

9.4 Supplying Rochambeau's Army

Even at the height of its prosperity, Newport had never been able to feed itself. Now that the city was but a shadow of its former self and its environs had been destroyed, not even the resources of the whole state would have sufficed supply the troops of the *expedition particulière* and the sailors on Ternay's fleet. Feeding these thousands of men went far beyond the capabilities of any single state, straining the resources of New England. Equally critical was the apparent inability of state and local officials to even procure the necessary resources from surrounding states. Appeals by General William Heath in the *Newport Mercury* of 15 July 1781 meant very little. On 15 July 1780, three days after General Heath's announcement and about two weeks after French forces had arrived in Newport, Brissout de Barneville, aide-de-camp to *baron* de Vioménil, reported that "les boulangers," i.e., the bakers, and "les bouchers," i.e., the butchers, "sont établis au camp."²⁶⁰ What they needed were cattle to slaughter for beef for the troops and flour to bake bread for them.

Newport had never been able to feed itself and years of British occupation had impoverished the town, yet the arrival of Rochambeau's forces in June 1780 doubled the number of people living in Newport.²⁶¹ A census in 1774²⁶² had counted 7,917 white inhabitants, 46 Indians and 1,246 free and enslaved blacks for a total of 9,208

A DETACHMENT of the Army and Fleet of our Great Ally, his Most Christian Majesty, under the Command of their Excellencies Monsieur Le Comte de Rochambeau, and Monsieur Le Chevalier de Ternay, having arrived in this Harbour: The good People of this and the neighbouring States, whose Situation makes it eligible, are invited and requested to bring to the Market of Newport, all Kinds of small Meats, Poultry, Milk, Vegetables, &c. for which they will receive a generous Price, serve their Friends, and benefit themselves.

The Markets will be so regulated as to prevent Impositions, either in buying or selling.

GIVEN at Newport, Rhode-Island,

this 12th Day of July, 1780.

W. HEATH, M. G.

By the Major-General's Command,

T. H. CARTWRIGHT, Aid de Camp.

²⁶⁰ In February 1781, Barneville estimated the weekly need at 50 head of live cattle. Brissout de Barneville, "Journal de Guerre de Brissout de Barneville. Mai 1780-Octobre 1781" *The French-American Review* vol. 3 no. 4 (October 1950), pp. 217-278, p. 254.

²⁶¹ Aaron Lopez' Store Blotter/Day Book for 1780 is not the only record in the Newport Historical Society (Shelf no. 18, no. 674) that shows how the dearth of coin had the town revert to a barter economy: on 1 August 1780, he sold "1 scythe £ 36 payable in a good Fatt Lamb", on 14 August "1 Bushel Rock Salt £ 110, payable in making Shoes @ £ 15 ppair".

²⁶² The 1774 census is available at

<http://www.newhorizonsgenealogicalservices.com/1774-ri-colonial-census.htm>

inhabitants in Newport; by the summer of 1782, fewer than 5,000 people were living in Newport:

Males Under 16 years of Age	1,084
Females Ditto	1,162
Males between 16 & 22	157
Females between 16 & 22	346
Males between 22 and 50	565
Females ditto	948
Males upward of 50	252
Females Ditto	400
=====	
Total: 4,914 ²⁶³	

If the 17 Indians, 51 mulattos and 549 free and enslaved African-Americans are added the total population of Newport in 1782 numbered 5,531 men, women and children.²⁶⁴ That same 1774 census had counted 3,950 white inhabitants, 68 Indians and 303 free and enslaved blacks in Providence for a total of 4,321 inhabitants living in 655 families. By 1782, the population of the town had decreased only a fraction to 4,306 inhabitants.²⁶⁵

Males Under 16 years of Age	943
Females Ditto	903
Males between 16 & 22	205
Females between 16 & 22	293
Males between 22 and 50	589
Females ditto	727
Males upward of 50	176
Females Ditto	169
=====	
Total: 4,015 plus 6 Indians, 33 mulattos and 252 blacks ²⁶⁶	

At the same time a review of July 1780 in the papers of the baron de Vioménil lists a total of 5,218 NCOs and enlisted men arriving in Newport.

²⁶³ NHS, Shelf no. 10, call no. 413, Ledger Book Samuel Freebody, 1739-1792, p. 152.

²⁶⁴ The charts are published in *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island* vol. 9, p. 653. The printed number for Newport is 5,530 inhabitants but an addition of the columns yields 5,531. In 1774, the slave population of Rhode Island was 6.3%, nearly twice as high as any other New England colony.

²⁶⁵ The number published in vol. 9 is 4,310 inhabitants though the columns add up to 4,306.

²⁶⁶ NHS, Shelf no. 10, call no. 413, Ledger Book Samuel Freebody, 1739-1792, p. 152.

Changes since 2 May 1780:

Died on the crossing: 34

Died in Newport: 53

Bourbonnois

Soissonnois

Saintonge

Royal Deux-Ponts

Auxonne Art.

Mineurs

Ouvriers

Total effectives 4373, 387 of
them in hospitals

A handwritten table titled 'Mutation du 2 may au 1^{er} 1780' (Mutation from 2 May to 1st 1780). The table is organized into five columns: 'Le Regt' (The Regiment), 'en parti de' (in party of), 'Morts' (Deaths), 'Effectifs' (Effectives), and 'Donnés aux hôpitaux' (Given to hospitals). The 'Morts' column is further divided into 'En mer' (At sea) and 'Sur rive' (On shore). The 'Effectifs' column is further divided into 'au 2nd 5th 1780' (on 2nd 5th 1780). The table lists various regiments and their respective numbers in each category. The final row shows a total of 4460 in the first column, 34 in the second, 53 in the third, 4373 in the fourth, and 387 in the fifth.

Le Regt	en parti de	Morts	Effectifs	Donnés aux hôpitaux
		En mer	Sur rive	
973	10	24	942	152
1024	1	5	1019	57
973	8	6	959	87
1008	13	16	979	58
432	3	5	424	33
24	11	11	24	11
26	11	11	26	11
4460	34	53	4373	387

Detail from a review of Rochambeau's forces in Newport, 1 September 1780. (Vioménil Papers, LB 0074). Lauzun Legion is not listed in this review but a review of the legion on 1 October 1780 showed a strength of 603 NCOs and rank and file (Archives Nationales, Paris, D2c32) that brings the total strength of Rochambeaus forces in September to not quite 5,000 men.

If the 459 officers in Rochambeau's little army and their 426 servants who had made the crossing (another ten officers, among them Brigadier Claude Gabriel de Choisy, the two Berthier brothers and Captain Jean François de Thuillière of the Royal Deux-Ponts,²⁶⁷ joined on 27 September 1780 when the frigate *La Gentille* arrived from Martinique) are added, the total of troops disembarking amounts to a little over 6,000 men, more than the 5,531 men women and children that lived in Newport in 1782.²⁶⁸ But that was less than half of the new arrivals: the crews of Ternay's warships numbered around 5,650 naval personnel, to which the crew of *la Fantasque*, a 64 gun-ship re-fitted as a hospital ship ("en flûte"²⁶⁹) and the crews of transport vessels need to be added. Ship garrisons added another 21 officers from various infantry regiments and 782 men for a total of around 7,000 personnel.²⁷⁰

Wherever Rochambeau and Ternay turned, they were faced with the need to take matters into their own hands to supply their roughly 13,000 soldiers and sailors. The responsibility of assisting the French supply officers in procuring supplies for the French land and naval forces initially lay initially with the authorities of Rhode Island in cooperation with the neighboring states of Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. On 16 June, General William Heath had come to Providence at express orders from General Washington "to endeavor in conjunction with the Governor, to establish a market between the Fleet and Army and Country and be carefull that our Allies are not imposed upon in the prices of articles which they may find necessary." Greene was not the only one who feared that the French allies might be fleeced. On 14 July, Governor Trumbull wrote to him from Lebanon that now that French fleet has arrived there was danger "of their being imposed and extorted upon by extravagant prices by individuals." In order to organize supplying the troops, Trumbull asked for a meeting of delegates from Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts and New Hampshire in Boston "as early next week as possible."²⁷¹ Rhode Island appointed a committee headed by Thomas Cushing to meet with

²⁶⁷ Recommended to Franklin by Marie Camasse, Thuillière left Europe in early 1777 to join the Continental Army. Captured twice by the British, he arrived in America just as his leave was about to expire. He returned to France in the spring of 1780 only to find that there was no place for him Ternay's ships and he had to sail with Choisy's group to Newport.

²⁶⁸ About three dozen officers joined Rochambeau's forces between October July 1780 and November 1783, but there were also some who departed for Europe, esp. after the siege of Yorktown, who did not return.

²⁶⁹ "en flute" designates a ship of the line or a frigate without a full complement of artillery to create cargo space so that it can be used as a transport, hospital ship &c.

²⁷⁰ The ship crews, infantry garrisons and number of servants is taken from *Rochambeau: A Commemoration by the Congress of the United States of America* (Washington DC, 1907), prepared by De B. Randolph Keim, p. 230.

²⁷¹ Trumbull to Greene, Rhode Island State Archives, Letterbooks, Letters to Gov. William Greene, vol. 15, 19 June to 10 November 1780. The letter was received on 17 July 1780.

Rochambeau, Ternay and Corny who agreed that there should be one general supplier or purchaser for French forces if the states or their purchasing agents could get the same prices for them that Corny and his agents had already agreed upon with private sellers. The New England states wanted to gain their share of the economic benefit accruing from French silver. The obvious choice as intermediary between the states and French forces was Jeremiah Wadsworth, former Commissary General of the Continental Army, who even before the arrival of Rochambeau's army was acting as an agent for Corny at the request of Lafayette.

But by the time the New England states met, the task of procuring supplies for Rochambeau's forces, begun as soon as Lafayette had arrived in Philadelphia, had taken on a life of its own. Soon three players would be competing with each other for the same purposes: Continental Army quartermaster acting for Corny, who also sent out his own purchasers, and Wadsworth. On 17 May, Congress had established a special committee in charge of Franco-American cooperation and within days requests for horse-teams and wagons went out from John Mitchell Deputy Quarter Master General for Pennsylvania to Carlisle in Cumberland County, to Reading in Berks County and to Lancaster since "there has not been a matter of more Importance to the United States since the war then that, of obtaining proper conveyances for our Allies, who are daily expected."²⁷² On 11 June he told John Holker that "the Chavalier De Luzerne was with me yesterday, he seems extremely Anxious that no Disapointment should take place & that the Business should be forwarded with the utmost dispatch." The next day he informed Waggon Conductor John Mulhuling that he was "to proceed with your Brigade of Twelve teames by way of Corryels Ferry, Rackets Town and Sussex Court House to new Windsor with the utmost dispatch, & when their wait for orders from Mons De Corney, or if none from him you will receive orders from His Excellency General Washington or some person Authorized by him where to Cross the North River." On 15 June Colonel John Davis received orders to speed up the dispatch of teams to Newburgh "as those Teames are wanted for the Service of our great Allyes his most Christian Majesty, whose troopes are daily expected I must again most earnestly request you will use all your power and Influence in York and Cumberland County to procure at least Fifty good four Horse Teames with Drivers, & Waggon Masters to each Brigade, which is to Consist of Ten Teames".

²⁷² Mitchel to Robert Patton, 31 May 1780. "Letter book respecting His Most Christian Majesty, 1780" *Pennsylvania Archives* Sixth Series vol. 14 (1907), pp. 207-254, p. 208. Unless otherwise identified all quotes in the next few paragraphs are taken from this source. Patton was DQMG in Lancaster County.

Though the pay and conditions offered for service increased almost daily from twenty five pounds pr. day " plus forage on 31 May to 30 pounds and more by 1 July, enlistment of waggoners lagged behind expectations. The reasons were simple. After years of having been paid with increasingly worthless paper money or IOUs, Mitchell correctly suspected that "the people in General are fearfull they will not get their pay when they come here". This time it would be different, and "to convince you & them of this I now send you Twenty thousand Dolls, w'ch is the pay of one Brigade for one month", as he wrote to Major Reading Howell on 16 June. But as long as Mitchell sent papers money, wagons, teams and drivers were hard to come by.²⁷³ David Duncan, ADQMG in Cumberland County assured Colonel John Davis, that he could "not do any thing without Money at this Place . . . they say they would not Trust their Father if in Public service, I cant blame them they have been Deceived so often since these times begun."²⁷⁴ By mid-June Mitchell was sending specie such as "half Johanneses"²⁷⁵ he had received from Corny with the admonition that "this money is not the property of the United States you are on no Account nor on no pretence of emergency to dispose of it for any other purpose, but that of paying Waggons to come here" to Philadelphia. From Philadelphia the wagons were to travel via "Correyls ferry [today's New Hope], Hacketstown & Sussix Court house, to New Windsor". Here they were to cross the Hudson to Fishkill and continue on to Hartford via Waterbury and Southington. In Hartford they would receive further orders from either Corny or Jeremiah Wadsworth.

