7,000 grains

25 pounds = 1 quarters

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

20 hundredweight = 1 ton = 2,000 pounds

Liquid and dry measures have been the same in England since 1824 with 1 gallon = 4 quarts = 8 pints = 4.54 liters, and 8 gallons or 36.32 liters to the bushel. The liquid gallon in use in the US is the Queen Anne Gallon of 1707 of 231 cubic inches or 3.78 liters. The US bushel, defined as a round measure with a plain and even bottom, 18.5 inches wide throughout and 8 inches deep, of eight gallons is for dry measure only. Based on the William III Gallon of 1696 of 268.8 cubic inches or 4.40 liters, this bushel holds 2,150.42 cubic inches or 35.24 liters. This means that the US hogshead as used in the eighteenth century, measured, and still measures, 63 gallons, while a hogshead in the UK since 1824 holds only 52.5 gallons.

²³³ Historical Society of Delaware (HSD) Rodney Collection, Caesar Rodney, Box 6 Folder 20.

Mindful of his experiences with the 1,500 Continental Army troops under Lafayette in early March 1781, Yeates also reminded President Rodney²³⁴ that previous "Considerable movement. (sic) of the Army going on Southward (was) a circumstance from real necessity productive of the most disagreeable occurrences, the taking property indiscriminately which never fails of giving much distress, and causing just murmuring" and urged him to insist on the strictest discipline for the troops while providing the supplies needed so that the soldiery did not have to steal.²³⁵

Ten days later, Superintendent of Finance Robert Morris added his voice to those clamoring for supplies. "The State of Delaware is required to furnish Eight hundred Barrels of Pork none of which as I am informed has yet been delivered," he wrote to Rodney on 26 August. In view of the armies approaching from the north, Morris urged haste. "The necessities of the Service render a Compliance with this Request so essential" that Rodney was to send whatever he had, even if it was less than the whole 800 barrels.²³⁶ Armed with Morris' letter, William Wright immediately waited upon the governor, who on 1 September ordered State Treasurer General Samuel Patterson, Colonel Henry Darby, and Captain William McClay to procure the necessary supplies and authorized funds to cover expenses. Patterson's, Darby's, and McClay's purchasing agents spread out over the state, but almost immediately ran into problems. One example may suffice to

I interpret the words "passage of troops" in Yeates' letter as referring to Washington's and Rochambeau's armies. This would mean that Washington's orders to prepare for the arrival of his troops had traveled in 2 to 2 1/2 days from White Plains through New Jersey, Philadelphia, and Delaware to Elkton. That is not impossible: news of battles of Lexington and Concord on 19 April 1777 reached Newcastle within 5 1/2 days early in the morning of 25 April. William Wright was Deputy Quarter Master of the Continental Army at Christiana. While the town itself is called Christiana, the river on which it lies was officially designated as Christina by the General Assembly of Delaware in 1937.

²³⁴ The Presidents of Delaware were elected for three year terms, and when Caesar Rodney's term expired, John Dickinson replaced him on 6 November 1781. Sworn in on 13 November, his 49th birthday, the day that the legislature adjourned after a 3 1/2 week session that had begun on 20 October, Dickinson resigned a year later on 13 December 1782, when he was elected Chief Executive of Pennsylvania. He was replaced by Nicholas Van Dyke on 1 February 1783.

The "General Assembly of Delaware" was bi-cameral and consisted of the House of Assembly of 21 representatives and a Council of nine members. The President or Chief Magistrate was elected by a joint ballot of all members of both houses. The legislature met three times each year, in January, April, and October. The proceedings of the Lower House can be followed in Claudia L. Bushman, Harold B. Hancock, Elizabeth Moyne Homsey, *Proceedings of the Assembly of the Lower Counties on Delaware 1770-1776, of the Constitutional Convention of 1776, and of the House of Assembly of the Delaware State 1776-1781* (Newark, 1986), and Claudia L. Bushman, Harold B. Hancock, Elizabeth Moyne Homsey, *Proceedings of the House of Assembly of the Delaware State 1781-1792 and of the Constitutional Convention of 1792* (Newark, 1988). Council Minutes have been published as *Minutes of the Council of the Delaware State from 1776 to 1792* (Dover 1886) pp. 656-7. It did not meet between 19 June, the end of the legislative session held in Lewes, and 25 October 1781, when it reconvened in Dover.

The President's Privy Council had two members each from the House and the Council. In 1781, Rodney's Privy Council consisted of Caesar Rodney, Nehemiah Tilton, James Raymond, and Isaac Griffin. It met only three times on 23 February, 7 April, and 4 October. The minutes of the Privy Council from 1778 to 1792 can be found in DEPA General Reference # 302. A copy of Delaware's constitution of 20 September 1776 is printed in Harold B. Hancock, *Liberty and Independence. The Delaware State During the American Revolution* (Wilmington, 1976), pp. 60-68.

Delaware's short-lived Council of Safety held its last meeting on 13 January 1776. See Leon de Valinger, Jr., "Council of Safety Minutes." *Delaware History* Vol. 1 No. 1 (January 1946), pp. 55-78.

²³⁵ Public Archives Division of Delaware, *Delaware Archives. Revolutionary War. In Three Volumes* (Wilmington, 1919) Vol. 3, p. 1357-58. Referring to the inclination of some Continental Army soldiers to take what was not theirs, Baron Clozen declared that "It is to be noted that the American Army paid neither for wood nor forage, and in a way, for nothing in this country. *The soldiers plunder a great deal* (and almost by turns.)" (sic) Acomb, *Clozen*, p. 259.

²³⁶ Morris to Dickinson, 26 August 1781. DEPA RG 1800.099, Delaware Archives - Military, Vol. 6 (unpublished), microfilm frame 378. One barrel equals 31.5 Queen Anne (or wine) gallons.

illustrate the difficulties they had to overcome and potential areas of friction between continental, state, and local officials.²³⁷

On 2 September, Simon Wilmer Wilson informed Rodney from Cantwell's Bridge that Wright had stopped by the previous day on his return from Dover and ordered him "to provide for a number of troops" expected at Christiana "in a few days." Wright had indeed "sufficient powers" from the governor to order Wilson's cooperation, but Wilson claimed that since his "powers" had expired in January 1781, he lacked authorization "to act at present for the public." He had a "sufficient quantity" of flour and hay, although "not immediately at the port of Christiana," but without "an assessment laid in this County" for other supplies it would "not be in my power to furnish" them.²³⁸ Rodney provided the necessary powers, but precious time was lost. But even if the supplies could be collected, they still had to be transported to their destination, and that cost money. William Millan informed Rodney from Cantwell's Bridge on 14 October that "nothing can be done without it." Like many others, Millan had "already advanced more Money for the public than I can afford, and my credit as a public officer is intirely exhausted." Without at least £ 50 "for the purpose of purchasing Casks, and paying the expenses of transportation" he saw himself unable to forward the supplies at hand.²³⁹

But despite such obstacles, supplies were collected and delivered. On 24 September, William Black and Evan Rice, submitted their "Acct of Suplays purchd ... for the use of the Troops under his Excelency Genrl Washinton on their March to the Southwd Sepr 1781."²⁴⁰ It listed

| | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| 9 Beaves | 76/10/- ²⁴¹ |
| 36 bushels of Indian Corn @ 3/- | 5/08/- |
| 50 1/2 bushels of oats @ 2/ | 5/03/- |
| 144 1/2 bushels of shorts @ 10d | 6/00/5 ²⁴² |
| 192 1/4 bushels of bran @ 1/ | 9/12/3 |

²³⁷ See Patterson's letter dated Christiana Bridge, 13 June 1782. "I would also mention to your Excellency that myself and three other persons were appointed to furnish General Washington's Army on the Expedition to Virginia last year Going and Coming. Two, of the named, has furnished you an account to lay before the House." The "other persons" were McClay, Darby, and Black. DEPA, RG 9200D09.000, John Dickinson Papers, Box 2.

By the time he wrote this letter in 1782, Darby and McClay had laid their account before the house already. See DEPA, RG 1315.008, Auditor of Accounts, Wastebook A, 1784-1796 p. 32, which contains an order of 21 June 1784 to pay William McClay and Darby £ 703 s 17 1 d for provisions purchased for the army under General Washington in 1781. DEPA RG 1315.007, Auditor of Accounts, Journal A, 1784-1800, page 309, State Treasury to Darby & McClay, reverses the order, "their purchases being included in General Patterson's Account" of 2 June 1783.

Patterson was a wealthy miller from Christiana who had been elected to the Continental Congress but did not serve. See W. Emerson Wilson, *Forgotten Heroes of Delaware* (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 55-56.

²³⁸ Wilson to Rodney, 2 September 1781. DEPA RG 1800.099, Delaware Archives - Military, Vol. 6 (unpublished), microfilm frame 346.

²³⁹ Millan to Rodney, 14 October 1781, DEPA RG 1300.000 Executive Papers Box 2, Correspondence 1781, typescript, microfilm frame 191. Original in W.S. Morse Collection, HSD.

²⁴⁰ DEPA RG 1800.099, Delaware Archives - Military, Vol. 6 (unpublished), microfilm frame 790. For a most detailed analysis of yields, population to food ratios, and the strains the needs of the war placed upon the agricultural economy of revolutionary America with much valuable data on Delaware see Richard Buel, Jr. *In Irons. Britain's Naval Supremacy and the American Revolutionary Economy* (New Haven, 1998).

²⁴¹ "Beaves" or "beeves" are full-grown heads of cattle intended for use as meat. When Wadsworth bought cattle for the French forces in Newport, Rhode Island, in July 1780, he calculated it to "average 400 lbs each of Meat Beef," i.e., slaughtered, about half the weight of a head of cattle today. Wadsworth to Henry Champion, 15 July 1780, Jeremiah Wadsworth Papers, Letterbooks Box 151, CHS.

²⁴² "Shorts" is the coarse parts of meal. Richard M. Lederer, Jr., *Colonial American English - A Glossary* (Essex, 1985), p. 211.

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| 38/2/9 "Ship Stuff" @ 8/ | 15/10/8 ²⁴³ |
| 9/0/3 buck wheat meal @ 4/ | 3/12/2 1/2 |
| 4/1/16 rye meal @ 12/6 | 2/14/8 |
| 9,482 sheaves of oats @ 2 d | 81/10/4 ²⁴⁴ |
| 26/2/16 of hay @ 60/ per ton | 79/4/1 ²⁴⁵ |

Including expenses the delivery cost the State of Delaware £ 295/13/7 *in specie* money.²⁴⁶

8.1.1 Route 1: The Land Route of Continental Army Troops

Any study of the march of the combined Franco-American armies through Delaware has to begin with the identification of the routes and their location on the ground today. On the French side this task is greatly facilitated by the compilation of maps and routes drawn by Louis Alexandre de Berthier published by Howard C. Rice, Jr. and Anne S. K. Brown in their *The American Campaigns of Rochambeau's Army 1780, 1781, 1782, 1782*. The maps and routes are

²⁴³ In July 1777, Samuel Dewees tells of biscuit being made of "shipstuff," usually the lowest-grade flour, and not in the best condition, when a large amount of flour "in danger of perishing" was ordered to be "baked into biskit for the use of the army." Samuel Dewees, *A History of the Life and Services of Captain Samuel Dewees ... The whole written (in part from a manuscript in the handwriting of Captain Dewees) and compiled by John Smith Hanna* (Printed by R. Neilson, 1844), p. 179. No measurement is indicated, but flour was measured in cwts/quarters/lbs.

²⁴⁴ Three weeks earlier, on 4 September 1781, a Train Master of the Continental Army had allowed "Eight sheaves to make one Bushel of Clean oats." DEPA RG 1800.099, Delaware Archives - Military, Vol. 6 (unpublished), microfilm frame 423

²⁴⁵ The hay is measured in tons/cwts/lbs.

²⁴⁶ The British Pound Sterling, identified by the symbol £ for the Latin *librum*, was divided into 20 shillings (symbol: s) of 12 pennies (symbol: d for Latin *denarius*) each or 240 pennies to the pound. The French monetary system followed the same pattern: 1 livre = 20 sols, 1 sol = 12 deniers, 1 livre = 240 deniers.

Reading Delaware invoices and ledgers however poses its own problems. On 1 January 1776 and 1 May 1777, Delaware issued a total of £ 55,000 in indented bills of credit. They quickly lost their value, so that the General Assembly discontinued their status as legal tender on 4 November 1780. Since Continental Dollars had become valueless as well, the state returned to *specie* money, which meant the Spanish Milled Dollar or Piece of Eight, which was the most commonly circulating coin in the colonies.

Minted in silver, it was similar in size and weight to the German *Taler* or the French *écu* of 6 livres. A little less than a troy ounce of British sterling silver (.925 fine silver, valued at 62 d or 5 s 2 d), a Spanish dollar was worth 54 d or 4 s 6 d. As the demand for silver coinage far exceeded the available supply, silver coins traded at a premium; the premium above the 54 d level was termed the "crying up" of coinage. In order to limit this "crying up," to Queen Anne issued a proclamation in 1704, passed into law by parliament in 1707, which specified that a full weight Spanish dollar would pass in the colonies at 72 d or 6 s, a third above the sterling rate. Since 5 s were called a *Crown* in Britain, French *écus* were known as *French Crowns* in the colonies.