When news of the arrival of Rochambeau's forces reached Philadelphia in the evening of 15 July, Mitchell urged even more teams on to Hartford: "every horse or waggon we have or can get will be wanted." Meanwhile Wadsworth had come to an arrangement with Corny on 21 June regarding the feeding of horses for the French army on their way to Newport and had begun to re-activate the purchasing network he had built up during his days as Commissary General for the Continental Army. On 24 June 1780, he wrote to David Trumbull in Lebanon, Connecticut, that he had been "directed by the Monsr De Corney Comy General of the Army of the King of France to

²⁷³ As late as 11 August 1780, Mitchell suggested to Holker the hiring of deserters: "if you think it Safe to Employ Deserters from the Brittish Army I can get Some very good Drivers amongst them." "Letterbook", p. 240.

²⁷⁴ The letter was written on 25 October 1781. Papers of John Davis, 1755-1783. 11 vols on 5 reels microfilm. Library of Congress Microfilm no. 17,137 (reels 79-83). The papers are part of the "Papers and Collection of Peter Force" (Series 8D: entry 32). The papers are ordered chronologically; the quote on reel 5.

²⁷⁵ A "Johannes" was a gold coin named after King John V of Portugal (1689-1750), whose name was inscribed on the coin. Valued at 8 Pieces of Eight or between 40 and 48 shilling sterling it was frequently called a Half-Joe in America. On colonial currencies used in the United States during the war of Independence see Appendix 3.

procure Horses, Forage and other necessities for the use of the Army when they arrive. ... As the design of the King of France is to cooperate with these States in repelling our Enemies, it is expected by the generous Allies of the States that our avarice will not prevent their cooperating effectually. I beg you to procure the needed supplies on terms the most reasonable."²⁷⁶ To procure these supplies Wadsworth's purchasing agents fanned out across New England and as far south as Pennsylvania²⁷⁷ and Maryland.²⁷⁸ On 29 June, Royal Flint left from Windham for Providence to begin "procuring the supplies for the French Army." When he got there Corny had gone to Boston but following his return in evening of 3 July, Flint had a conference with Corny in the morning of 4 July. That evening he reported to Wadsworth that Corny was "exceedingly disappointed" that none of the articles he had requested from Wadsworth during their meeting in Hartford while on his way back from Newburgh had yet been delivered. "He expects that all the articles he contracted with you for will be purchased in Connecticut" including 20 or 30 teams of oxen Wadsworth was trying to purchase in Pomfret and Killingly. In the same letter Flint told Wadsworth that

The Horses you bought will be wanted within two hours [!] after the Fleet arrives to go as an Escort with the French Commander in Chief to confer with Genl Washington. Two hundred & forty beeves & three hundred sheep must be at this place immediately and kept ready for the army – also sixty beeves & one hundred sheep at Newport for the same purpose. We shall need two hundred beeves that will average four hundred pounds of meat each & two hundred sheep weekly. ²⁷⁹ Measures must be taken to have this quantity furnished without possibility of

²⁷⁶ Wadsworth Correspondence, April – November 1780, Box 130 a, CTHS. Unless identified otherwise all quotes are from this correspondence file.

²⁷⁷ See for example a ms letter of 11 July 1780 from Col. Mathias Slough to Frederick Derch of Lancaster, PA with instructions to take 90 horses to Hartford for the French army. The horses were to travel about 25 miles per day and be fed 12 quarts of Oats or Speltz per day or 9 of Corn or rye if no Oats or Speltz plus plentifully of good Hay or Pasture."

²⁷⁸ On 2 August Col. Mitchell informed Wadsworth from Philadelphia that he sent another 27 horses he had purchased in Carlisle and Baltimore. By "Monday next" he will send 20 ammunition waggons, has already sent 113 four-horse teams "& in a few days expect to send a considerable Number more."

²⁷⁹ The average weight of live Connecticut cattle in the late eighteenth century was around 900 lbs but could pass 1,000 lbs. In December of 1780, David Trumbull bought four oxen with an average weight of 634 lbs; on 2 January 1781, he purchased an ox weighing 600 lbs, but the next day he estimated the weight of two oxen at 1,050 lbs each. Comparable numbers for sheep are around 100 lbs useable mutton per head. In December 1782, he purchased 85 head of cattle on the hoof in Boston weighing 630 lbs on average, leaving 350 lbs of meat per animal. Wadsworth Papers, Box 144, Folder December 1782, CTHS.

failure. The flour if not already sent must be forwarded without delay. It will not be possible to procure grain in this quarter, and I must beg you to supply what corn & oats you can, as soon as possible. The wood, vegetables, boards, beams, bricks, Cyder, Beer & Straw are expected from you according to Mons D'Corney's original directions: indeed he expects you to furnish explicitly every article he proposed when he saw you at Hartford. My Situation here without the Supplies is extremely disagreeable as the Mons expresses an anxiety greater than I describe.

Corny's "anxiety" grew even more as the well-intentioned activities of Lafayette and Luzerne in Philadelphia based on completely unrealistic expectations in June and early July began to backfire. On 20 July, Continental Deputy Quarter-Master Jabez Bowen warned Governor Greene from Providence:

I am informed also from Connecticut that there is Four Hundred Waggons on the Road from Pensylvania for the use of the French Army – such a vast number of Horses will Destroy all the Forrage and all the Grain in New England the Genl Assembly had much better engage to supply the Teams that shall be wanted even to remove the Baggage of the Army to Hartford, than to incourage or countenance the coming of such a Swarm of Locust into this part of the Country. A Representation of the impropriety and vast expence attending this Business ought to be made to the Commander of the French Army. I am sure it will cost more to bring the Waggons from Pensylvania than it would to carry the whole Bagge (sic) to Camp. I should think it would be much Better to carry the Baggage in the Transports to Norwalk or Fairfield. That would save 150 Miles transportation. This matter I know must be touched delicately yet as our Allies are Strangers they ought to be informed of the most Cheap and Convenient ways of doing their Business.²⁸⁰

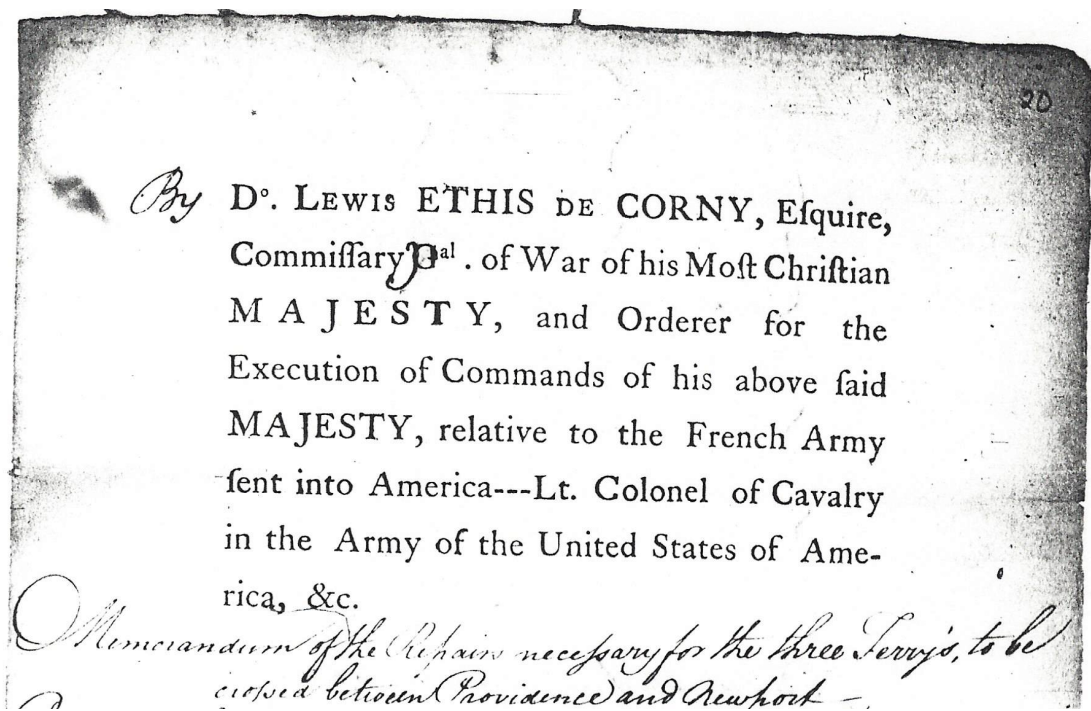
On 19 August, Ezra Stiles recorded in his journal²⁸¹ that

Five or 600 Waggons from Philad^a for Rh. Isld. passed this & last Week thro' Waterb^y, Southington &c eastward to transport the Baggage of the French Army to No. River.

²⁸⁰ Bowen to Greene, 20 July 1780. Rhode Island State Archives, Letterbooks, Letters to Gov. William Greene, vol. 15, 19 June to 10 November 1780.

²⁸¹ Stiles, *Diary*, p. 459.

Though Washington and Lafayette would push for a march to New York City for a few more weeks, French forces were in no condition to embark on such an enterprise even if there had been no British fleet patrolling outside Newport. The siege of New York City would have to be abandoned. Tens of thousands of livres and dollars had been wasted as the hundreds of teamsters assembled around Newburgh and as far away as Newport were sent back home. Now the question arose of who was responsible for this foul-up and who would pay for it. In his letter of 4 July, Flint had already warned Wadsworth that Corny was "rather out of humor, on account of some opposition there was in the town against his having an house and a disappointment from the QM on the score of forage." Unless he tried to save local supplies for emergencies, Corny already showed a streak of vengefulness – he did not like having had to wait for proper lodgings – that he (and Tarlé) would unleash on Wadsworth later that month: "I find he does not wish to have you purchase any articles in this state, except forage, but desires those supplies he engaged you to furnish should all come from Connecticut."