During the Revolutionary War, New England, Virginia, and the Carolinas adhered to this "Proclamation Rate" of a one third "upcrying" and currency issued at this rate was known as "Lawful Money" or "Current Money." The Middle colonies of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland set the exchange rate for a Spanish dollar at 90 d or 7 s 6 d, 66.66 per cent over sterling. To distinguish it from the "Proclamation Money," it was referred to as "Common Money" or "Pennsylvania Money," though "Lawful Money" (or "Current Money") appears in Delaware ledgers as well. New York created its own rate of 96 d or 8 s to the Spanish dollar, a 78 per cent increase over sterling. This means that:

4 s 6 d British = 6 s Massachusetts = 7 s 6 d Pennsylvania = 8 s New York

Or, expressed in terms of the value of a pound sterling the exchange rates would be:

£ 1 (240 d) British = £ 1 6 s 8 d (320 d) MA = £ 1 13 s 4 d (400 d) PA = £ 1 15 s 7 d (427 d) NY

This paragraph is based on information found at www.coins.nd.edu/ColCurrency. The best book in print by far is John J. McCusker, *Money and exchange in Europe and America, 1600-1775: a handbook* (Chapel Hill, N.C., Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, VA, by the University of North Carolina Press, 1978).

accompanied by detailed itineraries for the march to Yorktown. On the American side there also exists a complete body of cartographic work for the marches of 1781 from Philadelphia to and from Yorktown, but there are no corresponding itineraries for the Continental Army. Its itineraries have been reconstructed from contemporary sources.

On 4 September 1781, the Continental Army marched from its camp "three miles from Chester" on Philadelphia Pike (US-R 13) through Chester and Naaman's Corner across Naaman's Creek on "a wooden bridge" and passed "by Robertson's Mill a bit to the left" and on into present-day Claymont. "Robertson's Mill," which is clearly indicated on the French route map, was the home of Abraham Robinson on Naaman's Creek just south of the 20-mile marker, which is now relocated in the lawn in front of the Robinson House.²⁴⁷ **(Resource 1)** From Naaman's Creek, "the fine road continues over flat ground for about half a mile. Then the terrain becomes uneven and stony, continuing so far as Shellpot's Creek, over which there is no bridge." Not far past the Robinson House the troops may have marched past a house on the right, clearly indicated on the French map, that became the home of famous illustrator Felix Octavius Darley in 1859.²⁴⁸

As they approached Wilmington, they next marched past the *Anchor Tavern*, which was situated on the right-hand side of the road a little over a mile past the Robinson House. Next came *The Three Tuns Tavern*, which by 1804 had changed its name to *Swan Tavern* **(Resource 2)**, then across the *Stone Creek*, today's Stony Run, past the homes of Widow Callam, Edward Beeson and William Tussey to the Arthur Penny House located just before Mile Marker 25.²⁴⁹ **(Resource 3)** About 1/2 mile from the Penny House they crossed "Shellpot's Creek to Allet's [Ellett's? (sic)] Tavern the terrain is still stony and mountainous." But first they would have seen a good quarter of a mile past Shellpot's Creek the home of Admiral Boscawen on the right, and about 1 1/4 miles after that the road from Concord joined Philadelphia Pike from the right.

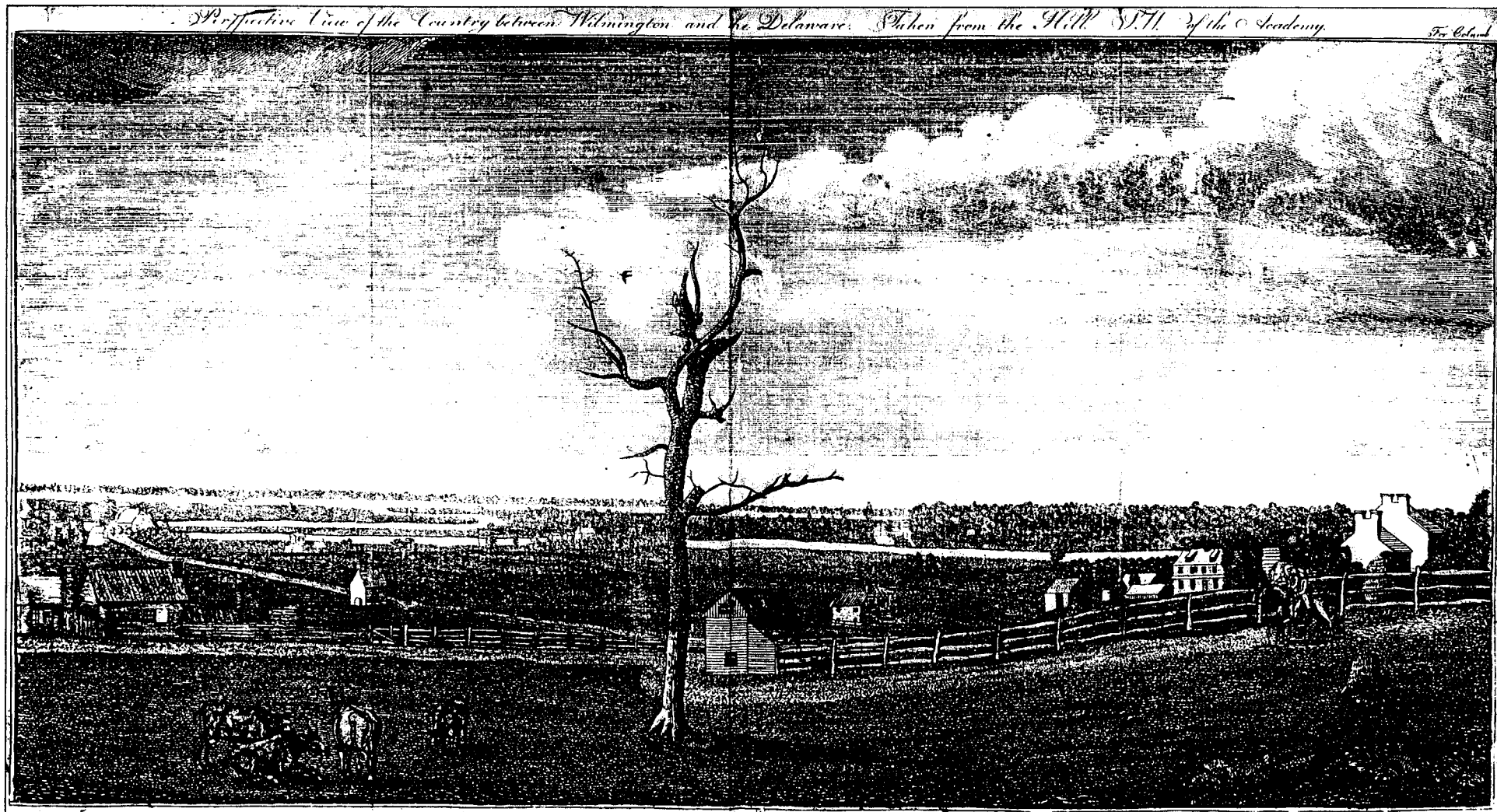
About 1/4 of a mile further on they reached "Brandywine Creek" and "Milltown, because of the large number of mills above and below the bridge."²⁵⁰ Before they crossed the Brandywine the troops passed Ellet's Tavern, which according to the French itinerary was located 1 1/2 miles

²⁴⁷ The itinerary follows that printed in Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, vol. 2, pp. 79-81. The Robinson House is situated on the right-hand side of the road into Delaware. The map drawn by George Washington's cartographer Simeon DeWitt in August 1781 for the march of the through Delaware clearly identifies the home of Abraham Robinson on the right-hand side of the road. The map is preserved in the *Erskine-DeWitt Maps* in the New York Historical Society (NYHS), Map 124 A. "Robinson's on Naamans Creek" was one of the mills from which Washington ordered the millstones removed in 1777. GW to James Potter, 31 October 1777, Washington, *Writings*, Vol. 9, p. 474.

²⁴⁸ The house, which is today the Darley Manor Inn, most likely was already standing in 1775, and may be identical with the Anchor Tavern (see Footnote 249), but more research is needed for this identification.

²⁴⁹ These houses are indicated on *Erskine-DeWitt Map 124 B*, but they have not yet all been identified positively. The Swan Tavern at Mile Marker 22 south of Harvey Road on Philadelphia Pike is *The Three Tuns* on the Erskine-DeWitt and Moore maps. S. Moore and T. W. Jones. *The traveller's directory, or, A pocket companion shewing the course of the main road from Philadelphia to New York, and from Philadelphia to Washington, with descriptions of the places through which it passes, and the intersections of the cross roads; illustrated with an account of such remarkable objects as are generally interesting to travellers; from actual survey* (Philadelphia, 1804), map 4. Where Edward Beeson's home is located on the map there is today the "Beeson Funeral Home." See George Fletcher Bennett, *Early Architecture of Delaware* (Wilmington, 1932) and Mary Sam Ward, *Inns and Taverns in Delaware (1800-1850)* MA Thesis, University of Delaware, 1968. Nancy Churchman Sawin and Barbara McEwing, *North from Wilmington by Oulde Roades and Turnpikes* (Wilmington, 1992) has a drawing of a "Three Ton Tavern" on p. 55. Neither this nor her other books such as *The Oulde King's Roade, including the Towns of Richardson Park ... & Glasgow* (Hockessin, 1989), provide documentation as to the source of and for these images.

²⁵⁰ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, vol. 2, p. 80. The 156 feet long and 36 feet wide bridge had been built in 1765. A view of Wilmington as it presented itself to the troops is captured in a pencil sketch in the *Columbia Magazine or Monthly Miscellany* of April 1787. It is reproduced on the next page.



“Perspective View of the Country between Wilmington and the Delaware. Taken from the Hill S.W. of the Academy.”

Columbia Magazine or Monthly Miscellany Vol. 1 No. 8 (April 1787)

from Shellpot's Creek. Modern Brandywine Village was one of the most important milling centers in the mid-Atlantic states in the eighteenth century.²⁵¹ (Resource 4) "On a small branch" of the Delaware River, according to Dr. James Thacher's account, "is erected eight very large and valuable stone mills, where an immense quantity of wheat is ground and bolted. The wheat is brought in vessels to the very door, and the flour taken off in return."²⁵² These mills were owned by a group of interrelated Quakers such as Thomas Shipley, whose daughter Elizabeth Shipley married Oliver Canby who is said to have built the first mill on the creek in 1742, and who in cooperation with his brother-in-law built a mill-race for the four mills working by the early 1760s. Their son Samuel Canby married Frances Lea, daughter of mill owner James Lea, in 1775. Elizabeth Lea, another one of James' daughters, was married to Joseph Tatnall in 1765.²⁵³

One half mile across the Brandywine, the troops marched past the Academy²⁵⁴ and followed Philadelphia Pike which by then would have become Market Street, down the hill toward the waterfront and the Christina River, called "Christiana Creek" on Erskine's map and "Cristine Creek" on the French map. Wilmington, as the French itinerary stated, "is a fairly sizeable town, well built and advantageously situated at the mouth of Christina Creek, which flows into the Delaware. . . . This town, in spite of the rivalry of Philadelphia, carried on very extensive trade before the war. Ships coming down the Delaware can stop here to load tobacco that has been transported overland from Head of Elk . . . and bring flour and cattle from the Jerseys, which are a precious object of exchange for the West Indies."²⁵⁵

Thacher described Wilmington as "a handsome, flourishing village, situated on the Delaware river." In the absence of a census, the size of the town can only be estimated, but it probably doubled in size since it had changed its name from Willingtown to Wilmington in 1730, when 610 people are said to have been living there. By 1777, "it was said to have 335 houses and 1,229 inhabitants" about 200 fewer than the 1,432 persons on board the *Duc de Bourgogne* at the time of departure from Brest for Newport in 1780!²⁵⁶ Lieutenant Enos Reeves of the Pennsylvania Line who marched through Wilmington on his way to Virginia in early October 1781, described it as "a fine borough, has a number of regular streets, a Court House, Market house, and contains about 5 or 600 houses . . . with a fine Academy on the Hill."²⁵⁷ Christiana Hundred, of which Wilmington was a part, had a total of 3,305 inhabitants in 1782. Yet small as it may seem, 1,200

²⁵¹ Ibid, p. 71. On Brandywine see Peter C. Welsh, "Merchants, Millers, and Ocean Ships: The Components of an early American Industrial Town." *Delaware History* Vol. 7, No. 4, (Sept. 1957), pp. 319-336, which lists all relevant literature. Ellet's or Allet's Tavern may be the Brandywine Village Inn. More recent is the work by Carol E. Hoffecker, *Brandywine Village: the story of a milling community* (Wilmington, 1974).

²⁵² James Thacher, *Eyewitness to the American Revolution. The Battles and Generals as seen by an Army Surgeon* (Stamford, 1994), p. 274. The book was originally published as *A Military Journal during the American Revolutionary War* (Boston, 1823).

²⁵³ Samuel Canby's house stood at Fourteenth and Market; Tatnall's home, built in 1771, is still standing at 1803 Market Street in Wilmington. Today's James Marshall Building, 1801 Market Street, built in 1770-71, was owned by Thomas Lea in the 1780s.

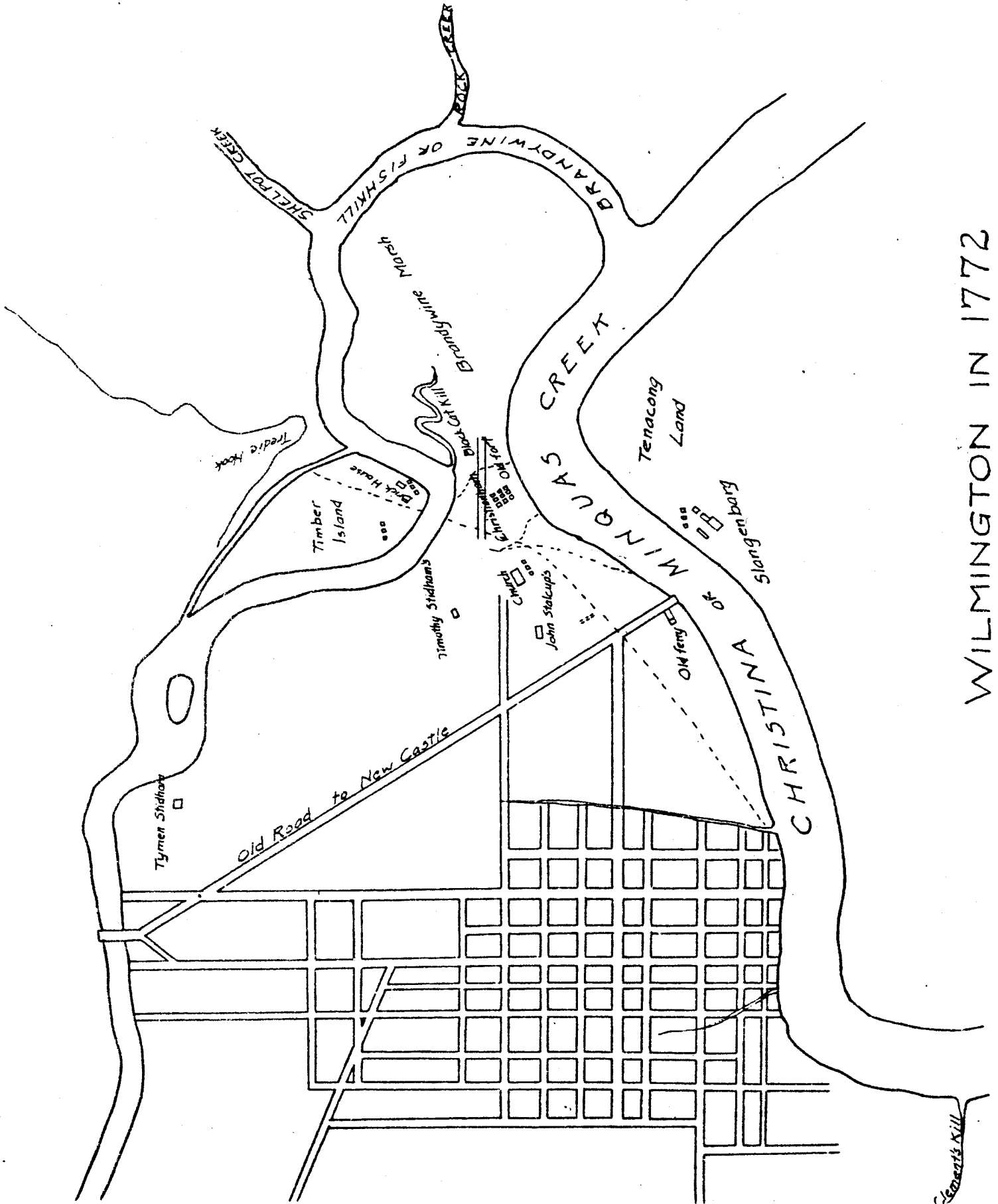
²⁵⁴ The "Academy" is the Wilmington Academy established in 1773 between 8th and 9th Streets and Market and King Streets in Wilmington. See E. Miriam Lewis, "The Minutes of the Wilmington Academy, 1777-1802." *Delaware History* Vol.3 No. 4 (September 1949), pp. 181-226, pp. 181-191.

²⁵⁵ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, vol. 2, p. 80.

²⁵⁶ Anna Lincoln, *Wilmington, Delaware: Three Centuries under Four Flags, 1609-1937* (Rutland, 1937) p. 96.

²⁵⁷ "Extracts from the Letterbooks of Lieutenant Enos Reeves, of the Pennsylvania Line [Sept. 1780-April 1782]." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* Vol. 21 (April-October 1897), pp. 235-256, p. 239, in a letter written from Head of Elk on 7 October 1781. Reeves was with a group of reinforcements going to the south. His letters were published in six installments from October 1896 to January 1898. While in Wilmington he went "to see an old Mr. [Jacob] Broom, . . . who kindly received me and would make me stay to drink a Sling with him, of which he is very fond."

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WILMINGTON IN 1772

FROM AN OLD PLAN

inhabitants made Wilmington the largest town in Delaware, whose population is estimated at 42,500 whites and 7-8,000 African-Americans in 1781, or about the number of troops present on both sides during the siege of Yorktown.²⁵⁸

The arrival of the Continental Army more than doubled, at least temporarily, the number of Wilmington's inhabitants. The units that marched through town in the first days of September 1781 were the First Rhode Island Regiment of about 390 officers and men, the First New York of the same strength, Scammel's Light Infantry with about 380 officers and men, and the First and Second New Jersey of about 340 officers and men, plus the artificers, for a total of about 1,500 to 1,600 men.²⁵⁹ With them came also a few dozen women. John U. Rees, who has done extensive research on the subject, estimates that between 30 and 45 women were in Washington's army, about 25 of whom may have marched through Wilmington on 4 September 1781.²⁶⁰

The troops, however, did not camp in Wilmington, but continued their march on King Street onto Front Street. Here they turned right/west onto Lancaster Pike (DE SR 48) and left onto Maryland Avenue (DE SR 4) for their camp, which, as recorded by Lieutenant Reuben Sanderson who served with Scammel's Light Infantry, was "one mile from Wilmington, which was about 20 miles we marched that day."²⁶¹ A campsite one mile from the outskirts of Wilmington on the way to Newport places them in the vicinity of Canby Park on the slopes of Robinson Hill facing the Mill Creek of Richard Richardson's Mill.²⁶² Some of the men were familiar with the site: Continental troops had already camped once before in 1777. **(Resources 5 and 6)**

But the troops also brought with them hundreds of horses and draft oxen. An "Estimate of the number of Horses & Oxen of the Main Army for the Campaign 1781 & of the cost of the Forage requisite for their Support for 182 days" allowed the Commander-in-Chief and his guard 64 horses and 24 oxen. Each regiment of Infantry was allowed 22 horses and 32 oxen, an artillery regiment had 20 horses and 40 oxen. Moses Hazen's regiment was allowed 26 horses and 24 oxen, the artificers 11 horses and 40 oxen, the Sappers and Miners 22 horses and 8 oxen. Staff,

²⁵⁸ Delaware's total white population in fall of 1782 was 42,816. Harold B. Hancock, *The Reconstructed Delaware State Census of 1782* (Wilmington, 1983), p. 7.

²⁵⁹ These numbers are estimates based on strength reports for the Continental Army for September 1781 in Lesser, *Sinews of Independence*, p. 208, compiled as the units were preparing to lay siege to Yorktown. Numbers for early September may have been slightly different. No strength reports for August have survived. Approximately 950 officers and men took the water route through Christiana to Head of Elk.

²⁶⁰ Personal communication to the author of 31 July 2002. See John U. Rees, "'The Multitude of Women': An Examination of the Numbers of female Camp Followers with the Continental Army." *The Brigade Dispatch* Vol. 23 No. 4 (Autumn 1992), pp. 5-17; vol. 24 No. 1, (Winter 1993), pp. 6-16; and No. 2 (Spring 1993), pp. 2-6; "The Number of Rations issued to Women in Camp: New Material Concerning Female Followers With Continental Regiments." *ibid.*, vol. 28 No. 1, (Spring 1998), pp. 2-8 and No. 2, (Summer 1998), pp. 2-12, 13, as well as his "'The Proportion of Women which ought to be allowed': Female Camp Followers With the Continental Army." *The Continental Soldier. Journal of the Continental Line* vol. 8 No. 3, (Spring 1995), pp. 51-58.

²⁶¹ Henry P. Johnston, *The Yorktown Campaign and the Surrender of Cornwallis 1781* (New York, 1881, repr. 1981), p. 170. Thacher served with Sanderson in the Light Infantry. Dr. Samuel Moore Shute, a 1st Lieutenant in the 2nd New Jersey Regiment, records that he marched to "2 miles below Wilmington" on 4 September after a camp at "the Plough." "The Plough" was 3 1/2 miles from Darby and 3 1/2 miles from Chester. See Moore, *The traveller's directory*, Map 2. It is about 19 miles from "the Plough" to Richardson Mill situated "2 miles below Wilmington." Type-script in DEPA RG 1800.066, Revolutionary War Records Box 2, Military Records 1775-1908, folder 31. The original is in the US Army Military History Institute.

²⁶² C. A. Weslager, *The Richardsons of Delaware* (Wilmington, 1957). On Richard (1720-1797) see pp. 46-57. Richard was married to Sarah Tatnall, sister of mill owner Joseph Tatnall. DeWitt identified the mill on his map as belonging to "Richard Robinson," a combination of Richard Richardson, the mill-owner, and Robert Robinson, on whose land some of the Continental Army encamped. Weslager, *Richardsons*, p. 52. An area map, which forms the inside cover page of Weslager's book, is reproduced on the following page.

commissary, artillery conductors, traveling forges, ammunition wagons and carts for provisions added dozens more animals. All of this means that including horses owned privately by officers there may well have been 500-600 animals with the Continental Army in Wilmington that day.²⁶³ As it settled down for the night, the army distributed these animals over the meadows of the surrounding farms.²⁶⁴ Since the army was unable to pay for it, the farmers received "Certificates" or IOUs, such as this one handed to Robert Robinson by Henry Dearborn.

"Camp near Wilmington Sept 5th 1781. This is to certify that Eighty horses & oxen have been pastured 6 hours on the farm of Robert Robinson for wh he is intitled to pay from the Public."

The certificate was allowed to be worth 30 shillings in 1790, though we don't know when or if Robinson received his compensation. Concurrently his neighbor Lance Stanard had 150 horses and oxen pasturing on his land on 5 September, and supplied 200 sheaves of hay and 260 sheaves of oats, which were valued at a total of £ 6 s 10 in 1790.²⁶⁵

As the troops set up their tents, at least some of the officers were invited into the homes of the local elite: Dr. Thacher records that he spent the evening with Dr. Ebenezer A. Smith and his brother, the Rev. William R. Smith, before continuing on the following day.²⁶⁶

Washington had spent the night of 4-5 September in Philadelphia, and left the city in the morning of Wednesday, 5 September 1781. What happened next constituted one of the happiest days in Washington's life. His secretary Jonathan Trumbull recorded the events of this momentous day in his journal. "About 3 miles below Chester meets an Express from Admiral de Grasse. The fleet arrived in the Chesapeak 26 ult^o. News welcome though strangely delayed. The General returns to Chester to meet and rejoice with Count Rochambeau, who was coming down by water, and to communicate the joy to Congress."²⁶⁷ Rochambeau, who had wanted to see Mud Island, Red Bank and Billingsport, while his troops were resting near Chester, embarked on a ship in Philadelphia to sail there.²⁶⁸ As they approached the shore, Baron Closen "discerned in the distance General Washington, standing on the shore and waving his hat and a white handkerchief joyfully. There was good reason for this; for he informed us as we disembarked that M. de Grasse had arrived in Chesapeake Bay with 28 ships of the line and 3,000 troops."²⁶⁹ The capture of Lord Cornwallis in Yorktown had come within reach.²⁷⁰ In Closen's eyes, Washington's joy represented a vindication of Rochambeau, "who must indeed have felt deep satisfaction in having the time draw near when his long-considered plans would be executed and in winning the

²⁶³ National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Miscellaneous Numbered Documents, Record Group 93, microfilm reel 92, No. 26624. The total estimate was for 3,121 horses and 2,132 oxen.

²⁶⁴ See John U. Rees, "Soldier's Shelter on Campaign During the War for Independence: Tents in the Armies of the Revolution." *Military Collector & Historian* vol. 49 No. 3 (Fall 1997), pp. 98-107; No. 4, Winter 1997), pp. 156-167; vol. 53 No. 4, (Winter 2001-2002), pp. 161- 169. Food preparation is discussed in John U. Rees, "'To Subsist an Army well ...' Soldier's Cooking Equipment, Provisions, and Food Preparation During the American War for Independence." *Military Collector and Historian* vol. 53 No. 1, (Spring 2001), pp. 7-23, with an addendum in No. 3, (Fall 2001), pp. 118-119.

²⁶⁵ DEPA RG 1800.099, Delaware Archives - Military, Vol. 6 (unpublished), microfilm frame 422.

²⁶⁶ Thacher, *Military Journal*, p. 274.

²⁶⁷ Trumbull, "Minutes of Occurrences," p. 332. Three miles below Chester places Washington at Marcus Hook, about 1 1/2 miles from the Delaware State line.

²⁶⁸ Rochambeau was accompanied on the excursion by Lauberdère and Major Mauduit du Plessis who had led the defense of Red Bank in 1777 while in the Continental Army. Lauberdere, "Journal," fol. 102/03.