Corny even had his own stationary. Detail of Ethis de Corny's "Memorandum of the Repairs necessary for the three Ferry's to be crossed between Providence and Newport" to the General Assembly of Rhode Island dated 6 July 1780.²⁸²

²⁸² "Petitions to the General Assembly" vol. 18, p. 80. RIHS

July 27th 1780
 His Most Christian Majesty D^m
 To Benj^m Remington

 To the Forage of 79 Horses
 from Jamestown to Newport D^m 13

 This may certify the M^r. Remington
 served the above mentioned Horses
 for the Service of His Most Christian
 Majesty -
 Enck Wadsworth

 To Maj^r. Stacey
 Com^d. of War

 Rec^d. Oct^r. 17th. 1780. of Jeremiah Wadsworth Esq^r. Three
 pounds nineteen Shilling, Sterling Money, in full of the
 above Acd
 Benja Remington
 £ 3. 19. 0 Sterly -

Benjamin Remington of Crompton was the ferryman at the Jamestown Ferry
 Jeremiah Wadsworth Papers, CTHS

Unfortunately the meeting of representatives of the New England States and Rochambeau and his logistics staff would take place on 17 July, the same day that Royal Flint told Wadsworth from Newport of the anger of Corny that the supplies

promised by the States had not arrived, which “procured him censure from his Commander in Chief.” Corny decided to go out and buy what he could at whatever the cost. “I think it is probable they will open a new mode & channel of supplies as they perceive they cannot put perfect dependance upon the States.”²⁸³ Flint’s comment, however, touched a very sore spot in the Continental war effort: order, regularity and precision were not the hallmarks of a state-based supply system that had consistently failed the Continental Army. and the governmental structure and fierce independence of Rhode Islanders did not make things easier for the French. On 6 August 1781, William Channing informed Governor Greene that he needed 50 or 60 tons of straw for the French soldiers who “are now oblidgd to lie on the bare Ground” much to the detriment of their health. Yet since “I do not believe it will be in the power of the Inhabitants of this Island to furnish it without receiving some Assistance from the Army in threshing & Carting” he inquired about possibility of “Assistance from the Regiment of Col. Greene,” i.e., the Rhode Island Regiment of the Continental Line. On the 9th, the Council of War had as well received an application from Benoît Joseph de Tarlé, Rochambeau’s intendant, for straw and resolved “that it be recommended most earnestly to the Farmers on the Island of Rhode Island immediately to furnish all the straw in their Power” to Tarlé, “who will pay a Generous Price.” On 8 August, Tarlé asked Governor Greene to order the farmers to thresh out their grain because he needed the straw. The order was given, but on 12 August, General Heath again informed Governor Greene that “I find the French Troops in great want of Straw, an article absolutely necessary for the preservation of the health of the Soldiers, and about which the General and Officers are extremely anxious.” Since the farmers would not thresh their grain, Rochambeau had offered to “send out some of his own People to assist in threshing, if the straw cannot be otherwise obtained.” Yet the straw still did not materialize, and on 12 August 1780, 50 of Greene’s men were ordered to make hay at Point Judith for 20 dollars extra pay for each and every day they are employed. Almost immediately, however, the order was repealed “as it may not be found consistent with the Publick Service to detach said Men for the Purpose aforesaid, in such case,” and the commissioners appointed to have the hay made on public farm are told to find other ways of having the hay made. It is unclear whether the hay for the French forces was ever cut or the straw was ever provided since a similar order of 3 August in which militia men had been ordered to do make hay for the same pay they would receive if they performed militia service had also been revoked. When procuring firewood, which had to be shipped from as far south as New Haven and New London, proved equally difficult,

²⁸³ On 27 February 1781, John Carter wrote to Major-General Schuyler, that “the Greatest misfortune is that it is almost impossible to persuaid these People to adopt necessary measures before the oppertunety of making provision to advantage is passed.” Wadsworth Papers Box 131, Correspondence December 1780 to June 1781, CTHS.

Rochambeau on 26 July ordered his own men out to do the work with the stipulation that every enlisted man on work detail was to be paid an extra 20 sols, one whole *livre*, per day without deductions.²⁸⁴ That was three times the regular daily pay of 6 sols 9 1/2 deniers of a grenadier or hussar. Clearly – waging war under the rules of the New World was more difficult than Rochambeau had expected. Even Nathan Miller from Warren expressed his frustration to Governor Greene on 28 July 1780 with the words that “nothing but the Extremity of the Law will Convince men where the whole are Politicians (as is the Case here) of the necessity of Subordination.” No wonder that some French officers told their correspondents in France of their surprise at the strange ways of waging war in the New World.²⁸⁵

Unlike their American counterparts, French troops would not put up with insufficient food supplies or go for months without pay: the French king paid his troops regularly every two weeks. If the supply system of the Continental Army was haphazard and constantly changing, supplying the French forces was science, reflecting the professionalism of the King's forces. American observers realized that very quickly. On 17 July, Royal Flint told Wadsworth from Newport that “You have no idea with what order & oeconomy the affairs in the French Army are regulated. It is a most perfect system. Their officers & soldiers are extremely civil and the best looking men I ever saw.” In the same letter he informed Wadsworth that “The French Army must be regularly supplied, and if they go one day without a full allowance of bread & meat they will revolt; so that they determine to have their supplies on a footing that cannot fail.” Maybe not quite, but Flint's letter to Wadsworth of 21 July is full of admiration. “The systems in the French arrangements are perfect, but they are so cautious & precise that their execution is slow & tedious. It is exceeding troublesome doing business with them. Every body I employ grows tired of their Service. They expect more than the circumstances & customs of this country will admit, and cannot make allowances for necessary difficulties. ... The intendant is a cool, candid attentive man – precise in his conduct – prudent of his money – and critical in his settlements. You can form no conception of the caution they use in their purchases.”²⁸⁶ Coming from a New Englander like Wadsworth this was a compliment indeed but also provides another example of how unfamiliar French officers were with “the circumstances & customs” of their hosts and how much both sides still had to learn. Thomas Lloyd Halsey a fellow purchaser for Wadsworth put it thus to Peter Colt: “They commonly sent to me at Sunsett to obtain what they wanted for the Morning, which is no way of taking the advantage

²⁸⁴ *Livre d'ordre*, 26 July, 19 September, and 8 October 1780.

²⁸⁵ The correspondence can be followed in the *Proceedings of the Council of War* the Letterbooks of Governor Greene in RISA, Providence, and in *Records of Rhode Island* vol. 9.

²⁸⁶ Wadsworth Correspondence, April – November 1780, Box 130 a, CTHS.

of Business."²⁸⁷ And an exasperated Jeremiah Wadsworth told Corny on 29 July 1780: "Such are the customs of this country & such is the genius of this people that it will be some time before you can mold them to the customs & mode of business practised in France." Or, to quote the *chevalier* de Coriolis again, who had written to his family in France: "Here it is not like it is in Europe ... in America the people say they are free and ... the words: 'I don't want to' end the business, and there is no means of appeal."

By the middle of August that regular supply of food, straw and firewood seemed no longer assured. Rochambeau had only brought two months of provisions from France and when the presence of the Royal Navy off the coast threatened not only to cut off supplies from France but from other states as well, Rochambeau and Ternay became nervous and in the meeting of 17 July blamed Corny for the shortfall. Corny in turn blamed Wadsworth and looked for any American supplier who promised to meet French needs. Intendant Tarlé and his naval counterpart Guillaume-Jacques-Constant de Liberge de Granchain too had never liked the idea of being dependent on a single supplier and had been entering into contracts parallel to, and outside of, Wadsworth's efforts, viz. on 29 July, Tarlé had signed an agreement with Thomas Walker and Jean Baptiste Arthur Vermonel of Boston for a total of 3,352 tons of hay or 2,240 tons English weight at 130 livres per ton, 30,000 bushels of Indian corn at 32 quarters per bushel and a price of £ 6 11/ 3d per bushel, 37,125 bushels of oats at 5/ 11 d per bushel 613 tons of straw (2,240 English weight) at 65 livres per ton beginning on 1 August 1780.²⁸⁸ From 1 to 15 August 1780, Walker and Vermonel promised to deliver to Newport an immediate supply of 180 tons of hay, 2,300 bushels corn, 60 tons straw and again the same amount between 16 August and 1 September so that French forces would always have a 15-day supply.

More important than Walker and Vermonel, however, were Gideon Delano of Dartmouth and Josiah Blakeley, a merchant from Hartford. On 23 July, Blakeley and Delano arranged with Tarlé for 1,500 cords of wood to be delivered between 15 September and 1 November; the French navy would pick up the wood in New London or New Haven or wherever it desired with the risk of transportation lying with the French.²⁸⁹ To make matters worse, the army was competing with the navy for scarce supplies. On 21 July 1780, Granchain entered into an agreement with

²⁸⁷ Halsey to Colt, 23 October 1781. Correspondence July 1781 to February 1782. Wadsworth Papers, CTHS.

²⁸⁸ £ 6 11/ 3d = 1 pound 11 shilling 3 pence.

²⁸⁹ A cord is defined as measuring 8 feet by 4 feet by 4 feet and containing 128 cubic feet of wood. A tree with a usable height of 40 feet and an average circumference of 75 inches contains about one cord of wood.

Delano on board the *Duc de Bourgogne* for three hundred cords of wood to be picked up in New Haven and New London during August and September for 5 dollars “hard money”, i.e. specie, each.²⁹⁰ Similarly Delano promised to have “one thousand Barrells of Flower of the best Quality to be found in Connecticut” in New Haven and New London within three months of 21 July. Again Ternay promised to supply the vessels to pick it up. Two days later, on 23 July, Tarlé negotiated a contract with Blakely and Delano for an unspecified number of cattle and sheep to be supplied beginning on 10 August until 1 January 1781. The only stipulation was that Rochambeau’s butchers would always have 50 oxen and 50 sheep at hand and in reserve. The cattle was to be weighed upon delivery and paid at 11 *sous* p/pound of 16 ounces, i.e. in English measure and on the hoof.²⁹¹ Delivery was to be at Blakely and Delano’s expense but the butchering was to be done by French butchers. The skins and tallow of oxen and sheep and everything known as the “Fifth Quarter” was to be Blackely and Delano’s. On 9 August, Granchain negotiated a separate agreement with Delano and Blakely who promised to provide 30 oxen of about 15,000 pounds total, i.e. 500 pounds each, per week “for the subsistance of the fleets Crew” in Newport or wherever the fleet might be beginning 1 September.²⁹² The negotiated price was 10 *sous* 6 deniers per pound French weight, to be weighed “with the feet head tallow and Skin except the bowells.”²⁹³

None of this would have been remarkable if Blakely and Delano had not arranged with Tarlé and Granchain to pay between 1/3 and ¼ in specie (at 5 livres 5 *sous* per Spanish silver dollar) and the rest with funds drawn on France. Wadsworth had been much more careful with the specie funds: on 24 June he had instructed David Trumbull in Lebanon: “I beg you to procure the needed supplies on terms the most reasonable, leaving it to the choice of the seller to have new money or Bills at fifty days sight on the treasury of France.” Here lies one of the explanations as to why supplies arrived in Newport only haltingly: James Hooker from Windsor just north of Hartford told Wadsworth on 7 July that a man named Timothy Burr bought corn at 4/ in specia per bushel at Poquonock and “most of the people here that have Corn to sell are displeased at its being more than the price we have given & Say its

²⁹⁰ See also the description of cutting firewood in late October in Blanchard, *Journal*, p. 73. Similarly Captain Asa Waterman wrote from Norwich 19 July 1780 that wood was scarce and either to be “procured of the Indians for hard Money they will not take the paper currency” or from Fisher’s Island at 12/ per cord.

²⁹¹ 1 livre = 20 sols, 1 sol = 12 deniers, 1 livre = 240 deniers. For a comparison of currencies used in Rhode Island in 1780 see Appendix 3.

²⁹² The dressed carcass makes up about 60% of the live-weight of cattle; the remaining 40% live-weight is taken up by the hide, blood, bones, horns, hoof, tallow, intestines and casings, fat and organs such as the tongue, heart, kidney and liver known as the Fifth Quarter.

²⁹³ Letterbooks, Letters to Gov. William Greene vol. 15, 19 June to 10 November 1780, RISA.

Enough.” Once farmers too realized that they might be paid in specie if they only held out long enough it became virtually impossible to purchase for paper money only. Seth Miner complained to Wadsworth from Norwich on 7 September 1780 about “our farmers who are so craving after French coyn they Don’t chuse to thresh their wheete at presant.” As long as Blakely and Delano offered gold and silver supplies arrived in camp but the arrangement had numerous drawbacks for all parties involved - except Blakely and Delano. Rochambeau’s and Ternay’s specie reserves, for one, were depleting faster than anticipated, an uncomfortable situation as the prospects of re-supply remained uncertain. That situation was exacerbated by the refusal of New England farmers to accept Continental and state currencies and their insistence on being paid at least partly in specie and bills drawn on the treasure in Paris. Specie payments drove the value of Continental and state-issued bills to new lows and dried up the market for Continental purchasers who had nothing but paper bills and IOUs to offer.²⁹⁴

Even before the arrival of Rochambeau, Peter Colt had written to Wadsworth on 24 May 1780 from Danbury that “the Troops on Hudson River are at half allowance of both Meat & Bread - & no relief to be had from this Quarter – the Troops desert daily – pray urge the Cattle buyers to push the Beef Cattle forward.” Eight weeks later Benjamin Tallmadge had teased Wadsworth in a letter from Cortlands Manor on Croton 14 July 1780 that “as you are Qgenl for the French I shall not be disappointed to find thro the Campaign that they are well fed & our Troops starving.” Once French silver had arrived in New England the situation became desperate for the Continentals. On 10 September 1780 Rhode Island delegate to Congress Ezekiel Cornell informed Governor Greene from Philadelphia that “The army now live principally by plunder both for meat & forrage. And will if they keep together I fear soon become freebooters. And I think every man must feel for the Inhabitants where the Army marches.”²⁹⁵ Two days later on 12 September 1780, William S. Pennington of the Second Regiment of Continental Artillery wrote in his diary: “Plundering and Morouding has become so prevelant at this time in the Army that there is No Such thing as Security of Property to the inhabitants.”²⁹⁶ This tendency to lawlessness was not lost on their allies. Almost a year later outside New

²⁹⁴ French treasury bills became a currency medium in themselves: on 19 June 1781, Ezra Stiles “received of Treasurer Trumbull £ 74. = £ 60. Bills of Exch^a upon France as part of my Salary.” *Literary Diary* vol. 2, p. 541.