²⁶⁹ Acomb, *Closen*, pp. 121-123; the quote is on p. 123. The news that de Grasse had cast anchor in the Chesapeake Bay on 26 August came via General Mordecai Gist from Baltimore, where the 18-gun Cutter *Serpent* under Captain Arne de Laune had arrived on 4 September.

²⁷⁰ Unbeknownst to Washington or Rochambeau, Cornwallis' fate was sealed that very afternoon in the Battle off the Capes when de Grasse's fleet prevented a British fleet from entering the Chesapeake Bay.

approval of General Washington, who originally had been bent upon a campaign against New York."²⁷¹ Lauberdière recorded how "le témoignage de la joie des deux Généraux dans cette occasion n'est pas facile a rendre -- the expression of the joy of the two generals on this occasion is not easy to describe."²⁷²

Rochambeau spent the night of 5-6 September with his troops which were encamped about two miles outside the city on the road to Chester (US-R 13) along the Eastern banks of the Schuylkill. The following day, 6 September, he rode with his First Division into Delaware.

After he had communicated his "joy to Congress" from Chester, Washington, his aides, his Guard of about 70 officers and men, and two or three women, continued their journey.²⁷³ In his "Minutes of Occurrences," Trumbull recorded that "At evening proceeds to Wilmington. 6. Breakfast at Christiana Bridge, where our boats, stores &c. are brought from Delaware Water through the Christiana Creek, debarked and carried across by land about 12 miles to the head of Elk."²⁷⁴ Unfortunately Trumbull does not record where Washington stayed in Wilmington or in which of Christiana's taverns the group breakfasted, but he did take the time to write a letter to Robert Morris from Christiana on 6 September 1781.²⁷⁵ Neither does Washington's expense account shed any light on this stay of the Commander-in-Chief in Delaware. Between 21 November 1780, and 6 September 1781, Washington kept no detailed expense account, and the first entry by Lieutenant William Colfax, who had assumed his duties as cashier to Washington on 6 September, dates from 8 September for a dinner at the Fountain Inn in Baltimore.²⁷⁶

The Continental Army had marched through Newport on 5 September, past the home of Jacob Robertson, through a "thinset wood"²⁷⁷ and crossed the Red Clay Creek on "a wooden bridge" onto the Christiana-Stanton Road to Christiana,²⁷⁸ where "you pass on the left a bridge and a road going to Dover." The triangular configuration of the roads converging on Christiana is clearly visible on the DeWitt map, and on a petition submitted by John Lewden to the legislature on 13 January 1781. In it, Lewden complained that the road from Newcastle was "subject to great wash in heavy Rain that endanger the Eastermost End or Wing of the Bridge over the Creek."²⁷⁹ Lewden's petition confirms Clermont-Crèveœur's comment about the march that "the roads were very good at this season, but one could tell that in winter they could be very bad."²⁸⁰ Comparing the high quality of roads near Wilmington as opposed to those in the country, Cromot du Bourg, one of Rochambeau's aides, also commented that "it is evident that the roads, which are good enough now, must be very bad in winter."²⁸¹

Once past Christiana, "There are then no side roads and only a few dwellings, on the right and left, as far as the bridge called Cooch's Bridge."²⁸² DeWitt's map confirms this description: only

²⁷¹ Acomb, *Closen*, p. 123.

²⁷² Lauberdière, "Journal," fol. 104.

²⁷³ Washington's letters to Congress and the chevalier de la Luzerne are dated "Chester, 3 p.m."

²⁷⁴ Trumbull, "Minutes of Occurrences," p. 332.

²⁷⁵ The letter is available in the online edition by the Library of Congress of the George Washington Papers.

²⁷⁶ Washington's expense account is *ibid.* Series 5, Financial Papers, George Washington, September, 1781, Revolutionary War Expense Account, p. 19, image 37.

²⁷⁷ Ella W. Johnson, *Story of Newport, a square little town in the state of Delaware* (Wilmington, 1963).

²⁷⁸ On Christiana see Richard Rodney Cooch, *A History of Christiana, Delaware* (Christiana, 1976).

²⁷⁹ DEPA RG 1111, Legislative Petitions, 13 January 1781.

²⁸⁰ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 1, p. 51. Lewden asked that the course of the road be altered and attached a drawing done by William McClay to his petition. For an August 1780 description of the extremely bad condition of this road see Wade Catts et al., *Phase I Archaeological Investigation of Old Baltimore Pike*. Delaware Department of Transportation Report No. 71 (Dover, 1989), p. 49.

²⁸¹ Cromot du Bourg, "Diary," p. 385.

²⁸² Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 2, p. 81.

the homes of Isaac Hershey and Robert Montur are identified on the Old Baltimore Pike between Christiana and Cooch's Bridge. At Cooch's Bridge, site of the only Revolutionary War battle fought on Delaware soil on 3 September 1777, (**Resources 7 and 8**), "there are three different roads. All three go to Head of Elk. The one you pass on the right before crossing the bridge goes around to the right of Iron Hill. The one straight ahead from the bridge goes over the crest of this same mountain. The road to the left beyond the bridge goes around to the left of Iron Hill. The shortest of the three roads is the one straight ahead, but is also the hardest for wagons; they should take the left-hand road after crossing the bridge. After having come around or over Iron Hill you go up over Gray's Hill. Then the three routes merge, first the right-hand road, then the left-hand road, a mile before reaching the bridge called Elk Bridge."²⁸³

Leaving his camp near Canby Park in the morning of 5 September, and passing Aiken's Tavern along the way,²⁸⁴ Reuben Sanderson of Scammell's Light Infantry too recorded that he marched 14 miles from his camp near Canby Park and camped about 6 miles beyond Christina, which would put him on the east side of Iron Hill, about a mile from the Blue Ball Tavern and 2 1/2 miles from the Delaware-Maryland State Line. On 6 September he marched "10 miles" from this campsite to Head of Elk. Dr. Shute, who had camped "2 miles" below Wilmington, marched only 13 miles "to Iron Hill," where he spent the night. The next morning he marched 6 miles to "head of Elk & encamped in a cornfd."²⁸⁵

8.1.2 Route 2: The Water Route of Continental Army Troops to Christiana

In the morning of 20 August, Colonel Moses Hazen's Canadian (Congress' Own) Regiment left its camp at Haverstraw, New York, and encamped between Springfield and Chatham, New Jersey, from 21 to 28 August. From there it marched to Princeton via Bound Brook on 29 and 30 August, and on 31 August 1781, it "passed thro' Trenton towards the Lower Ferry, close by which halted and encamped. About an Hour after we encamped Col. Scammell's Corps of Light Troops, the Rhode Island and New Jersey Lines, and Part of the New York Line and Sappers and Miners Passed between us & the River and encamped in our Front; the French Troops are encamped between us and Trenton."²⁸⁶

This scenario is confirmed by Joseph Plumb Martin of the Corps of Sappers and Miners. Martin arrived in Trenton at sunset of 31 August, but "instead of encamping for the night, as we

²⁸³ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, Vol. 2, p. 81. "Elk Bridge" crosses the Elk River about 1/2 mile outside Elkton. The three roads mentioned at Cooch's Bridge are Glasgow Road to the left or south, Baltimore Pike straight ahead, and River Road to Welsh Tract Church. None of them go over Iron Hill.

²⁸⁴ Aiken's Tavern was on the east side of road leading from Newark to Middletown adjacent to land of Pencader Presbyterian Church. Glasgow was known as Aikentown after Mathew Aiken.

DEPA, Military Records, Revolutionary War, Record Group 1800.066, Box 2, Archibald Robertson Journal extracts, gives the following distances: "Head of Elk to Aiken's Tavern 4 1/2 miles; To Couche's Mill 2; To Newark 3; White Clay Creek 2."

See also Wade Catts et al., *Tenant Farmers, Stone Masons and Black Laborers: Final Archaeological Investigations of the Thomas Williams Site*. Delaware Department of Transportation (Dover, 1990), pp. 16-20, for a brief discussion of Glasgow.

²⁸⁵ Johnston, *Yorktown Campaign*, p. 170. Sanderson must have marched through Elkton toward the harbor; it is exactly 3 miles from Cooch's Bridge to the State Line and six mile to the center of Elkton. Thacher reports arriving at Head of Elk on 6 September, "having completed a march of two hundred miles in fifteen days." Thacher, *Military Journal*, p. 274.

The "Blue Ball Tavern," still standing on DESR 273 west of Newark, is clearly visible on Colles' map.

²⁸⁶ *Journal of Sergeant-Major John H. Hawkins, 1779-1781*. Manuscript Guide 273, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. Hawkins' journal is not paginated.

expected, we were ordered immediately on board vessels then lying at the landing place, and a little after sunrise found ourselves at Philadelphia."²⁸⁷

Water transportation, especially of heavy or bulky goods, was faster than transporting them on land and cheaper as well: freight charges on land were ten times the freight charges for water transport.²⁸⁸ In a military context this meant primarily artillery and foodstuffs, and wherever possible Washington used the waterways along the route in 1781 to his advantage. From Trenton onwards, except for the short, 10-mile portage from Christiana to Elkton, Colonel Lamb's Second Continental Artillery, the Sappers and Miners, and Hazen's Canadian Regiment traveled to Virginia on water. By 29 August 1781, Deputy Quartermaster Samuel Miles had 31 craft capable of carrying more than 3,200 men waiting for the armies at Philadelphia.²⁸⁹ That same day, Washington informed General Lincoln that Rochambeau was "inclined to have the French Troops march by Land from Trenton to Head of Elk, which will give a larger proportion of Craft for the American Baggage and Troops. ... after a lot[tin]g a Sufficiency for the French Baggage &c ... first put on Board such heavy Stores and Baggage, Cloathg Tools Garrison Carriages &c,&, as Colo Lamb and you shall think proper, and then Embark the Troops on Board the Water Craft and let them fall down the River to Christiana Bridge as soon as possible."²⁹⁰

From Philadelphia, Washington had instructed Moses Hazen on 2 September to "proceed immediately to Christiana Bridge at which place I expect you will meet the Boats laden with Ordnance and other stores. You will make the proper general arrangements for the speediest transportation of them across to the Head of Elk. Colonel Lamb, or Lieut. Colo. Stevens will attend particularly to the assorting and forwarding the Ordnance Stores, which ought to be first carried over.

It is of importance that the Road from Christiana Bridge to the Head of Elk, should be put in the best state; you will therefore take a view of it and appoint an active Officer acquainted with such business to go upon it with a party and make the necessary re[pair]s."²⁹¹

Sergeant-Major Hawkins of Colonel Hazen's regiment recorded that pursuant to these orders from Trenton at "About 6 oClock, [on 31 August] part of our Army embarked on board Shallops with their Artillery and Baggage – the Waggons & Horses went by Land. Our Regiment was among those that first embarked. At Day Break (Sept. 1 [sic]) set sail, passed Bordentown, Bristol and Burlington and about noon appeared before the City of Philadelphia, where we dropped Anchor in the Stream."

Following a brief rest in Philadelphia, Hawkin's unit, the artillery, and the Sappers and Miners boarded their shallops again "and about 3 oclock the next Morning [(Sept. 2) sic.] set sail and about half past ten dropped Anchor about 2 Miles from [before] Chester." Again the rest was brief for Hawkins. Around 2:00 p.m. the shallops took advantage of the tide and tacked against the wind past Chester and Marcus Hook into the mouth of the Christiana River "just at Sunset." They did not stop at Wilmington but followed the winding course of the Christina River past Newport to Christiana or Christiana Bridge, where they arrived around midnight 2/3 September. Having spent the night as best they could, the units began unloading supplies "A little after Day Break" on 3 September. That evening Hawkins' "Regiment encamped in the Woods. Col. Lamb's Regt. of Artillery encamped on our Left." (**Resource 10**)

²⁸⁷ Joseph Plumb Martin, *Private Yankee Doodle* (1830; repr. Eastern Acorn Press, 1992) p. 222.

²⁸⁸ Buel, *In Irons*, p. 325 note 23.

²⁸⁹ Samuel Miles to GW, 29-30 August 1781. George Washington Papers at the Library of Congress, 1741-1799: Series 4. General Correspondence. 1697-1799, available at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem>

²⁹⁰ GW to Lincoln, Washington, *Writings* vol. 23, p. 71.

²⁹¹ Quoted from a transcript on the Library of Congress web site at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem>

Joseph Plumb Martin's account of the journey from Philadelphia to Christiana is also worth quoting at length. After a stay of "some days ... we [(the Miners) sic] left the city" and proceeded

"down the Delaware in a schooner which had her hold nearly full of gunpowder ... to the mouth of Christiana Creek, up which we were bound.

We were compelled to anchor here on account of wind and tide. Here we passed an uneasy night from fear of British cruisers, several of which were in the bay. In the morning we got under weigh, the wind serving, and proceeded up the creek fourteen miles,²⁹² the creek passing, the most of its course, through a marsh, as crooked as a snake in motion. There was one place in particular near the village of Newport [Delaware] (sic) where you sail four miles to gain about 40 rods. We went on till the vessel grounded for lack of water. We then lightened her by taking out a part of her cargo, and when the tide came in we got up to the wharves and left her at the disposal of the artillerists."²⁹³

Hawkins' and Martin's accounts, which unlike Hawkins' was written years after the events, indicate that the Continental Army departed from Philadelphia at the same time on 2 September. Hawkins did not anchor for the night but continued on to Christiana and spent the night on board his ship. Martin, who sailed on a larger ship, anchored in the mouth of the Christina in Wilmington and arrived at Christiana some time during 3 September. This scenario is confirmed based on an entry in the Orderly Book of Colonel Lamb's 2nd Regiment of Artillery:

"Christiana Bridge, Sept. 3rd 1781 – 6 OClock a.m.