The best overview is provided by Wayne Carp, *To Starve the Army at Pleasure. Continental Army Administration and American Political Culture* (Chapel Hill, 1984).

²⁹⁵ Letters to Gov. William Greene vol. 15, 19 June to 10 November 1780, RISA. Lack of food and pay forms the background for the mutinies of January 1781.

²⁹⁶ William S. Pennington Diary, 4 May 1780-23 March 1781, p. 62. MG 234, New Jersey Historical Society, Newark.

York City Baron Closen remarked that "It is to be noted that the American Army paid neither for wood nor forage, and in a way, for nothing in this country. *The soldiers plunder a great deal* (and almost by turns.)"²⁹⁷ This scenario repeated itself wherever French forces approached. On 21 August 1781, Continental Quartermaster James Hendricks wrote from Alexandria in Virginia "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."²⁹⁸

Congress, Continental Quartermasters and the New England states had foreseen this scenario and instituted price and wage controls. Additionally they asked French purchasers to only offer paper money and letters of credit drawn on France. Neither Corny nor Blakely and Delano acceded to that request; Jeremiah Wadsworth did with the consequence that he had difficulty meeting the supply demands placed on him. Working within the framework set by Congress and the New England states while trying to husband French specie did not, could not, produce the supplies demanded by increasingly nervous French forces in the summer of 1780 confined in Newport, esp. when other purchasers offered specie. When Corny and Grandchain turned to other suppliers in late July, a piqued Wadsworth ceased all cooperation. On 27 July Wadsworth informed David Trumbull from Newport: "I shall not continue to do business with the Monsieur but wish you to engage the hay and oats as it will be expected of me." Two days later he told Corny that he wanted to meet with him in Newport to settle their accounts. "I should not do you justice were I to omit telling you that the present mode of doing business is exceedingly difficult & expensive; my people who pass & repass not knowing your language are stopped at the ferries, some times sent back & always delayed. ... The vessels employed are detained when they might be dispatched if the parties could converse with each other. Every moment brings me new difficulties of this kind, and the expense is accumulating rapidly." Corny was described by Blanchard as "a man of intelligence, but intriguing and greedy" if not vengeful,²⁹⁹ but the Intendant Tarlé was trying to

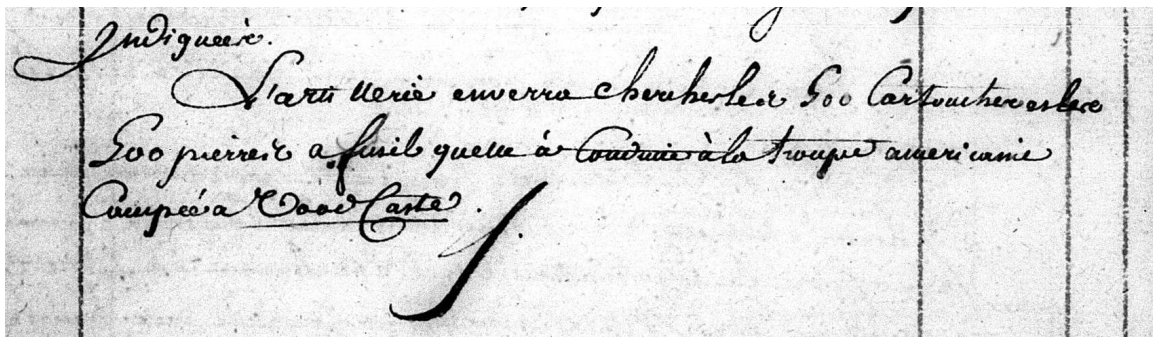
²⁹⁷ Acomb, *Closen*, p. 259.

²⁹⁸ NARA, Revolutionary War Records, Miscellaneous Numbered Records, Record Group 93, microfilm reel 92, no. 26743.

²⁹⁹ "his stay in America, short as it has been, has not impaired his fortune" Blanchard, *Journal* p. 87. On 4 December 1780 Corny requested Washington's permission returned to France which was granted on 22 December. He departed Newport in February and arrived

protect himself as well as Flint informed Wadsworth from Providence on 5 September 1780: “you may depend upon it he is disposed to revenge himself for your asking to be released from their service and will give you every trouble in his power.” One of the reasons for Corny’s, Tarlé’s and Grandchain’s anger was that Jeremiah Wadsworth had quit cooperating with them just when wagons and horses from Pennsylvania and Maryland began to arrive in Hartford by the hundreds. (The first division of teams arrived in Hartford on 17 July – by 27 July Wadsworth had resigned.) It was only on 21 August, that Mitchel ordered Major Reading Howell to stop hiring additional teams for the French service.

Once the danger of a British attack had subsided in mid-August and the French supply staff realized the high cost of doing business with Blakely and Delano, they looked for a cheaper way of supplying their forces. The French offer in September to resume business with Wadsworth was based on the inability of Blakley and Delano to guarantee a stable food supply at the onset of winter. At the same time, Rochambeau rejected the offer of the New England states to supply his forces under a regional system of state quotas similar to that used to supply the Continental Army. During July and August when militia had joined French forces in the defense of Rhode Island Rochambeau had seen how the American system worked, or did not work. Starving militia had to be fed from French resources, needed arms, ammunition and siege material from French stores.



Detail from *Livre d'ordre* for 10 August 1780; the artillery is ordered to send 500 rounds and ammunition and 500 flints to the American forces at Wood Castle.

He had witnessed the American system first-hand and was not prepared to expose his forces to it. Just as Flint was warning Wadsworth of Tarlé’s revenge in early September, Corny, Tarlé and Grandchain approached him again. Wadsworth

in France in March 1781. Bodinier, *Dictionnaire*, p. 212. On 13 August 1780, Blanchard had a run-in with Tarlé over beef purchases as well. Ibid. p. 54.

had portrayed Blakely and Delano as petty adventurers without the ability to guarantee delivery and developments proved him correct. Wadsworth refused to come to their rescue. He was determined to force the two out and to become sole supplier: he saw no reason why patriotism should interfere with his profit. His efforts were crowned with success when Rochambeau offered him a contract appointing him sole supplier of French forces on 8 October. The contract also guaranteed him a 5% commission on all purchases, which made him the wealthiest man in Connecticut by the end of the war.

The contract was to begin on 1 November, the day Rochambeau's infantry and artillery were to enter winter quarters in Newport, but Wadsworth's troubles were not over yet. Corny and Tarlé had entered into extensive and long-term contracts with Blakely, Delano and others. The French *commissaires* washed their hands of them, claiming that Wadsworth had assumed those contracts when he signed the contract on 8 October. Wadsworth of course refused to assume those contracts and while the smaller suppliers caved in to Wadsworth's pressure, Blakely and Delano refused to give in so easily. Wadsworth, however, was much better connected than the two and using his connections with Connecticut's political elite he convinced the legislature on 30 October to prohibit the sale of beef to Blakely & Delano in the state. Without access to Connecticut cattle, Blakely could not fulfill his contracts, but still Blakely refused to give up. While he agreed for himself in a letter of 30 November to Wadsworth that he would stop supplying the French on 1 November he also told Wadsworth that the contract with the French had been made by his partner (i.e. Delano though Blakely refused to identify him) and that he could not speak for him. When Delano refused to follow Blakely's lead Wadsworth threatened to call in a loan from a third party which could have bankrupted the two. Only then did Blakely surrender.³⁰⁰

³⁰⁰ Wadsworth's letter of 30 November with Blakely's response of 1 December on the blank conjugate leaf were advertised for sale by M&S Rare Books in January 2015. The description of the letter is here: http://www.msrarebooks.com/4DCGI/w_BookDetailS/17181

[AT A MEETING OF THE GOVERNOR AND COUNCIL OF SAFETY AT
HARTFORD 30TH OCTOBER, A. D. 1780.]

Resolved, That this Council approve the agency of Jere. Wadsworth, Esq^r, which is represented to be by him undertaken at the instance of the Intendant of the French army, for the supply of the army of his Most Christian Majesty at Rhode Island, and do disapprove of any purchases of beef to be made in this State by Josiah Blakely and — Delano, or any person under them; and all persons are to desist purchasing in their name or in their behalf, as this Board have the fullest information that the French army is to be supplied with beef by said Wadsworth, and a competition of purchases must create many evils.

Extract from the minutes.

Test. W^m WILLIAMS, Clerk.
From Papers in the Conn. Historical Society.]

Charles C. Hoadly, *The Public Records of the State of Connecticut, from May 1780 to October 1781 Inclusive: With the Journal of the Council of Safety from May 15, 1780 to December 27, 1781, Inclusive, and an Appendix; Compiled in Accordance with a Resolution of the General Assembly* vol. 3. (Hartford, CT, 1922), p. 221.

While trying to sort out the mess created by Corny Rochambeau had to fend off the increasing pressure for military action emanating from Morristown.

Congress, Washington, Lafayette all urged military operations against the British as soon as possible. Hopes ran high in the Continental Army and in the colonies at large that a campaign would begin as soon as the immediate needs of setting up camp around Newport had been addressed. On 30 May 1780, six weeks before the first French infantryman set foot on American soil, William S. Pennington of the 2nd Regiment of Continental Artillery recorded in his diary that "Its reported that A Body of French Troops are to Land Near Rhode Island and March by land to Act against New York."³⁰¹ On 4 July 1780, Flint informed Wadsworth from Providence that "The Horses you bought will be wanted within two hours after the Fleet arrives to go as an Escort with the French Commander in Chief to confer with Genl. Washington. In Trenton, Moore Furman wrote on 17 July 1780, that as "The French Fleet & Army arrived at New Port the 10th I apprehend there can be no other object now but New York worthy of the Attention of the Combined Forces, & that they will Act Offensively towards that, what I wish is that every Man will now aid some

³⁰¹ New Jersey Historical Society (NJHS) MG 234, William S. Pennington Diary, 4 May 1780-23 March 1781.

decisive blow to put an End to the War.”³⁰² From Cortland Manor on the Croton, Washington's *aide-de-camp* Colonel Benjamin Tallmadge informed his friend Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth in Hartford on 14 July 1780, how “We have just been rejoicing on acct of the arrival of the French Fleet. How long before they will be ready to cooperate with us? When will be their first movement? For God’s Sake let us go about business soon.”³⁰³ Ezekiel Cornell, Rhode Island's Delegate to Congress sounded even more desperate when he wrote to Governor Greene on 1 August 1780, from Philadelphia of “the necessity of appointing General Washington sole Dictator of America, [which] is again talked of as the only means under God by which we can be saved, from destruction. ... the people will not work for the Continent without money nor trust her for any articles wanted for the Army. Therefore they must be supported by the force of Military Law, or disband.”³⁰⁴

Washington too hoped to embark on a military campaign before the onset of winter. As early as 15 July, he had suggested to Rochambeau a joint attack by French and American infantry forces against New York sometime in August.³⁰⁵ Similarly he wrote to Nathanael Greene on 14 July from Bergen County “Sir: I have determined upon a plan of operations for the reduction of the City and Garrison of New York; which is to be carried on in conjunction with the french forces daily expected from France. The number of Troops to be employed upon this occasion, may be about forty thousand men. ...”³⁰⁶ On 15 July, the day news of the arrival of Rochambeau reached Philadelphia, he sent a detailed plan to Lafayette with the request to submit it to Rochambeau and de Ternay upon their arrival.³⁰⁷ But Rochambeau's troops were in no condition for an attack, and neither was he prepared to embark on such a risky enterprise. Instead he suggested a meeting with Washington, and on 16 July wrote to Lafayette that “In an hour of conversation we shall be able to settle things far more definitely than in volumes of writing.”³⁰⁸ But Lafayette continued pressing for action, eventually even questioning Rochambeau's courage. This could have thrown the alliance into a severe crisis, and it speaks highly for the 55-year-old

³⁰² New Jersey Historical Society, Newark, New Jersey, MG 608, Anderson Family Box 2: Military Correspondence Folder 12.