As soon as the Tents are pitched and the Baggage carried up to the Ground, a fatigue party is to be turned out consisting of one Sup [erior officer], two Sergeants, two Corp [oral] s and twenty Matrosses, to disembark the ordnance and stores now on board the Vessells. – An officer from each Company to Superintend the mounting the Pieces and Ammunition belonging to their respective Companies."²⁹⁴

Help in this task was not far behind in the form of the 2nd New York Regiment under Colonel Philip Van Cortlandt which arrived in the early afternoon of 6 September.²⁹⁵ On 21 August 1781, Washington recorded in his diary that "During the passing of the french Army I mounted 30 flat Boats (able to carry about 40 Men each) upon carriages, as well with a design to deceive the enemy as to our real movement, as to be useful to me in Virginia when I get there."²⁹⁶ John Hudson, who was with the 2nd New York as it began transporting the boats from Stony Point, New York, on 26 August across New Jersey to Trenton remembered them being "so large that it took a wagon and eight horses to draw them."²⁹⁷

²⁹² It is 10 miles on land from the center of Wilmington to Christiana.

²⁹³ Martin, *Private Yankee Doodle*, p. 223. One rod equals 5.5 yards.

²⁹⁴ *Orderly Book: Colonel John Lamb's Second Regiment, Continental Artillery, Virginia*. 26 June – 30 December 1781. 85 pages, Library of Congress. There is no entry for 2 September. It also contains a gap between 4 September and 24 September, when it commences at Burwell's Ferry on the James River.

²⁹⁵ In his diary, Van Cortlandt wrote simply that he proceeded from Philadelphia to Markus Hook, "passing Wilmington to the Head of Elk, where I left the Boats and Marched by land to Baltimore where I encamped on the Hill being a part of Mr. Howards Farm now a part of Baltimore City (13 September 1781)." Jacob Judd, ed., *The Revolutionary War Memoir and Selected Correspondence of Philip Van Cortlandt* (Tarrytown 1976), pp. 59-60. Lauberdière wrote that "pendant notre sejour à Philadelphie ils passerent au large de cette ville en descendant le Delaware pour se rendre à New Castle." Lauberdière, "Journal," fol. 100. Lauberdière had joined Rochambeau in Philadelphia on 1 September.

²⁹⁶ Washington, *Diary*, p. 256. Eventually the Second New York transported 34 boats to Head of Elk.

²⁹⁷ Hudson reminiscences were printed in volume 3 of the weekly *Cist's Advertiser* of Cincinnati, Ohio, in five installments between 28 January and 22 April 1846. The quote is from the installment of 28 January.

At Trenton on 31 August, Washington's diary states that "Count de Rochambeau and myself concluded it would be best to let the Troops march by land to the Head of Elk, and gave directions accordingly to all but the 2d. York Regiment which was ordered (with its baggage) to come down in the Batteaux they had in charge to Christiana bridge."²⁹⁸ The execution of this order can be followed in the journal of Samuel Tallmadge of the 2nd New York. At 8 a.m. on the morning of 3 September, the 2nd New York arrived in Trenton where "(we) put our boates in the delaware river put the baggage on board, and Imbarked about one Oclock." Some of the carriages were to be taken apart and put on board the batteaux for future use as Timothy Pickering told Henry Dearborn on 31 August. "As soon as the boats arrive, please to direct all the carpenters to repair any damage they may have sustained ... if 15 of the best boat Carriages are selected, they may be taken to pieces, put on board the boats, & with so many troops as they will carry, go to Christiana Bridge, from whence at two trips they may take all the boats over to the Head of Elk; or if inconvenient to take down more than ten carriages, they will of course take the boats over in three trips." The teams and the remainder of the carriages were to go to Christiana by land.²⁹⁹

Following a day of rest, Tuesday, 4 September, in Philadelphia, the regiment continued on to Marcus Hook on 5 September. Tallmadge's journal continues:

"Camp Marcushook Thursday Sepr 6th 1781. Embarked about Six OClock Continued our march down to Wilmington passed by the town, and proceeded on to Newport there halted half an hour then Continued our march to Christeen Bridge where we arrived about one OClock and Encamped. Willmington, and Newport is situated on Christeen Creek, the latter in Delaware state."³⁰⁰

In 1781, Christiana was one of the most important shipping centers in Delaware and a crucial trading place on the route from Philadelphia to Baltimore. "Of the five routes from the northern Chesapeake to the Delaware, the portage between Head of Elk and Christiana Bridge was the most direct," and "sufficiently heavy to justify the maintenance of a regular shallop service between Christiana Bridge and Philadelphia."³⁰¹ More than a century old by 1781, Lieutenant Reeves described it as "small and ill built, containing 50 houses, some of which are very good."³⁰² Lauberdière on the other hand estimated it at 30-some houses and less than 200 inhabitants.³⁰³
(Resource 11)

²⁹⁸ Washington, *Diaries*, vol. 2, p. 258.

²⁹⁹ NARA, Record Group 93, Numbered Record Book, vol. 82 Target 3, microfilm reel 26, pp. 175-178.

³⁰⁰ Almon W. Lauber, *Orderly Books of the Fourth New York Regiment, 1778-1780. The Second New York Regiment, 1780-1783 by Samuel Tallmadge and Others with Diaries of Samuel Tallmadge, 1780-1782 and John Barr, 1779-1782* (Albany, 1932), pp. 759-60. The Orderly Book contains gaps from 17 June 1781 to 24 September 1781, and from 10 October 1781 to 19 August 1782.

³⁰¹ Buel, *In Irons*, p. 323, note 8.

³⁰² Reeves, "Letter-Books," p. 239.

³⁰³ Lauberdière, "Journal", fol. 106 v., gives Christiana "une trentaine de maisons."

The number of inhabitants is an estimate based on the statement that "Christiana's development began in earnest after the Revolution" and that "by 1800, Christiana Bridge could boast a population of 289 inhabitants and between 50 and 60 buildings, including 33 dwelling houses, wharves, storehouses, shops and taverns." Wade P. Catts, Jay Hodny, and Jay F. Custer, *"The Place at Christeen": Final Archaeological Investigations of the Patterson Lane Site Complex Christiana, New Castle County, Delaware* Delaware Department of Transportation Archaeological Series No. 74 (Dover, 1989), p. 34.

See also C. A. Weslager, "Christina, Christeen, Christiana: A Delaware Connection." *Names* Vol. 39 No. 3, (1991), pp. 269-276.

The arrival of Continental Army troops increased the population of the little town five-fold: the 2nd New York arrived with around 20 officers and 400 NCO's and rank and file, Moses Hazen's regiment had a strength of 21 officers, 42 NCO's and 204 men, while Colonel Lamb's artillery may have had close to 200 men. At Dobbs Ferry in July it was listed with 23 officers, 57 NCO's, and 83 rank and file, but some of its furloughed and/or detached men may have been recalled for the campaign. Martin's Sappers and Miners were around 50 officers and men strong.³⁰⁴

The 2nd New York and the artillery spent the next two days, 7 and 8 September, "Constantly employed in Loading and transporting ammunition together with other stores to the head of Elk." The "Estimate of Money due on Contract made for the passage of the Army stores, Baggage &c. ...from Christiana Bridge to Virginia, and from thence to the Northward Commencing 28 August 1781," provides a detailed account of the activities and Continental Army expenses in Christiana during the critical days of late August and early September 1781.³⁰⁵

Post at Christiana Bridge Land Transportation etc.

| | |
|---|-------------|
| For the Hire of Waggon to transport the stores & baggage to the Head of Elk | 171/11/00 |
| For Pasturage 20 Horses two months @ 20/ per Month | 40/00/00 |
| For Pasturage 80 Oxen two months @ 10/ per | 80/00/00 |
| Carpenters bill for Sundry Services and nails | 4/00/00 |
| Blacksmiths bill for shoeing horses & Cole taken for the Army | 3/00/00 |
| Labourers & fatigue men | 25/00/00 |
| Sundry lots of Grass taken for the Horses of the Army | 35/00/00 |
| Damages done the inhabitants fencing & wood purchased | 40/00/00 |
| Certificates given by Sundry Conductors for the Pasturage of Waggon Horses | 50/00/00 |
| Salary of one Assistant Clerk and Storekeeper | 116/00/00 |
| | £ 564/11/00 |

Once the task was completed, the 2nd New York in the morning of Sunday, 9 September, "struck Camp and marched to the head of Elk and Encamped."³⁰⁶ They were joined in their march by a group of 85 recruits from Delaware under the command of Lieutenant Caleb Prew Bennett, who had been waiting for orders to join the Delaware Regiment fighting with General Nathanael Greene in the Carolinas. They assisted in the unloading of the artillery before joining Washington's Army and the 2nd Continental Artillery on the march to Yorktown.³⁰⁷

³⁰⁴ These numbers are estimates based on the strength reports for Moses Hazen's Regiment and the 2nd New York for late September 1781 given in Lesser, *Sinews of Independence*, p. 208. They were compiled as the units were preparing to lay siege to Yorktown. The numbers for early September may have been slightly different. No strength reports for August have survived. The strength for Colonel Lamb's artillery and for the Sappers and Miners is that for July 1781, since the strength of these units is not recorded in the September 1781 report.

There is the possibility of a Revolutionary War encampment at the top of the hill along the road leading north out of the town (old Route 7). The site, known as the Marta Site, awaits further archaeological and historical investigation.

³⁰⁵ NARA, Revolutionary War Records, Miscellaneous Numbered Records, Record Group 93, microfilm reel 92, No. 26673. Additional expenses incurred at Head of Elk, included £ 250 "for the Hire of Waggon to transport the Stores etc from Christiana Bridge to this Place" that brought the total bill to £ 1,619/11.

³⁰⁶ Tallmadge, *Diary*, p. 760.

³⁰⁷ Charles W. Dickens, "Orderly Book of Caleb Prew Bennett at the Battle of Yorktown, 1781." *Delaware History* vol. 4 (1950), pp. 105-148, p. 108. Bennett's Orderly Book begins on 24 September 1781. These were the only Delaware troops that participated in the siege of Yorktown. Briefly attached to the 3rd Maryland regiment on 27 September, they were ordered to join the artillery park on 6 October and to

8.2 The March of the French Army Through Delaware, 5 – 7 September 1781

On 1 September 1781, the First Brigade of the French Army was encamped in Trenton and crossed the Delaware River on 2 September. On 3 September, the brigade paraded before Congress and its President, Delawarean Thomas McKean who had become President on 10 July 1781, following the resignation of Samuel Huntington of Connecticut, and encamped about two miles outside the city on the road to Chester (US-R 13) along the Eastern banks of the Schuylkill. The following day, 4 September, the Second Brigade joined the First Brigade.

After a day of rest on 5 September, the First Brigade decamped from Chester, its 28th campsite since leaving Newport, and marched on what would become Philadelphia Pike into Delaware on 6 September. Rochambeau's son, the vicomte de Rochambeau, stated the obvious when he wrote that Delaware "is much longer than it is wide. The inhabitants are numerous and very industrious. The land is well cultivated and it produces the same things that Pennsylvania does. Wilmington is the capital. It is inhabited largely by Quakers. It is given over to commerce and uses the creek which flows by its southeast portions to send out its ships. It has about 200 houses."³⁰⁸

Once they had reached the outskirts of Wilmington, the troops of the First Brigade, i.e., the regiments Bourbonnais and Royal Deux-Ponts together with Lauzun's Legion and its artillery and wagon train, veered right to march down West Street. At Fifth Street they turned right again and then left onto Pasture (=Washington) Street toward Front Street. Facing Front Street they set up camp on a line with Second Street on fields between today's Justison and Adams Street³⁰⁹ (**Resource 12**) on the edge of Wilmington's Ships Tavern District. One of the sites pointed out to the soldiers was indeed the "Tavern at the Sign of the Ship" as the place where Lafayette had lodged after he had been wounded during the Battle of Brandywine.³¹⁰ (**Resource 14**)

With the arrival of the more than 2,000 officers and men of the First Brigade, the population of Wilmington increased 2 1/2 fold. With the men once again came a small number of women and children -- five women and children for the Bourbonnais, six women and three children for the Royal Deux-Ponts, and one or two women with the artillery.³¹¹

receive their orders from General Knox. In November they were ordered to join their regiment in North Carolina. Christopher Ward, *The Delaware Continentals* (1941; repr. Wilmington 2001), pp. 471-473.

³⁰⁸ Vicomte de Rochambeau, "Journal," p. 251. The capital of Delaware was of course Dover.