³⁰³ Benjamin Tallmadge to Jeremiah Wadsworth from Cortlandt Manor on Croton 14 July 1780. CHS, Wadsworth Correspondence, Box 130a.

³⁰⁴ RISA, Letterbooks, Letters to Gov. William Greene, vol. 15, 19 June to 10 November 1780.

³⁰⁵ Washington's “Memorandum for Concerting a Plan of Operations” is printed in Fitzpatrick, *Writings*, vol. 19, pp. 174-176.

³⁰⁶ [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mgw:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(gw190197\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mgw:@field(DOCID+@lit(gw190197)))

³⁰⁷ [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mgw:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(gw190204\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mgw:@field(DOCID+@lit(gw190204)))

³⁰⁸ Doniol, vol. 5, p. 350.

Rochambeau that he calmly admonished the 22-year-old *marquis* as "an old father ... to a son who is very dear to him" that "I do not need to be spurred into action." Having "brought to your attention, as gently as possible, the things that displeased me in your last letter," Rochambeau concluded by assuring Lafayette of his "love and esteem to his last breath."³⁰⁹ The *marquis* had been gently, but firmly, put in his place, but the need for a face-to-face meeting of the generals remained.



Market Square in Providence. Governor Bowen's house is to the left of the Market³¹⁰

Rochambeau wrote this letter to Lafayette from Providence; once the young *marquis* had departed from Newport on 3 August and the immediate danger of a British attack had subsided as well - Sir Henry Clinton called off an invasion of Rhode Island or an attack on Newport on 1 August - Rochambeau embarked on a tour of inspection of his various posts and hospitals. On 26 August, Deputy Governor Bowen accompanied Rochambeau from Newport to Providence, where he was met by Generals Sullivan and Varnum. Like most French officers before and after him Rochambeau lodged with Bowen.

³⁰⁹ Rochambeau's letter of 27 August 1780 in Idzerda, *Lafayette*, vol. 3, pp. 155/56.

³¹⁰ This photograph is reproduced in Preston, "Providence", between pp. 8/9.



The Market House in Providence today

Rochambeau had barely returned to Newport when a five-day visit by 18 (or 19?) American Indians on 29 August brought excitement to the French camp. The thirteen Oneida and Tuscarora as well as five Caghnawaga had come to offer their assistance in the war against the common enemy, and Rochambeau welcomed them with all honors, gave them a demonstration of French military power and exchanged gifts with them.³¹¹ On 30 August he took them to Ternay's flagship where there was more cannon-fire. The visit is prominently described in all French journals: few of the officers or enlisted men had ever seen a Native American and they were fascinated by them. French response, as with virtually all aspects of the New World, was very much determined by the social status of the observer. Officers such as Clousen employ terms such as "horrible and singular faces", "bizarre manners",

³¹¹ For a recent description see also Hattendorf, *Newport, the French Navy*, pp. 67/68.

From Newport the delegation went to American headquarters where they arrived on 12 September, when Israel Angell recorded that "a Number of Savages of the Onido (sic) Nation Came to head Quarters." RIHS Mss 980, Israel Angell Papers.

“distasteful” when describing the Indians.³¹² Flohr, the enlisted man in the Royal Deux-Ponts, uses a much more value-neutral language, describing for example their religious services as “*Gottesdienst*”, i.e. divine services, a term he would also have used for a Christian service.

One of the interpreters who accompanied them was “a native German, born in the Palatinate [whose] father had migrated to America and had taken him along when he was a little boy and because his father had died he ended up among the savages and that he was now 23 years already among them and that he wanted to stay with them.” Flohr met the man, identified by Baron Closen as a man from the Palatinate by the name of Frey from Schwetzingen who had lived with the Indians since 1758, in a tavern in Newport. From him learned details about life with the Oneida, that “his father had died he ended up among the savages and that he was now 23 years already among them and that he wanted to stay with them,” or, in the words of Closen, “would end his days among them.”

9.5 Rochambeau's Journey to the Hartford Conference, 18-24 September 1780

Once the Oneida had left for New Jersey plans for a meeting between Rochambeau and Washington could be finalized. On 8 September, Washington asked Rochambeau and Admiral de Ternay to meet him in Hartford, even though he was under no illusion as to the outcome of their meeting.³¹³ “Our plans can only turn up possibilities; which is the more unfortunate, as the affairs of this country

³¹² Acomb, Closen, pp. 37/39; Blanchard, *Journal*, pp. 61/63, Gallatin, “Garde Suisse”, pp. 330-332 ;

³¹³ There is no good, recent account of this conference. Older, but still useful, accounts include Allan Forbes and Paul F. Cadman, *France and New England* 3 vols, (Boston, 1925-1929), vol. 2, pp. 109-117: “Hartford and Wethersfield, Where Washington and Rochambeau Met in Historic Conferences.” Forbes and Cadman erroneously include the duc de Lauzun in Rochambeau's party and confuse Rochambeau's aide Joseph *comte* de Damas, who did not go to Hartford, with Mathieu Dumas, who did. Damas did not leave any writings. See also the unsigned “Hartford in the Revolutionary War” in *Protection. A Magazine published for Representatives of The Traveler's Insurance Companies. Bicentennial Edition* vol. 99, no. 7, (July 1976), pp. 2-5. It was not, however, a three-day conference as claimed in this article. Finally see the *Washington-Rochambeau Celebration: 1780-1955 Hartford - Connecticut. Official Souvenir Program* (Hartford, 1955), where Baron Cromot du Bourg is listed as having accompanied Rochambeau to Hartford. (p. 11) Du Bourg cannot possibly have been at Hartford since he only arrived at Boston from France on 18 July 1781. See his “Diary of a French Officer 1781” *Magazine of American History* vol. 4, no. 3, (March 1880), pp. 205- 214, p. 208. The diary is continued in no. 4, (April 1880), pp. 292-308), vol. 4, no. 5, pp. 376-385, and vol. 4, no. 6 (June 1880), pp. 441-452. Many details can be gleaned from the relevant entries in Florence S. Marcy Crofut, *Guide to the History and Historic Sites of Connecticut* 2 vols., (New Haven, 1937), esp. vol. 1, pp. 231/32.

require activity, upon whichever side they are viewed."³¹⁴ Five days later, on the 13th, he renewed his request, urging once again action before the onset of winter. "Should the Count De Guichen arrive before the end of this month, I still recommend New York to be our object; and in this view I cannot forbear to you how essential it is that the fleet should instantly proceed to take possession of the port, and that your troops should as soon as possible form a junction with ours by way of the sound."³¹⁵ On the 18th, Rochambeau and Ternay set out for Hartford.

In a letter of 16 October 1780, Swedish Count Axel von Fersen, aide-de-camp to Rochambeau, informed his father that Rochambeau's group at Hartford had consisted of six persons.³¹⁶ They were the commander-in-chief himself, his son Donatien Marie Joseph de Vimeur, *vicomte* de Rochambeau, Admiral Henry d'Arsac, chevalier de Ternay, the French chief engineer Colonel Jean Nicholas Desandroins, and two aides, i.e., Mathieu Dumas and Fersen. All of these participants kept journals or diaries, sent letters to parents or relatives in Europe, or wrote memoirs yet they allow but a sketchy reconstruction of the journey to Hartford Conference.³¹⁷

Short as they are, the most detailed reports of the route are given by Admiral Ternay and the *vicomte* Rochambeau.³¹⁸ Ternay records that the group left Newport at 9:00 a.m., took Bristol Ferry to Bristol and dined at Warren. From there it was on to Providence where the two men and their suites arrived ten hours after departure from Newport. Having spent the night at the home of Deputy Governor Ephraim Bowen they departed Providence at 7:00 a.m. and had dinner at "woulangton", i.e. Voluntown, today's Sterling Hill. The group had planned on spending the night in

³¹⁴ Washington, *Writings*, vol. 20, p. 16.

³¹⁵ Washington, *Writings*, vol. 20, p. 46.

³¹⁶ *Lettres d'Axel de Fersen a Son Père*, F.U. Wrangel, ed., (Paris, 1929), p. 82. Arnold Whitridge in his *Rochambeau* (New York, 1965), p. 99, adds the *marquis* de Chastellux to this group, which is wrong since Chastellux himself wrote "I did not attend him on this journey." François Jean *marquis* de Beauvoir de Chastellux, *Travels in North America in the Years 1780, 1781 and 1782* Howard C. Rice Jr., ed., 2 vols (Chapel Hill, 1963), vol. 1, p.63.

Washington was accompanied by LaFayette, Henry Knox, his French-born Chief of Engineers Jean Baptiste de Gouvion, six aides, including Alexander Hamilton, and an escort of 22 dragoons.

³¹⁷ See also Claude C. Sturgill, ed., "Rochambeau's *Mémoire de la Guerre en Amérique*" *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* vol. 78, (January 1970) pp. 34-64, p. 41.

³¹⁸ Rochambeau wrote that he "left on the eighteenth, with the admiral and the commanding officer of the engineers." Next the group was "given beds at Providence" and "left the next day," 19 September, at 7:00 a.m. "to go to Hartford. We went through Sutuate [Scituate], Coventry [Rhode Island], Voluntown" [Sterling Hill], three miles from the state line in Connecticut. Vicomte de Rochambeau, *The War in America. An Unpublished Journal (1780-1783)* in Jean-Edmond Weelen, *Rochambeau. Father and Son* (New York, 1936), pp. 191-285, pp. 211-212.

Windham, but, as Admiral de Ternay recorded in his *Journal*, "the roads were filled with rocks and difficult for four-wheeled vehicles" so that "the inhabitants, men and women, traveled almost all on horseback." Since Ternay was sick, he and Rochambeau rode in a carriage.³¹⁹ As they were approaching "close to the village of Scotland," the inevitable happened. One of the wheels broke and "we were obliged to stop."³²⁰ Rochambeau sent an aide to get a wheelwright "who lived about a mile from the spot where the accident occurred." Fersen returned with the news that the wheelwright was sick and "that for his hat full of guineas he would do no work at night." But when the wheelwright found out who his customers were and that they were on their way for a meeting with Washington, he promised to have the carriage "ready for you at six in the morning. He kept his word," and by 7:00 a.m. the next morning, the group was on its way.³²¹ Rochambeau found the incident "strikingly characteristic of the manners of the good republicans of Connecticut."³²²

Following lunch in Andover, the party arrived in Hartford around 3:00 p.m. On Thursday, 21 September, the meeting began in the home of Jeremiah Wadsworth. Fersen informed his father that "The two generals and the admiral remained closeted the whole day that we spent in Hartford," with the *marquis* de Lafayette and Alexander Hamilton serving as interpreters and translators.³²³ Washington had brought an eight-page outline for an operation against New York City drafted by Alexander Hamilton, in the hope that he would be able to convince Rochambeau and Ternay to stage such an attack before the onset of winter.³²⁴ But both generals were well aware that independent of their infantry strength any such attack would be doomed without French naval support. The arrival of British Admiral Sir George Brydges, Baron Rodney, and his fleet in New York combined with the departure of Louis Urbain de Bouexic, *comte* de Guichen for France, ruled out that possibility for

³¹⁹ Ternay died on 15 December 1780.

³²⁰ See in Ternay's "Journal de ma voyage sur le vaisseau le duc de Bourgogne anno 1780," the entry for Tuesday, 19 September 1780. Ternay's "Journal" forms part of the Destouches Papers in the Huntington Library, San Marino, California. The blacksmith has not been identified.

³²¹ Rochambeau's memory may have failed him here; the aide may have been Dumas since Fersen wrote his father on 16 October 1780, that Rochambeau had sent him ahead to Hartford to announce his arrival. Fersen, *Lettres*, p. 82.

A guinea was an English gold coin first minted in 1707 worth 21 shillings. It was named after the coast of Guinea in Africa, the place of origin of the gold.

³²² *Memoirs of the Marshal Count de Rochambeau, relative to the War of Independence of the United States*. M.W.E.Wright, ed., (Paris, 1838), p. 20.

³²³ Fersen, *Lettres*, p. 83.

³²⁴ Washington, *Writings*, vol. 19, p. 423, note 68. The "Idées mises sous les yeux de S.E. le général Washington par M. le comte de Rochambeau et M. le chevalier de Ternay -Réponse du général Washington" are printed in Doniol, *Histoire* vol. 4, (Paris, 1892), pp. 104-107.

the foreseeable future. Both generals decided to return to their headquarters to prepare for the eventuality of an amphibious attack and to delay any major action until the arrival of the second division from France.

On early Friday afternoon, 22 September, the French delegation, again accompanied by the Governor's Guard and a thirteen-gun salute to the river, departed for Newport. Washington left the following morning, 23 September, for the Hudson. At the same spot where a wheel had broken three days earlier, Rochambeau's carriage broke down again. Once again the friendly "blacksmith agreed to work through the night for the single reason that our journey was in the interest of America."³²⁵ By 5 a.m. on the 23rd the carriage was ready. Again Rochambeau's comment: "I do not mean to compare all good Americans to this good man; but almost all inland cultivators and all land owners of Connecticut are animated with that patriotic spirit, which many other people would do well to imitate." Following a dinner in Voluntown/Sterling Hill, the two officers inspected the hospital at the college in Providence, where Ternay counted 300 sick French soldiers though he thought the building could accommodate 200 more. After another night in Providence at the home of Ephraim Bowen on 23/24 September, the group left at 10:00 a.m., dined at Warren, took the Bristol Ferry and was back in quarters in Newport by 7:00 p.m.

The results of the conference must have been disappointing for Washington, but even without firm plans, it had served an important purpose. The two generals had met for the first time face to face and had taken an instinctive liking to each other, a precondition for any successful cooperation. Rochambeau's officers too had encountered Washington for the first time and Dumas' impression of the American would be repeated in the writings of many officers: "We had been impatient to see the hero of liberty. His dignified address, his simplicity of manners, and mild gravity, surpassed our expectation and won every heart."³²⁶ Fersen was a bit more reserved. He found the American "illustrious, if not unique in our century. His handsome and majestic, while at the same time mild and open countenance perfectly reflects his moral qualities; he looks the hero; he is very cold; speaks little, but is courteous and frank. A shade of sadness overshadows his countenance, which is not unbecoming, and gives him an interesting air."³²⁷

³²⁵ Ternay, "Journal," entry for Friday, 22 September 1780.

³²⁶ Mathieu Dumas, *Memoirs of his own Time; including the Revolution, the Empire, and the Restoration*, 2 vols., (London, 1839), vol. 1, p. 29. Captain Dumas (1753-1837), later served as *aide-major général des logis* or assistant quartermaster general in Rochambeau's staff.

³²⁷ Fersen, *Lettres*, p. 82.

Dumas summed the conference well when he wrote that "General Washington and General Rochambeau decided on passing the whole winter in passive observation, always holding themselves ready to profit by the most favorable circumstances which might present themselves. The whole of this comparative suspension of hostilities was well employed in putting the American army in good condition for the opening of the campaign; and General Rochambeau, on his side, who was expecting the arrival of the second division, prepared himself to aid our allies with vigor."³²⁸ Washington himself wrote to James Duane on 4 October 1780 that "the interview at Hartford produced nothing conclusive because neither side knew with certainty what was to be expected. We could only combine possible plans on the supposition of possible events and engage mutually to do everything in our powers again against the next campaign."³²⁹

As it turned out the Franco-American cause was not so much threatened by an amphibious attack from the outside but by treason from within. Just as Washington reached the Hudson, news of Benedict Arnold's treason and failed attempt to hand over West Point to the British on 25 September reached American lines, sending shock waves through the colonies. The incident only confirmed Rochambeau's conviction of the shaky ground upon which the success of the rebellion rested as well as determination not to risk anything without overwhelming odds in his favor. The American cause might not survive any more failures such as the unsuccessful sieges of Savannah or Newport. France, and America, could not afford another year of losses. But America was at the end of her rope, and the odds in favor of success could only be improved by French aid. Immediately upon his return to Newport, Rochambeau sent his son to Versailles to ask for more aid and the second division, without which he felt there was no chance of success against New York. To support the *vicomte* in his mission, Washington ordered Henry Laurens, son of the president of Congress who had fought valiantly in the Battle of Rhode Island, to accompany the Frenchman. "Without a foreign loan," he told Laurens, "our present force, which is but the remnant of an army cannot be kept together for this campaign, much less will it be increased and in readiness for another."³³⁰

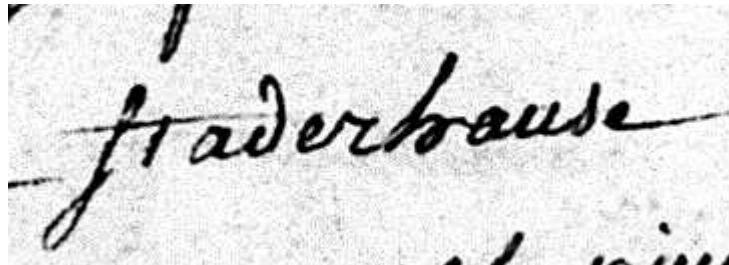
Both before his departure and following Rochambeau's return from Hartford and prior to entering winter-quarters French and American forces conducted sham battles in September and early October in order to test their military skills and to prepare for the eventual defense of the island. On 9 September, the Soissonnois and

³²⁸ Dumas, *Memoirs*, p. 32.

³²⁹ Washington, *Writings*, vol. 20, p. 118.

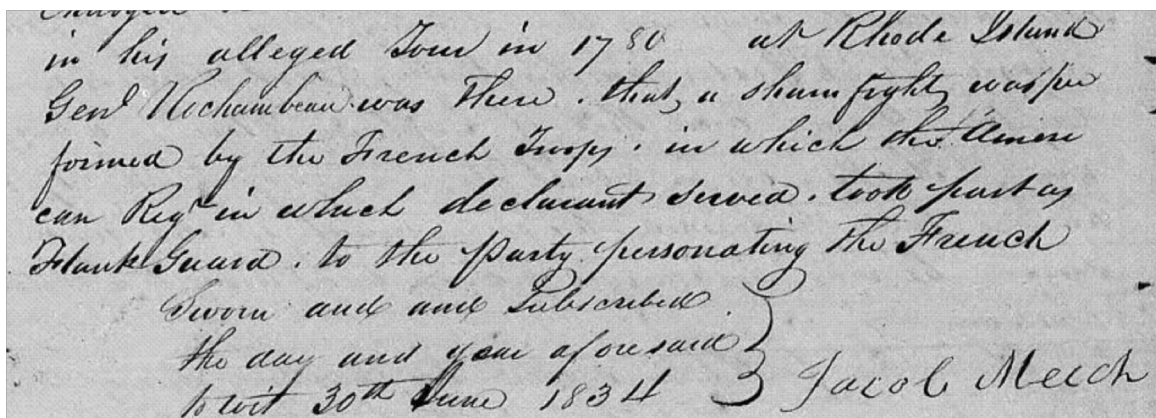
³³⁰ Washington, *Writings*, vol. 21, p. 438.

Royal Deux-Ponts were ordered to receive 12 blank rounds each for regimental exercises the next day; the Bourbonnois and Saintonge conducted brigade exercises the following day.³³¹ Following Rochambeau's return from Hartford, the army on 1 and 6 October practiced defending against a British Landing in the vicinity of an unidentified location called "Statlers House" by Closen and "Staderhouse" by the *comte de Lauberdière*.³³²



Continental Army forces participated in these maneuvers as well. In his pension application of 30 June 1834, Jacob Meech, serving in the Rhode Island Regiment, remembered that

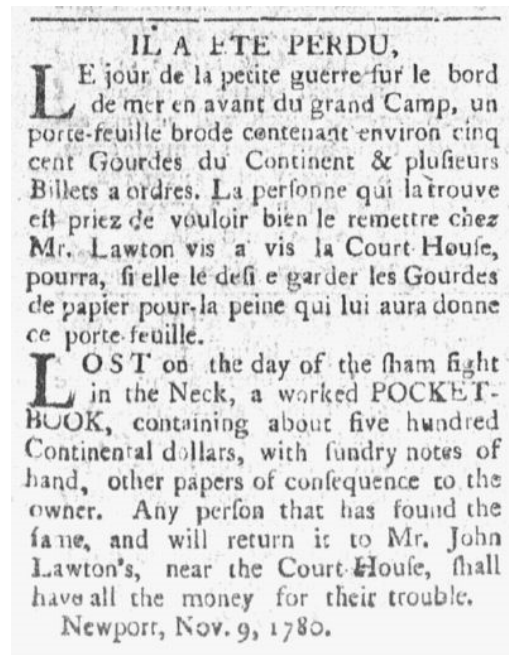
while serving his alleged Tour in 1780 at Rhode Island Genl Rochambeau was there that, a sham fight was performed by the French Troops, in which the American Regt in which declarant served took part as Flank Guard to the party personating the French."³³³



³³¹ A detailed description of these maneuvers can be found in Rochambeau's *livre d'ordre*.

³³² Acomb, *Closen*, p. 42. Closen places the manoeuvres on 1 and 6 October (Acomb, *Closen*, p. 42); Blanchard writes that they were held on 2 and 7 October. Blanchard, *Journal*, p. 53.

³³³ Pension application of Jacob Meech, 30 June 1834, no. S15524.



During one of these exercises Pierre d'Espeyron, Major of the Soissonnois, who lodged with John Lawton, lost his pocket-book.³³⁴

While these exercises went on Ezra Stiles visiting Newport in early October and was introduced to Rochambeau on 5 October. Two days later, on 7 October, he dined with Rochambeau "in a splendid manner. There were perhaps 30 at Table. I conversed with the General in Latin. He speaks it tolerable." On 9 October he dined with Chastellux, again "in a splendid manner on 35 Dishes. He is a capital Literary Character, a Member of the French Academy. He is the Glory of the Army. After Dinner the Minister of France the Chevalier de la Luzerne with the General came in & socially conversed round the Table."³³⁵

On 28 October, Ternay's frigate, *l'Amazone*, commanded by the de la Pérousse, one of France's most promising young naval officers accompanied by the *Surveillante* and the *l'Hermione* slipped out of Newport harbor and headed for France where it sailed into Lorient after a very fast crossing of nineteen days on 15 November 1780.³³⁶ Until the return of young Rochambeau, the French would have to bide their time and wait in "passive observation" for the news he would bring.

³³⁴ *Newport Mercury* 23 November 1780

³³⁵ Literary Diary, vol. 2 p. 473. He also reported his visit in a letter to Benjamin Franklin which Chastellux forwarded to France. He also dined with Vioménil and other French dignitaries before departing again on 10 October.

³³⁶ Vicomte de Rochambeau, *Journal*, p. 214, including the text of Rochambeau's letter to the ministry.

29

Quantity of Materials necessary for
the Building and repairing of the houses
for Caracking the Troops of his. M. G. M.
at Newport,

80000. Bricks.
100. Cart loads of Stone
80. Hogheads of Lime
600. Cartloads of sand.
600. Feet of Timber ten inches square
5000. Feet of Timber six inches square
15000. Feet of Timber, four or five inches square
30000. Feet of Planks two inches thick, for the
repairing of almost all the stairs.
150000. Feet of Plank, one inch thick, for flooring.
100000. Shingles.
8000. Laths.
6000. Weight of Nails, three inches long
200000. Shingle nails.
6000. Weight nails two inches long

If the General assembly can make the Count, have
two thousand cords of fire-wood, along with the
other materials that they think they may conveniently
let him have, it is to be noted that all the
Bargains made by the French army, are all
paid $2/3$ in bills upon France, and the other $1/3$
in hard money.

20

Estimate of materials needed to make the houses in Newport habitable for winter
quarters for French forces.

9.6 Winter Quarters in Rhode Island and Connecticut

The French had been thinking about winter quarters as early as 29 August, when Tarlé inquired of Governor to Greene about the possibility of moving into empty and/or destroyed houses in Newport, Warren and Bristol rather than build new barracks for the troops. Tarlé did not fail to point out that repairing these houses would be of great benefit to inhabitants as well as the fact this was Rochambeau's preferred solution. In his response, Governor Greene assured Tarlé that "The Council will at all Times be extremely happy in giving their utmost Assistance to effect the General's Intentions." Concurrently he appointed General James M. Varnum and Colonel Lovitt, Deputy Quarter-Master, to confer with Rochambeau on the particulars. He also promised that take the General Assembly would take up the request when convened in Newport on 11 September.³³⁷ Between mid-September and the end of October, empty and deserted houses in Newport were repaired at a cost of more than 120,000 livres. The British occupation may have destroyed as many as 400 of the more 1,100 homes standing in Newport before the war.³³⁸ When a great storm overturned the tents pitched on the hills around Newport on 18 October, the infantry and artillery in Newport were anxious to get out of the cold and into winter quarters.