³⁰⁹ The French route is indicated on the map of the campsite in Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, vol. 2. The *corderie* indicated on the map is a rope walk on the property of Mordecai Woodward. See Historical Society of Delaware and The Delaware Society for the Preservation of Antiquities, *A Survey of Selected Historical Houses and Areas within the West Center Urban Renewal Project (Scheduled for Razing by the Urban Renewal Commission)* (np, nd) vol. 1, pp. 5-7 with a description of the Woodward houses on 701-703 West Street. Woodward had bought the property from his father Joseph in 1769; after his death in the summer of 1795, John Dauphin bought the land on 19 March 1796. (**Resource 13**)

The street names of Wilmington have changed since the 1780s. First Street was Front Street, but Second and Third Streets were always identified by their number only. Fourth Street used to be called High Street, Fifth was Queen Street, Sixth was Hanover Street, Seventh was Broad Street, Eighth was Kent Street, Ninth was Wood Street, Tenth was Chesnut Street, Eleventh was Elizabeth Street, Twelfth was Dickinson Street, Thirteenth was Franklin Street, Fourteenth was Washington Street, Fifteenth was Stidham Street.

³¹⁰ The tavern and its use by Lafayette after the Battle of Brandywine is mentioned in many journals, e.g., the *Journal de Guerre* of Andre Amblard, a grenadier in the Soissonnais regiment.

³¹¹ When Rochambeau's infantry left from Boston on Christmas Day 1782, it had embarked 25 women and 4 children, including six women and one child for the Soissonnais and five women and children for the Saintonge. Three women accompanied the artillery. These numbers are based on the embarkation list in the Vioménil Papers, LB 0074, Académie François Bourdon, Le Creusot, France. A slightly different list in the *Archives Nationales* gives 20 women and six children for the infantry regiments, three for the artillery.

A large number of animals also accompanied the troops. Rochambeau's little army may well have had 2,000 horses -- just for the wagon train Wadsworth had drafted 855 horses, the artillery added another 500, and Lauzun's Legion had 300 mounted hussars plus horses for the officers -- and up to 800 oxen.³¹² It is quite possible to up to 1,000 horses and oxen grazed on the outskirts of Wilmington that night. Unlike the situation for the American Army, however, where we can reconstruct the expenditures of the march in great detail, documentation for this aspect of the French presence is small. Rochambeau preferred to let his agent Jeremiah Wadsworth handle all aspects of supply. Wadsworth bought in bulk and paid in cash, and so did the French officers. They left no paper trail of IOUs behind, and while this was the preferred way of doing business for Delaware farmers and merchants, the historian laments the cash reserves of the French forces.

But even cash transactions left a trail in the account books of Wilmington millers and merchants. The presence of French forces and their bullion had an enormous economic and emotional impact on the cash-starved colonies. American historian Lee Kennett has estimated that between public and private funds, "French forces may well have disbursed 20 million *livres* in coin," possibly doubling the amount of specie circulating in the thirteen colonies.³¹³ Even if the amount of specie was closer to the estimate of Timothy R. Walton, who estimates that "on the eve of the American Revolution, about half the coins used in the British North American Colonies, some 4 million pesos (24 million *livres*) worth, were pieces of eight from New Spain and Peru," which would give a total of about 48 million *livres* in bullion circulating in the colonies. An infusion of 20 million was bound to have had a major impact on the economy.³¹⁴ But Kennett may still be right. James A. Lewis estimates inter-governmental loans between France and Spain (such as that for de Grasse in August 1781) at about 2 million peso. Loans arranged by private lenders added 3, possibly 4, million peso for a minimum of 30 million *livres* (at an exchange rate of 6 *livres* per peso), which, if added to Kennett's 20 million, would match Walton's 48 million *livres*.³¹⁵ Though the nine shipments of coin from France totaling approximately 10 million *livres* were in French coin, these inter-governmental loans were in Spanish coin, while the extensive trade with the French West Indies brought French colonial currency as well as Portuguese specie into the colonies. Wilmington and Delaware received their share of these funds.³¹⁶

The siege artillery as well as Lauzun's Legion wintered on the American mainland and left in May 1783. An embarkation list dated Philadelphia, 4 May 1783, gives 5 women as passengers "à la ration," i.e., soldier's wives, though it is unclear which unit they belonged to. That would bring the total of women and children in the French army to 34 women and children. Archives Nationales, Paris, Marine B/4/185.

³¹² As it left Annapolis for Williamsburg on 21 September, Berthier wrote that "Lauzun's Legion [the hussars], the artillery horses, and the army wagon train formed a column numbering 1,500 horses, 800 oxen, and 220 wagons." Quoted in Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns*, vol. 2, p. 83.

³¹³ Kennett, *French forces*, p. 68. The remainder of Rochambeau's funds were in bills of exchange which often lost one third or more of their value as opposed to specie due to speculation, a constant source of friction between French and American authorities. But since it cost 1 *livre* to bring 4 *livres* in specie to the New World, the French reluctantly accepted the loss.

³¹⁴ Timothy R. Walton, *The Spanish Treasure Fleets* (Sarasota, 1994), p. 183.

³¹⁵ James A. Lewis "Las Damas de la Havana, el precursor, and Francisco de Saavedra: A Note on Spanish Participation in the Battle of Yorktown" *The Americas* Vol. 37, (July 1980), pp. 83-99. Lewis estimates inter-governmental loans such as the one for de Grasse in August 1781 at about 2 million peso, loans by private lenders at 3, possibly 4, million peso for a minimum of 30 million *livres*. These funds were vital for the French, and American war efforts.

³¹⁶ During archaeological excavations at the Patterson Mansion and tenant houses on the outskirts of Christiana, French colonial coins, identifiable by the mark "C" on them, were recovered. For an example of the currencies circulating in Delaware at the time see also the chapter on the robbery of the French treasury.

French purchasing agents preceded the marching columns, and with them came the much-needed bullion. Thacher admitted, "They punctually paid their expenses in hard money, which made them acceptable guests wherever they passed; and, in fact, the large quantity of solid coin which they brought into the United States, is to be considered as of infinite importance at the present period of our affairs."³¹⁷ On 24 August 1781, "7 French guines" show up for first time in the James Lea Mills Account Book of Brandywine Village. By early September, ½ Joes, pistols, doubloons, and guineas have completely replaced Continental dollars though Lea, like most merchants, continued to keep a separate column with the prices in Continental Dollars.³¹⁸ On 6 September 1781, the day Rochambeau's troops camped in Wilmington, we find the first entry for a sale directly to the French in the account book of the Lea Mills: "44 bushs left I am to sell @ 3/3 to french Army the Cash to be paid to Saml Baker in Second Street." This seems to have been corn meal belonging to a William Brown, but the price is quite a bit higher than the 2/6 or 3/- a bushel he had charged previously. The same is true for wheat, which had sold for 5/6 to 5/8, up to 6/3.³¹⁹ A few months later, on 11 November 1781, Lea's neighbor Samuel Canby expressed the hope that: "as I apprehend from the present prospect of things in our Country that people generally will rather be encouraged to go into Business more than there has been opportunity for these several Years past as there is nothing but Specie now Circulating as a currency."³²⁰

The laws of supply and demand were clearly at work, driving up prices to the disadvantage of the Continental Army. On 25 January 1781, Wadsworth lamented "the American Army is literally starving."³²¹ Once the campaign of 1781 had begun, such worries about supplying the Continental Army became common occurrences. In late August Robert Morris recorded in his diary that "Thomas Lowery, Esq. of N.J. this day informed me that his purchase of flour in that state was stopped by the buyers of the french army giving 21/ per Ct for flour that before he has readily obtained at 15 shillings."³²² Three weeks later, on 21 August, James Hendricks, Deputy Quartermaster in Alexandria, lamented

"Lord knows what will be done for provisions! Colo Wadsworth & Carter, the French Agents have their Riders all round the Country, buying flour & beef with specie, this will effectively prevent the Commissioners from procuring any, as there is not a probability of the People letting the State Agents have an Ounce on Credit while they can get the French Crowns & Louis, I wish the Executive wou'd fall on some method to get the Cash from the French, and furnish the Supplies, without some method or other is fell on, the American Army will be starved."³²³

From Fredericksburg his colleague Richard Young sang a similar tune. "There are several men employed as Agents to purchase Corn, Flour &c. for the French Army for which they pay a generous price in hard Money, if this plan is pursued we shall not be able to furnish supplies with Certificates." Unless some action was taken, Young feared that "one Army will be well supplied,

³¹⁷ Thacher, *Military Journal*, p. 266.

³¹⁸ "French Guines" are *Louis d'ors*, gold coins valued at 24 livres or 4 Pieces of Eight, "1/2 Joe's" are the golden Portuguese "Johannes" minted in Brazil valued at 8 Pieces of Eight, a "Pistol" is a Spanish gold coin worth 4 Pieces of Eight, and a "doubloon" is a Spanish gold coin worth 16 Pieces of Eight in the colonies.

³¹⁹ Lea Mills Account Book 1775-1783, p. 51. Ms Books Business L, HSD. "3/3" stands for 3 shillings 3 pence, "3/-" for 3 shillings, no pence etc.

³²⁰ Diary of Samuel Canby, Nov 1779 to Dec 1796. Photostat in HSD from original at Yale University.

³²¹ Wadsworth Papers, Letterbooks, Box 151, CTHS

³²² Entry of 29 August 1781 in the diary of Robert Morris, quoted in Kennett, *French forces*, p. 133.

³²³ NARA, Revolutionary War Records, Miscellaneous Numbered Records, Record Group 93, microfilm reel 92, No. 26743.

while the other is likely to suffer."³²⁴ But without money there was not much that Washington or anyone else could do. One year later, on 15 October 1782, an officer in the First Rhode Island regiment was still complaining from Peekskill, New York, that local merchants avoided them "as they Would a Mad Dog" while the nearby French camp at Crompond "abounds in plenty."³²⁵

Rochambeau's officers were delighted with Wilmington. "The location of this city is one of the pleasantest and most favorable on the whole continent," wrote Baron Ludwig von Closen, one of Rochambeau's aides-de-camp. "The houses, many of which are on the banks of the Delaware, are all very well built, and their surroundings reveal the prosperity of the residents. Before arriving there, you cross the creek and the village of Brandywine."³²⁶ Marching through Wilmington in the fall of 1782, Lieutenant Verger of the Royal Deux-Ponts also liked what he saw. Its "location is the most agreeable one could possibly find. Its streets are quite regular and its houses built of brick. It is on the Christiana River, whose banks are very gay."³²⁷ Lauberdière wrote that following his visit to the battlefield of Brandywine, he went to Wilmington, which is "very well built, all houses there are made of brick. They form but one large and long street. I don't think this place is very healthy, the banks of the Delaware being very marshy on either side."³²⁸

Enlisted men could not leave the columns for sightseeing, but officers such as the vicomte de Rochambeau, Baron Closen, the comte de Lauberdière, or Cromot du Bourg used the opportunity provided by the march to Wilmington to see the battlefield of Brandywine, where Continental Army troops had fought British forces under General Howe on 11 September 1777. Washington himself, according to Cosen, had told him the details of the battle, heightening the officer's interest in the affair.³²⁹ Cromot du Bourg, who rode with the Second Division, recorded that on 6 September "we marched to Wilmington over a very fine road. On arriving, the creek and village of Brandywine are passed, and next the town is entered. It is in one of the finest situations possible. The houses are very well built. This town is also on the banks of the Delaware. I turned off from the road to see the battle-field of Brandywine."³³⁰ He returned to Wilmington on today's Concord Pike (DE SR 202), which merges with Market Street at Vandever Avenue on the left bank of the Brandywine in Brandywine Village. Georg Daniel Flohr of the Royal Deux-Ponts, one of the very few enlisted men who recorded his experiences, described his march thus. "On the 6th we broke camp again, 14 miles to Wilmington; that day we encountered along the way a pretty little town by the name of Brandywine on the Delaware River in a pleasant region near very low hills. That same day we continued on to Wilmington, a pretty little town which is adorned with very pretty buildings; we set up our camp very close to the Delaware River."³³¹

Rochambeau reputedly spent the night in a house on 606 Market Street, (**Resource 15**), and local lore has it that the troops were also supplied by Mrs Hester Zane, who lived on the southwest corner of Fourth and Shipley Street.³³²

³²⁴ NARA, Revolutionary War Records, Miscellaneous Numbered Records, Record Group 93, microfilm reel 92, No. 26743.

³²⁵ Quoted in Scott, *Yorktown*, p. 99.

³²⁶ Acomb, *Closen*, p. 124.

³²⁷ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns* vol. 1, p. 162. Verger had remained in Newport in June 1781 and sailed to Virginia with Barras. He does not mention Delaware on the return march of 1782.

³²⁸ Lauberdière, "Journal," fol. 106 r.

³²⁹ Acomb, *Closen*, p. 124, footnote 35. Lauberdière's *Journal* contains a long description of the battle of Mud Bank of 1777. (ff 101r - 106r)

³³⁰ Cromot du Bourg, "Diary," p. 384.

³³¹ Flohr, *Americanische Reissbeschreibung*.

³³² John Gardner identifies this house as Rochambeau's lodging in a map accompanying in his foreword to *Enemy Views. The American Revolutionary War as recorded by Hessian Participants* Bruce E. Burgoyne, ed., (Bowie, 1996). The evidence is circumstantial; it is unknown where any other French officers stayed.