Lauzun's forces were anxious to enter into winter quarters as well. But where would they go and who would provide them with the necessary supplies? Rochambeau had planned on quartering the Legion in Providence, and Washington approved of the plan. As late as 14 October, he wrote to Rochambeau that "from the reputation of the Duke de Lauzun I am persuaded he will do every thing in his power to give satisfaction to the inhabitants of Providence, and I flatter myself he will find the greatest cordiality in them."³³⁹ Washington's hopes turned out to be wishful thinking. On 9 October, Ephraim Bowen informed Governor Green,

that the Duke de Lauzun Brigad. General of the French Army, will be in this Town the day after tomorrow to see the Quarters for himself, the Officers & Men of the Legion. I pointed out to the Aid De Camp of his Excellency the Count De Rochambeau, Such Houses &c as I thought would be suitable & Best Spared. I also Requested the Council to make

³³⁷ Rhode Island State Archives, Letterbooks, vol. 4, Letters from the Governor, 19 January 1780 to February 1807.

³³⁸ Captain Oyré estimated "plus de 700 maisons" in Newport. Oyré, Notes, p 1 of the typed copy in the Library of the Society of the Cincinnati, Washington, DC.

³³⁹ The letter is available on-line through Washington Papers on the website of the Library of Congress. In a letter of 24 October 1780, Washington approved of this change of plans.

*Some provision for the Quartering of the Men Above mentione'd which they Refer'd to the Assembly - As the Duke Comes on Purpose for this Affair, I Beg that Your Excellency will Immediately Call the Council & Make Such Provision as will appear Necessary. I shall not undertake to give any Assistance to Him without Proper Direction."*³⁴⁰

Governor and Council complied, and on 15 October 1780, the Minutes of the War Council recorded that

Whereas it hath been represented to this Council that a Legion of the Troops of His Most Christian Majesty commanded by the Duke de Lawzun is to be canton'd in the Town of Providence during the ensuing Winter: and whereas his Excellency the Count de Rochambeau hath requested the Quarters may be provided for said Troops as also Stables for their Horses, and Magazines for their Forage, Grain &c. Therefore Resolved that it be recommended to Col. [Jabez] Bowen Deputy Quarter Master General to take up the following Houses to be appropriated for Quartering said Troops, viz: The Work House to contain One Hundred and Twenty Men, Mr. Benjamin Stelle's House Fifty – his Shop Eighteen, Mr. Stephen Whipple's House Fifty, Mr. Joseph Hoyle's Shop Twelve Men; and that he be also directed to take up the Market House Chamber as a Store for their Grain, and the Sperma Caeti Works and Store belonging to John Jenckes Esqr. And Company as a Magazine for their Forage; and that he be also directed to take up a sufficient number of Stables for their Horses.

*Resolved that the Town of Providence be and they are hereby directed to provide suitable Rooms for the Officers of the Legion commanded by the Duke de Lawzun by Tuesday Evening Next, and in Case the said Town does not provide Rooms for said Officers by the Time aforesaid, that Col [Jabez] Bowen Deputy Quarter Master General be directed to take up suitable Rooms for them in such Houses as he may think proper and that a Copy of this Resolve be immediately transmitted to the Town Clerk of Providence."*³⁴¹

³⁴⁰ Bowen to Greene, 9 October 1780, RISA, Letterbooks, Letters to Gov. William Greene, vol. 15, 19 June to 10 November 1780.

³⁴¹ This is the last entry in the minutes until 9 June 1781. Bowen to Greene, RISA, Letterbooks, Letters to Gov. William Greene, vol. 15, 19 June to 10 November 1780.

Since 15 October 1780 was a Sunday, Tuesday evening next would have been 17 October 1780. But the inhabitants of Providence were not to be directed by the War Council and seem to have been anything but cordial to Lauzun for on 19 October 1780, Rochambeau inquired of Governor Jonathan Trumbull about the possibility of quartering the Legion in Connecticut.³⁴²

Sir, I had at first projected to quarter this winter The Duke of Lauzun's Cavalry at Providence, The Governor and the States of Rhode-island had very kindly prepared there exceeding good Lodgings for him and his corps, but the immoderate cupidity of the neighboring inhabitants having raised forage to an extravagant price in hard money, I have had a conference about it with Colonel Wadesforth whom you love, and we are agreed that I would write to your Excellency to ask that a winter quarter be assigned to the Cavalry of the Duke of Lauzun in Connecticut State. The good policy would render it necessary that it should be in the same place, under the inspection of its chief, who will answer of the Discipline of his Troops. I am likewise caution to your Excellency of his honesty every way. The number of horses will amount to 220. or 240. thereabouts, because I will keep 50 of them here. The Huzzards will be equal in number. I am acquainted with all the Zeal that Your Excellency has for our common cause, and that you will do all in your Power to receive that part of the French Corps.

Trumbull immediately forwarded the request to the General Assembly, and both Houses of the legislature appointed committees to consider the petition. In "Perswasion that regular Discipline will be observed by them," the Upper House recommended that the "Duke of Laezun's Cavalry may be Quotered in the Towns of Windham Lebanon and Colchester or any of them and that Col. Jeremiah Wadsworth David Trumbull Esqr and Mr Joshua Elderkin be impowered and Directed ... to provide Such Quarters for the Officers and for the Men for said legion in all or any of the Towns aforesaid."³⁴³ The Lower House agreed and ordered Wadsworth and David Trumbull to "prepare without delay Quarters for the Officers and Barracks for

³⁴² The proceedings in Hartford can be traced in Connecticut State Library, *Connecticut State Archives*, vol. 19: Revolutionary War Series I, pp. 66-68; Rochambeau's letter on p. 67. See also the entry for 23 October 1780, in Governor Trumbull, *Diary*, Jonathan Trumbull Sr. Papers, CTHS. In a letter to Rochambeau of 24 October, Washington approved of this change of plans.

³⁴³ Connecticut State Library, *Connecticut State Archives*, vol. 19: Revolutionary War Series I, from the undated resolution passed by the Upper House, p. 68. On the winter-quarters of Lauzun's Legion see my *Hussars in Lebanon! A Connecticut Town and Lauzun's Legion during the American Revolution, 1780-1781* (Lebanon, 2004).

the Men either by repairing some decayed buildings, having vacant houses or building some low Barracks as they shall find most convenient and least expensive to the State."³⁴⁴ Rochambeau charged his aide-de-camp Mathieu Dumas with "the establishment of the quarters of the legion."³⁴⁵

Three days into his new contract, on 4 November, Wadsworth informed his business partner John Carter, the French-speaking son-in-law of General Philip John Schuyler that he would proceed to Lebanon on 6 November "to make the arrangements for the Legion agreeable to the order of M. Tarlé."³⁴⁶ When Wadsworth assured Carter on 11 November of his satisfaction with these arrangements the hussars were already in Providence.³⁴⁷ While quartered in Newport on 8 November 1780, "les hussards de Volontaires Etrangers de Lauzun" had received orders to supply themselves with bread for the next two days. On the 10th they would receive their bread rations for the 12th through the 15th in Providence. There they would also receive an eight-day ration of rice for those four days, the extra ounce per day was given "en gratification."³⁴⁸ "Much snow fell and it was very cold" when the hussars crossed over from Newport to Providence in the morning of 9 November. Despite the inclement weather Lauzun gave a ball in Hacker's Hall in the evening.³⁴⁹ After two days of rest they left Providence for Windham on 12 November. Here they stayed for a week, but on Monday, 20 November, Lauzun and his hussars rode into Lebanon "without finding any cedars there", as Closen entered gleefully in his journal.³⁵⁰ Maybe not cedars, but there were plenty of other trees. In his memoirs Lauzun compared his winter quarters with "Siberia [which] alone can furnish any idea of Lebanon, which consists of a few huts scattered among vast forests."³⁵¹ On 11 January he joined Henry Knox who was traveling through Lebanon to inform Rochambeau of the mutinies at Morristown. In

³⁴⁴ Quoted *ibid.* from the resolution passed by the Lower House, p. 66. See also Charles J. Hoadley, ed., *The Public Records of the State of Connecticut from May, 1780, to October, 1781, inclusive* (Hartford, 1922), p. 187.

³⁴⁵ Dumas, *Memoirs*, p. 53.

³⁴⁶ Wadsworth to Carter, 4 November 1780, Wadsworth Papers, Letterbooks Box 151, CTHS.

³⁴⁷ Wadsworth to Carter, 11 November 1780. Wadsworth Papers, Letterbooks Box 151, CTHS.

³⁴⁸ See *Livre d'ordre*, entry for 8 November 1780.

³⁴⁹ Blanchard, *Journal*, p. 75.

³⁵⁰ Acomb, *Closen*, p. 45.

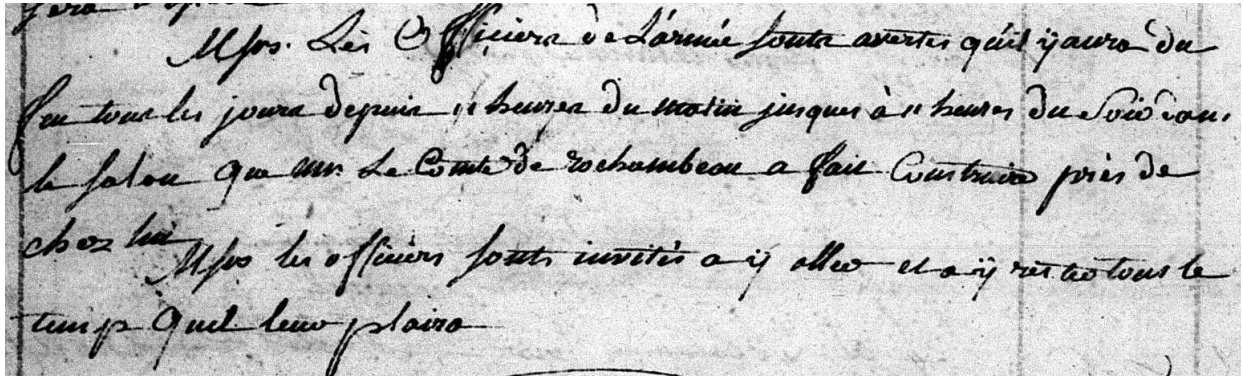
³⁵¹ Lauzun, *Memoirs*, p. 194. On winter quarters in Lebanon see also Allan Forbes and Paul F. Cadman, "De Lauzun's Cavalry at Lebanon, Connecticut" in Forbes and Cadman, *France and New England*, 3 vols., (Boston, 1925-1929), vol. 2 (1927), pp. 99-108, and Rowland Ricketts, Jr., "The French in Lebanon 1780-1781," *Bulletin - The Connecticut Historical Society*, vol. 36, no. 1, (1971), pp. 23-31.

mid-March he accompanied Washington to Lebanon on his way back from Newport but returned almost immediately. The next time he set foot in Lebanon was in June.