Following the route taken by the Continental Army the previous day past Richardson Mountain, called Roberson Mountain in the French itinerary,³³³ the First Brigade continued its march on 7 September to Elkton, where it spent the night of 7-8 September. Along the way they marched through Newport, "a rather pretty place" of about 60 houses, and Christiana, a "rather cheerful little place with about 50 houses."³³⁴ "Four miles past Newport one crosses a creek over a bridge called "Christians Bridge. ... Christian's village is situated in a fortunate position and consists of 30-some houses. Two miles from there one crosses Kelley's Creek, which is ten miles from Head of Elk."³³⁵ Commissary Claude Blanchard who traveled through Christiana on 8 September, went "to dine at Christian Bridge, where I did the honors of the public table to some Americans with whom I drank toasts. At night, I lay at the Head of Elk where I found our army."³³⁶

When the Second Brigade, i.e., the infantry regiments Soissonnais and Saintonge with their artillery component, broke camp in Chester on the morning of 7 September, it did not stop in Wilmington but marched another five miles to a camp in Newport. The infantry camp was situated along the right-hand side of Route 4 or Market Street between Market and the Christina River east of the intersection with DE SR 41. **(Resource 16)** The artillery camped closer to the Christiana River. **(Resource 17)** The next day, 8 September 1781, the French army was once again united in Elkton.

³³³ Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns* vol. 2, p. 80.

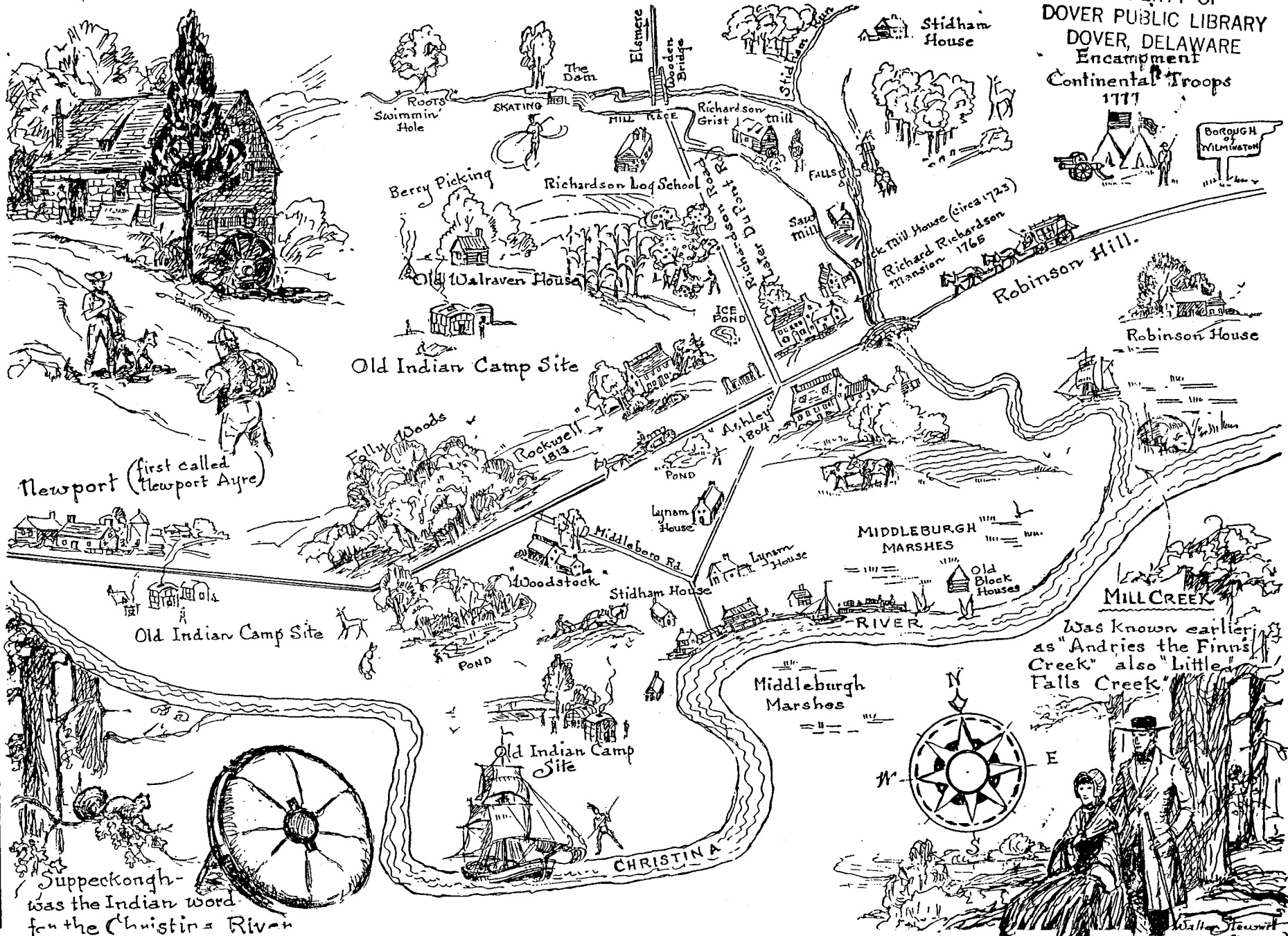
³³⁴ Acomb, *Closen*, p. 124.

³³⁵ Lauberdère's "Journal," fol. 106 v.

³³⁶ Blanchard, "Journal," p. 137.

PROPERTY OF
DOVER PUBLIC LIBRARY
DOVER, DELAWARE
Encampment
Continental Troops
1777

BOROUGH
of
WILMINGTON



Newport (first called Newport Ayre)

Old Indian Camp Site

Suppeckongh-
was the Indian word
for the Christina River

Was known earlier
as "Andries the Finns
Creek" also "Little
Falls Creek"

Wallace Stewart
51

FROM ELKTON TO YORKTOWN, 9 TO 28 SEPTEMBER 1781

Washington and the first units of the Continental Army reached Head of Elk/Elkton in Maryland on Thursday, 6 September. On 7 September, the First French Brigade joined them, while the Second Brigade, which had camped at Newport, arrived on 8 September. Once the American rearguard arrived from Christiana on 9 September, the two armies, "amounting in the whole to near seven thousand, with an amazing train of ordnance and military stores," were ready for the last leg of their march to Yorktown.³³⁷ In exactly three weeks since departing from Philipsburg on Saturday, 18 August, the two armies had marched from Philipsburg through New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware and 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 for the Carolinas, and de Grasse would only stay until mid-October.

But for now Washington had more immediate worries. Up until the decision to march to Virginia was made on 14 August, Washington had warned of the reluctance of some of his troops to march to the southward. With the arrival in Elkton his fears seemed to come true. Desertion, a perennial problem in the Continental Army, was picking up and affected even Colonel Lamb's artillery, which, Baron Closen wrote, were "the elite of the country and are actually very good troops, well schooled in their profession. We had nothing but praise for them." But in the six days between its departure from Trenton on 31 August and arrival at Head of Elk on 6 September, eleven men, almost 10 per cent of its *de facto* strength, deserted from the regiment.³³⁸

The situation was tense. "When the American troops, brought by General Lincoln from the North River and composed of the *New York, Jersey, and Pennsylvania* lines, arrived in Elkton, they did not wish to continue their march or embark unless they received part of their back pay, which had been owing them for a long time."³³⁹ Closen's statement bespeaks the potential seriousness of the situation. The New Jersey and Pennsylvania Lines had already mutinied once that year in Morristown in January and might well do so again, while James Duane, a New York delegate to the Continental Congress, wrote Washington on 9 September that he had been "full of worry" about the New York Line.³⁴⁰ On 17 August, Washington had already informed Morris from Dobbs Ferry that he would have to pay the army at least one month salary in specie. Robert

³³⁷ Major William Popham, ADC, to Gov. Clinton of New York, 8 September 1781, quoted in Johnston, *Yorktown*, p. 173. Popham's number of "near 7,000," i.e., 2,500-2,600 Americans incl. officers, and about 4,300-4,400 French officers and men, seems reasonable.

³³⁸ The desertion figure is from L. Richard Pierson, *Colonel John Lamb's Second Continental Regiment of Artillery in the American Revolution 1775-1784* (Typescript, US Army Military History Institute, 1988) p. 206. Other units had problems too. Sanderson reports that on 3 September seven men of Captain Comstock's Company of Scammell's Light Infantry deserted while the regiment camped in Chester. Johnston, *Yorktown*, p. 179.

³³⁹ Acomb, *Closen*, p. 124. The italics are in the original. The Pennsylvania Line was not present; it was already in Virginia. In his *Journal de Guerre*, Laubardière claimed that "it had always been the goal of our generals to hurry the march of the troops through Philadelphia to prevent desertion." fol. 97 v.

³⁴⁰ Duane to GW, 9 September 1781, quoted in Kennett, *French forces*, p. 134. On the eve of the Yorktown Campaign, Lieutenant-Colonel Ebenezer Huntington of Norwich, Connecticut, wrote to his brother Andrew on 2 August 1781 a long and angry letter from Dobbs Ferry, New York. In it he warned that the soldiers "Complain of the Ill Usage they receive from the State, the more they Suffer the more the State insults them by their Neglect, you have no right to expect their Services a Moment Longer, ... we have borne till we can bear no longer, you must pay us in Gold, or find other Servants, & those who ask no Wages." *Letters written by Ebenezer Huntington during the American Revolution* (New York, 1914), p. 94. Huntington went on to command a battalion of Light troops at Yorktown.

Morris wrote in his diary that "great S[y]mptoms of discontent had Appeared on their passing through this City."³⁴¹ On 6 September, Washington repeated the request from Head of Elk.

Dear Sir:

Every Day discovers to me the increasg Necessity of some Money for the Troops, I hope by this Time you are provided to give a Month's Pay. I (am) 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 enough funds to pay the army and asked Rochambeau on 6 September for a loan of \$ 20,000 in specie to pay the troops, with the promise that he would return the money. Aware that de Grasse would bring 1.2 million livres worth of specie from Cuba, Rochambeau agreed to the loan, which depleted his treasury of more than one third of the 300,000 livres he had left. Washington was not assured that this would satisfy his restless soldiers. When Morris informed him of the loan, he responded on 7 September that "The Sum of 20,000 Dollars will fall much short of the Sum necessary."³⁴² He needed about \$30,000 to meet the demands of his troops. Rochambeau increased his loan to \$26,600. But 26,600 Pieces of Eight or 143,640 livres was all he could lend the Commander-in-Chief and his superior officer to satisfy the demands of the American troops.³⁴³ The effect of the French silver resonated for decades in the minds of the recipients.

"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."³⁴⁴ For many a Continental soldier this was indeed the first and only time he ever received "real" money during his years of service. Private Martin remembered that "we each of us received a MONTH'S PAY, 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

³⁴¹ Diary: September 1-5, 1781. *The Papers of Robert Morris, 1781-1784*. E. James Ferguson, ed., Vol. 2: August - September 1781 (Pittsburg, 1975), p. 173.

³⁴² On 27 September he repeated his request from Chatham. "I must entreat you, if possible to procure one months pay in specie for the detachment which I have under my command; part of those troops have not been paid any thing for a long time past, and have upon several occasions shewn marks of great discontent. The service they are going upon is disagreeable to the Northern Regiments, but I make no doubt that a douceur of a little hard money would put them in proper temper. If the whole sum cannot be obtained, a part of it will be better than none, as it may be distributed in proportion to the respective wants and claims of the Men." Lauberdière wrote that by the time the Continental troops arrived at Head of Elk, "grumbling had spread among them and reached their general and what was even more distressing to him was that many officers raised their voices and threatened him with nothing less than to let him march to Virginia by himself." Lauberdière admitted however that these "unfortunate troops were not usually paid, or clothed, and often poorly fed." Lauberdière, "Journal," fol. 106 v and 107 r. Most of the correspondence between Washington, Rochambeau, and Morris can be found at <http://memory.loc.gov>

³⁴³ The amount is given in Morris to Lincoln, 8 September 1781. *Papers of Robert Morris*, Vol. 2, p. 220. Morris supplied the last \$ 6,200, which brought the total to the \$ 32,800 (177,320 livres) that Washington needed. It was less than half the 375,000 livres Rochambeau spent on his troops in a single month. Officers were excluded from the windfall -- "I cannot even obtain my pay as Captain in the Line," wrote Popham.

Morris repaid the money by February 1782, though not without confusion as to the applicable exchange rate. César Louis de Baulny, treasurer of the French army, converted the Milled Dollar at s 7 6 d or 90 d (=5 livres 5 sols), while Morris converted it at a premium rate of s 8 4 d or 100 d (=5 livres 8 sols), and the French tried to refund 4,935 livres to Morris that they thought he had paid beyond the 144,000 livres he owed. At 5 livres 8 sols per Milled Dollar, \$ 26,600 amount to 143,640 livres or 23,940 écus rather than the 24,000 écus that Morris said the French had loaned him and which would have exchanged to 144,000 livres at 6 livres to the écu or French Crown. *Papers of Robert Morris*, Vol. 4 (1978), pp. 304-5 and pp. 330-332.

³⁴⁴ Popham to Gov. Clinton of New York, 8 September 1781, quoted in Johnston, *Yorktown*, p. 173.

receive till the close of the war, or indeed, ever after, as wages."³⁴⁵ Another enlisted man, John Hudson of the First New York Regiment who had celebrated but his 13th 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."³⁴⁶ The specie had an immediate effect on the morale of the troops and at least for now all discipline problems were solved.

But Washington's problems were not over yet. He had hoped that there would be a sufficient number of watercraft assembled at Head of Elk to transport his troops to Yorktown, but he soon learned, much to his chagrin, that his needs far surpassed the resources available to him. Initially only twelve sloops and eighteen schooners were waiting at Head of Elk, but dozens more were hired before the end of the year 1781. They were barely enough for half of the Continental Army, Rochambeau's grenadiers and chasseurs, the officers and men of the Auxonne artillery, and for the infantry of Lauzun's Legion, about 1,500 French and 1,500 Americans in all.

The Continental Army was the first to embark. The Order Book of Scammel's Light Infantry recorded the organizational structure of the Continental Army for the sea journey.

"Division Morning Orders Sept 8, 81

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."³⁴⁷

Since "Genl Heasons" included the Rhode Island regiment, the First American Division as defined in this order was a little about 1,4500 officers and men. The combined New Jersey regiments, about 330 officers and men and the 1st and 2nd New York, about 800 officers and men, formed the Second American Division. Since there was no shipping space available for them, they marched with the French forces to Baltimore.³⁴⁸

Anxious to reach his seat at Mount Vernon after a six-year absence, Washington "with Colo. Humphry only" left Baltimore "very early" on 9 September and after a sixty mile ride reached his estate that same evening. Accompanied by his two aides Fersen and Damas, Rochambeau reached Mt. Vernon the following day; on 11 September, Chastellux arrived with his retinue as well.³⁴⁹ On 13 September, the generals continued their journey to Williamsburg, which they reached on 15 September. A visit to Admiral De Grasse on his flagship *Ville de Paris*, followed on the 18th. The commanders were ready for the siege to begin, but their troops were still far behind.

Around 4:00 a.m. on 11 September, Dr. James Thacher of Scammel's Light Infantry set sail from Head of Elk for the Chesapeake on the "Glasgow," a schooner with a burthen of 24 tons which he shared "with four other officers and sixty men."³⁵⁰ The remainder of the troops, between

³⁴⁵ Martin, *Private Yankee Doodle*, pp. 222-23. Martin says he sailed on the Schooner *Birmingham*, Capt. Trout, a nutshell of 18 tons. NARA, Revolutionary War Records, Miscellaneous Numbered Records, Record Group 93, microfilm reel 92, No. 26800, where her name is given as *Brumagin*.

³⁴⁶ Hudson, "Reminiscences," *Cist's Advertiser*, 28 January 1846.

³⁴⁷ NARA, Record Group M 853 reel 8, vol. 52, p. 124.

³⁴⁸ The route of the New York regiments can be followed in Lauber, *Diaries of Tallmadge*, pp. 760-762. About 200 Americans embarked in Annapolis.

³⁴⁹ Trumbull, "Minutes of Occurrences," p. 333.

³⁵⁰ Thacher, *Military Journal*, p. 274. It took him twelve days to cover the more than 300 miles to Williamsburg. The *Glasgow*, Capt. Griffith, Master, was hired on 4 September. She served for 76 days at

3,800 and 4,000 men, marched to Baltimore, where the remainder of the Continental Army embarked.³⁵¹ Without the necessary shipping space, Vioménil and the forces under his command, still almost 75% of the troops of the *expédition particulière*, left Baltimore on 17 September. At Spurrier's Tavern, however, a courier reached Vioménil in the evening with news that transports from de Grasse had reached Annapolis.³⁵² Vioménil immediately changed plans. In the morning of 18 September, his troops turned toward Annapolis, which was reached around 7:00 a.m. on 19 September. Over the next few days the infantry with their baggage and tents as well as the field artillery embarked on 15 vessels sent by Admiral de Grasse. The *Romulus* of 74 guns, the frigates *Gentile*, *Diligente*, *l'Aigrette*, the captured British frigates *Isis* and *Richmond*, and nine transports, sailed late in the afternoon of 21 September 1781.³⁵³ They arrived in the James River on 24 September and made their camp at Archer's Hope, at the mouth of College Creek Landing near Jamestown. Williamsburg was reached on 25 September. Three days later, the two armies set out for Yorktown. Concurrently Lauzun's cavalry, which had separated from the rest of the French army on 14 September, took up siege positions at Gloucester Point on 24 September.³⁵⁴

The empty French wagon train, and more importantly the hundreds of oxen and horses used to draw the regimental wagons and the artillery carriages, and the many horses owned privately by the officers still had to be brought to Yorktown. In the morning of 18 September, Vioménil had a meeting with de Tarlé, the French intendant. They decided to discharge some of the wagons that were no-longer needed. The majority of the craft and animals, however, together with their American drivers and civilian employees would take the land route to Williamsburg. Thirty American troops under the command of an officer who knew the roads would provide cover and guidance.³⁵⁵ By the time the wagons reached Williamsburg on 6 October, the First Parallel was already dug outside Yorktown. On 9 October, French siege guns opened up on the British defenders. The completion of the Second Parallel was blocked by a portion of the British outer works -- two detached earthen forts called Redoubts 9 and 10, located 400 yards in advance of the

£ 1 s 9 per day. NARA, Revolutionary War Records, Miscellaneous Numbered Records, Record Group 93, microfilm reel 92, No. 26675 and 26800, where her burthen is given at 29 tons. A good recent overview is presented by Robert W. Tinder, "Extraordinary measures: Maryland and the Yorktown Campaign, 1781." *Maryland Historical Magazine* Vol. 95 No. 2, (Summer 2000), pp. 133-159.

Another account of the journey down the Chesapeake Bay replete with a "theatrical performance" on 14 September and an "elegant supper" on the 13th in Annapolis where he "cracked a few bottles of wine, broke a looking Glass & retired to rest on board our vessels" can be found in the Journal of Dr. Moore.

The Journal of Lt. Thomas Anderson of the Delaware Regiment. 1780-1782 (New York, 1867) records that on 8 May 1780, Anderson "set sail from the Head of Elk in Company with 50 Sail of Vessels being the Second Maryland Brigade destined for Petersburg ... arriv'd on the 23d, 350 miles," which means that it took him 15 days to reach Petersburg in Virginia, about 30 miles up the James River from Jamestown. An "Estimate of Money due on Contract made for the passage of the Army stores, Baggage &c. ... from Christiana Bridge to Virginia, and from thence to the Northward Commencing 28 August 1781," lists a total of at least 22 sloops, sixty schooners, as well as shallops and a number of smaller vessels employed in the campaign in 1781 NARA, Revolutionary War Records, Miscellaneous Numbered Records, Record Group 93, microfilm reel 92, No. 26673.

³⁵¹ "An Estimate of Vessels taken into Transport Service at the Port of Baltimore for the Expedition Against general Cornwallis 1781. By David Pac A.D.Q.M." lists 79 sloops and schooners, incl. 3 ships and 4 rowboats that were lost. They were taken into service between 30 August and 2 October with 2 late ships hired on 26 October. They were frequently used for around 90 days and thus into December 1781, i.e., for the return trip of the Continental Army northward after the siege of Yorktown. NARA, Revolutionary War Records, Miscellaneous Numbered Records, Record Group 93, microfilm reel 92, No. 26675.

³⁵² Vioménil to Rochambeau, 18 September 1781. Fonds Vioménil LB 0074-104.

³⁵³ The names of the ships and number of troops on board can be found in Fonds Vioménil, LB0074-100.

³⁵⁴ The itinerary for Lauzun's hussars can be found in the d'Arrot Papers which are part of the Lafayette-Leclerc Papers, MS 31.17, at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation (CWF), in Williamsburg, Virginia.

³⁵⁵ "Mémorandum du Baron de Vioménil pour une réunion avec l'intendant," dated 18 September 1781. Fonds Vioménil LB 0074-127.

British inner defense line on the extreme right of the siege line. On 14 October, Allied artillery bombarded Redoubts 9 and 10 most of the day, preparing them for the assaults. That evening, American troops under Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander Hamilton took Redoubt No. 10, while the French carried No. 9. The capture of these redoubts enabled the besiegers to finish the Second Parallel, and to construct the Grand American Battery within point blank range of the British inner defense line. It was only a matter of time before His Lordship would surrender.

Delaware continued to serve as an important supply station and depot for the armies outside Yorktown. The list of requisition seemed unending. On 18 September 1781, Robert Morris asked Rodney for 500 barrels of salt to be delivered to Head of Elk.³⁵⁶ On 4 October 1781, Commissary General Ephraim Blaine informed President Rodney from Oxford Landing on the Choptank River in Maryland that the siege army consumed "Sixty thousand Rations per day." He thought that the siege would be over in 20 days and urged that all supplies be forwarded to Choptank as expeditiously as possible. "Men who are day & night upon fatigue and exposed to the greatest Danger ought to be regularly Supplied with Provisions and every refreshment they are entitled to – for God sake give me every Assistance and let no excuse prevent the Commissioners from doing their duty."³⁵⁷

Rodney forwarded the request to Isaac Carty, imploring him that "if you have any Flour at or in the neighbourhood of Duck Creek Send immediately to the nearest water on the Chesepeak."³⁵⁸ The reports of William Millan, State Receiver of Supplies in Newcastle County, the county most affected by the march, give an excellent overview of the exertions of the State. A "State of Supplies in New Castle County" of 7 November 1781 shows that over the previous month he had delivered 2,074 cwts of flour with another 634 cwts in storage. He also had transferred almost 263,000 lbs of hay with another 80,500 lbs in reserve, 112 heads of cattle, 29,554 lbs of fresh beef and 20,632 lbs of "Pickled Beef," almost 3,500 bushels of rye, 1,021 bushels of corn, 15,664 bushels of oats with 136 more in reserve, 6 bushels of buckwheat, 120 sheaves of oats, 481 lbs of dried beef, 252 lbs of salt pork, 453 1/4 lbs of bacon, 10 gallons of rum, and 32 horses.³⁵⁹

A good month later, on 10 December 1781, Millan reported his receipts during November 1781. Among the items received "from the Taxable Inhabitants" of his county were 2,621 cwts flour, 2,955 lbs of fresh beef, 220 lbs pickled beef, 481 lbs of dried beef, 112 head of cattle, 28 horses 3,734 lbs of bacon and 331,210 lbs of hay. Most of these items were taxes in kind; but some of it was purchased "on Aect of the Delaware State. Millan collected " 440 lbs of the 481 lbs of dried beef, all of the bacon, 28 of the of the 112 heads of cattle and all but four of the horses. Only the 220 lbs of the pickled beef had to be paid for in cash. Virtually all of the receipts had already been delivered: 775 lbs of flour and 58,250 lbs of hay was all Millan had left.³⁶⁰

³⁵⁶ Morris to Rodney, 18 September 1781. DEPA RG 1300.000 Executive Papers Box 2, Military 1781, microfilm frame 497.

³⁵⁷ Public Archives Division of Delaware, *Delaware Archives. Revolutionary War. In Three Volumes* (Wilmington, 1919) Vol. 3, p. 1357. The original is in DEPA, RG 1300.000 Executive Papers Box 2, Correspondence 1781, microfilm frame 189.

The Choptank River begins just south of Dover north of Willow Grove; Choptank Landing, the end-point of MD-SR 16 across the river from Windyhill, Maryland, is about 45 miles from Dover.

³⁵⁸ Rodney to Carty, 7 October 1781. DEPA RG 1800.099, Delaware Archives - Military, Vol. 6 (unpublished), microfilm frame 616.

³⁵⁹ DEPA RG 1800.099, Delaware Archives - Military, Vol. 6 (unpublished), microfilm frame 794. A partial return is *ibid.*, frame 755. No return for supplies delivered during September 1781 has been found; they are presumably included in Patterson's expenses for the march.

³⁶⁰ DEPA RG 1800.099, Delaware Archives - Military, Vol. 6 (unpublished), microfilm frame 730 and 738.

Support of a different kind was provided by Francis Bailey, publisher of *Freeman's Journal*, who sent his own encouragement from Philadelphia on 8 October 1781.

To Lord CORNWALLIS.

Hail great destroyer (equall'd yet by none)
Of countries not thy master's nor thy own!
Hatch'd by some Demon on a stormy day,
Satan's best substitute to burn and slay
Confin'd at last -- hemm'd in by land and sea,
Burgoyne himself was but a type of thee!
Like his to freedom was thy deadly hate,
Like his thy baseness and be his thy fate. -
To you like him no prospect nature yields
But ruin'd wastes and desolated fields;
In vain you raise the interposing wall
And hoist those *standards* that like *you* must fall
In vain you break old Charon's sable boat
Lest you to hell with negro souls should float;
In *you* conclude the glories of your race;
complete your monarch's and your own disgrace.
What has your Lordship's pilfering arms attain'd?
Vast hoards of *plunder* and no State regain'd -
That must return, tho' you perhaps may groan,
Resign it, Ruffian, for 'tis not your own; --
Then, *Lord* and *Skater*, headlong to the brine
Rush down at once -- the devil and the swine!
Wouldst thou at last with *Washington* engage,
Sad object of his pity not his rage!
See, round thy posts how terribly advance
The chiefs, the soldiers and the fleets of France!
Fight while you can, for warlike *Rochambeau*
Aims at your head his last decisive blow;
A thousand ghosts from earth untimely sped
Can take no rest till you like them are dead;
Then die, my Lord -- that only chance remains
To wash away dishonourable stains;
For small advantage would your *capture* bring,
The plundering servant of a bankrupt king.