Rochambeau himself as well as his highest-ranking officers and their aides-de-camp had moved into houses in Newport immediately following their arrival in July. The vast majority of the remaining +/- 360 officers were company-grade officers who quartered with their companies. Only now, on 1 November 1780, did they move from the outskirts of town into Newport. Rochambeau had been quartered in the home of Newport merchant William Vernon who was serving as head of the Continental Navy Board in Boston. Vernon probably started to worry about his property when 10 October 1780 his son Samuel Vernon told him that he "believe[d] the General takes as much care of the House as the French Men generally do, but it will sustain more damage than a Family living in it seven years. The Floors will be entirely spoiled." In early December Rochambeau ordered an addition – "une grande et vaste baraque", according to Lauberdière - be built to William Vernon's

house. It was meant both as a place for his officers to meet, to gamble and to save fire-wood, which was “rare et cher”.³⁵² On 19 January 1781, he informed the officers of his little army that the gambling hall was open daily from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.³⁵³



Livre d'ordre, 19 January 1781

Berthier claimed that Rochambeau had only been “Concerned with the welfare of his little army as winter set in [when he] had a large hall built where all the officers could get together. . . . [I]t is my opinion that this hall served a very useful and beneficial purpose to the whole army and did honor to M. de Rochambeau, who presided there like the head of a family.”³⁵⁴ Head of the family or not – a rather angry William vented his anger to Samuel in December, informing his son that “I can’t think it polite of him not to mention it to you or write me on this matter—I expect they will make great work on the House if not ruin it. But I intend being fully paid for all damage.” Part of the damage was caused by the weekly balls that Rochambeau had promised (“tous les huit jours”) to the ladies for “leurs plaisirs, et ceux de la garnison.” On 12 December 1782, Vernon demanded 450 Spanish Silver dollars or £ 135, which he was paid in full.³⁵⁵

³⁵² Gallatin described it as a “wooden building, very spacious and forming a large salon where he [i.e., Rochambeau] entertained throughout the winter. A big fire was always ablaze there.” Not surprisingly Rochambeau on 22 February 1781 had to issue a prohibition against gambling for high stakes.

³⁵³ Closen recorded that the building opened on 20 January 1781; Rochambeau had constructed it in order to “prevent the officers from playing in their rooms or *gambling*.” Acomb, Closen, p. 55.

³⁵⁴ Berthier in Rice and Brown, *American Campaigns* vol. 1, p. 237.

³⁵⁵ The correspondence can be followed in the Vernon Papers Box 63 Folders 4 and 19, NHS. The receipt for the damages paid by Rochambeau is reproduced in John Austin Stevens, *Newport in the Revolutionary Period, 1778-1782: the French Occupation, 1780-1781. An Address Delivered in Newport by John Austin Stevens, in 1897.* (Newport, 1928).

The addition built by Rochambeau was torn down in 1894 only.

On Wednesday the 31 instant, an elegant Ball was given by the gentlemen officers of the Royal Regiment of DEUX PONTS, in the service of his most Christian Majesty, to the Ladies of this town.

This ball given by the officers of the Royal Deux-Ponts Regiment on 3 January 1781 provided an opportunity where the two nationalities could meet and mingle.

Newport Mercury 15 January 1781

A few days later, on 8 February, the *baron* de Vioménil gave a ball on the anniversary of the 1778 Treaty of Amity and Friendship between the United States and France. The weekly balls fulfilled many purposes. They were meant to shorten the time in winter quarters, bring locals and their guests together and not least for the officers to learn English and for Newporters to practice what French they had learned. In the summer of 1780 few Newporters spoke French and with the notable exception of Chastellux, Dumas or Lauzun and his aide-de-camp Jacques Nicholas Desmaison, the only French officers who spoke English were those who had seen previous service in the Continental Army. Those were officers such as Rochambeau's aide-de-camp Langlois du Bouchet or Teissedre de Fleury, who had received a Congressional medal for his role in the storming of Stony Point in 1777 but was now serving as the Major in the Saintonge Regiment. It did not take long before advertisements offering classes in English or French began to appear in the *Newport Mercury* and the *Gazette Française*.³⁵⁶

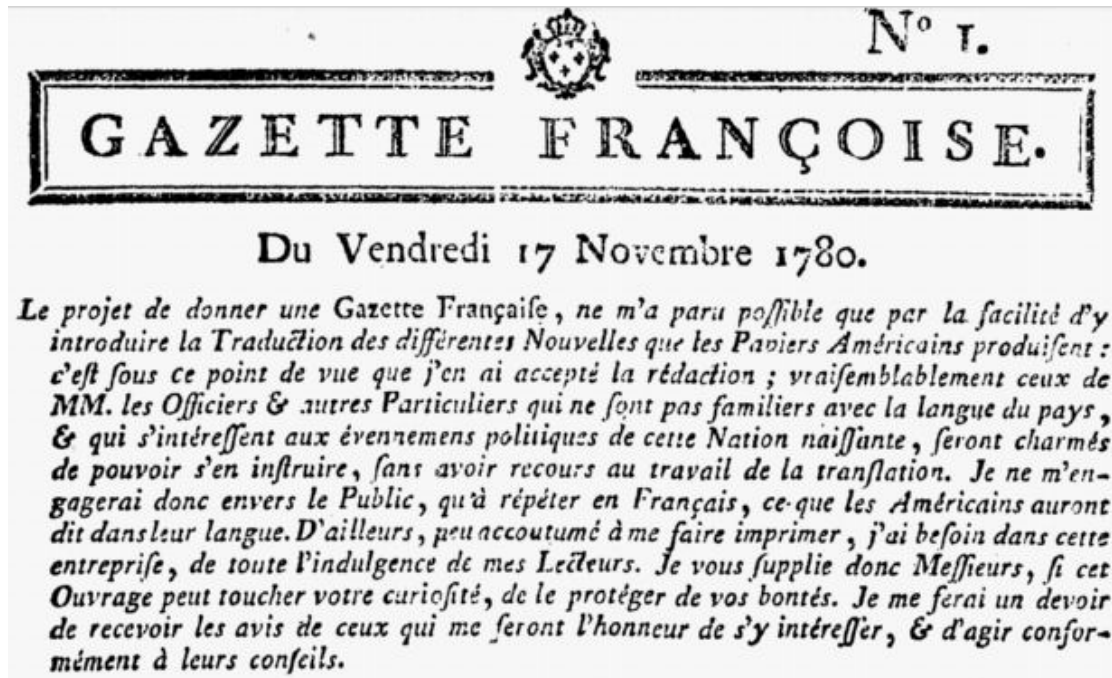
MM. les Officiers & autres habitants qui desireront apprendre la Langue Anglaise, peuvent s'adresser au sieur Phineas Salomon Lemonnier, qui la leur enseignera : il prend trois piastras gourdes par mois, & une d'entrée : il demeure chez le sieur Robert Potter, sur le grand Quai.

Phineas Salomon Lemonnier, Schoolmaster, begs leave to acquaint the Ladies and Gentlemen, in the town of Newport, that he has opened a French and English School, at the house of M. Robert Potter, N^o 485, on the Long-Wharf, at Three Spanish Mill'd Dollards per month, and one Dollar entrance.

Gazette Française 2 January 1781

³⁵⁶ Only eight issues of the *Gazette Française* are known to have been printed, i.e. on 17, 24 and 29 November, on 8, 15, 22 and 30 December 1780 and on 2 January 1781.

An important – if short-lived – component of the language-learning process was the *Gazette Française*. Printed on a press that had crossed the Atlantic on *le Neptune* in Admiral de Ternay's fleet and set up in No. 641, Water Street, it aimed to keep primarily French officers unable to read English informed of current events. Current in this case meaning the past six to eight months. We do not know how successful the paper was: Closen for one preferred Rivington's *Royal Gazette*; he thought it more interesting and funnier than the local French offerings.³⁵⁷

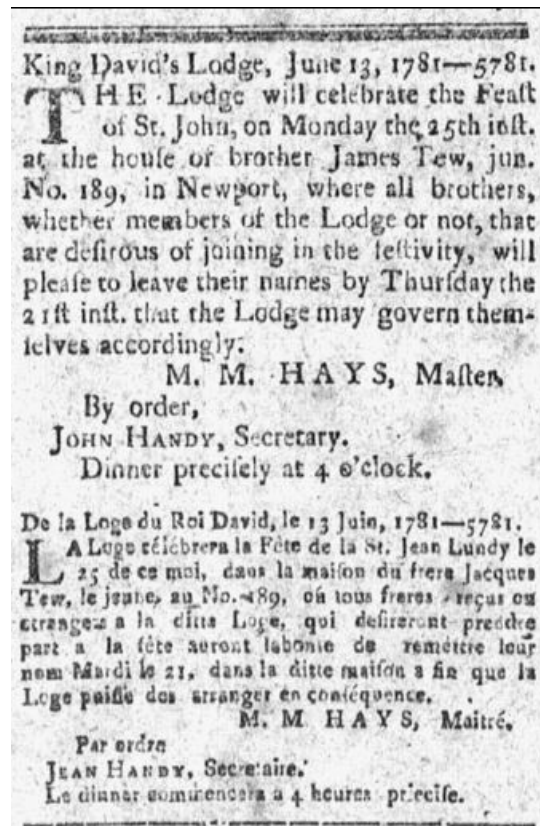


Higher-ranking officers lodged with families throughout their stay frequently gave – and received – private lessons from the (usually) lovely daughters of their hosts. By 8 September, Axel von Fersen had begun to teach 18-year-old Hunter English, mostly because “We do nothing. Sometimes we amuse ourselves, but often we are bored. After the troops had entered winter quarters he wrote to his sister on 7 December 1780: “Every evening I go to Mrs Hunter’s ... Her daughter is charming. I teach her French, she teaches me English, and teaches me better than I do her. She

³⁵⁷ Acomb, *Closen*, p. 45. Lawrence Wroth, “The French Fleet Press in the American Revolution.” *The Preservation Society of Newport County, Washington-Rochambeau Celebration 1780~1955. Newport ~ Rhode Island* (Newport, 1955), pp. 25-29 and p. 31. Besides the newspaper the press printed primarily official announcements of the fleet and the army, the *Calendrier Français pour l'année commune 1781*, 24 copies of Chastellux' *Voyage de Newport à Philadelphie, Albany &c*, and the *Relation de la sortie de l'Escadre Française, aux ordres du Chev Destouches ... le 16 Mars 1781 ...*. The last known item printed on the press is dated 18 July 1781.

already speaks quite prettily.”³⁵⁸ By the summer of 1781, Fersen, Blanchard, Noailles, the two brothers Deux-Ponts and many other officers spoke the language fluently enough to write letters in English and the *Newport Mercury* could rightfully claim (on 21 April 1781) that “embarrassment of not understanding one another diminishes sensibly every day.”

Another place where male Newporters and French officers - and soldiers - met was in the meetings of the King David Lodge. St. John’s Lodge of Newport, the first lodge in Rhode Island, had been established on 27 December 1749 but lost its charter in 1765 and remained dormant until it merged with King David Lodge in 1790. King David had been established on 7 June 1780 just a few weeks prior to the arrival of Rochambeau’s forces.³⁵⁹



Invitation for the meeting on 25 June in the home of James Tew to celebrate the
Feast of St. John the Baptist, Patron Saint of the Freemasons
Newport Mercury 23 June 1781

³⁵⁸ *The Letters of Marie Antoinette, Fersen and Barnave*. O.-G. Heidenstam, ed. (New York, 1929), p. 10.

³⁵⁹ Henry W. Rugg, *History of Freemasonry in Rhode Island* (Providence, 1895), does not mention participation by French masons at meetings.

Newport , le 22 Décembre 1780.

**Les Freres Francs & acceptés Maçons ,
sont avertis de s'assembler chez M. Jean
Lawtons proche la Maison de Ville , Mer-
credi prochain Jour de la fête de St. Jean ,
à trois heures précises de l'après-midi sui-
vant leur résolution**

**Par ordre du très-digne Maître ,
JEAN HANDY , Secrétaire.**

Invitation for the meeting on 27 December in the tavern of John Lawton to celebrate the Feast of St. John the Evangelist. *Gazette Française* 22 December 1780³⁶⁰

French officers and soldiers who were masons could have participated in these meetings. Three of Rochambeau's infantry regiments as well as the Auxonne Artillery had Military Lodges. The oldest of these lodges belonged to the Royal Deux-Ponts, which had constituted the Lodge *Joseph of Union* in Nuremberg on 12 May 1761 (legitimated on 29 May 1762). The Saintonge regiment established its lodge *Saint-Charles des Amis Réunis* on 2 June 1763 while the masons in the Bourbonnois organized themselves in the « *Les Vrais Amis* » in June 1764. That these lodges did indeed bring their tools with them is suggested by the fact that the Bourbonnois lost its tools in the wreck of the *Bourgogne* of the coast of Venezuela in May 1783. The Auxonne artillery had a lodge called la Concorde.³⁶¹

It is unknown whether Newport masons were invited to meetings of the military lodges but such reciprocity is highly likely. Similar meeting took place along the march wherever there were lodges, viz in Wilmington, Delaware Lodge No. 14. The first recorded monthly meeting of the lodge took place on 19 July 1781, in Bezaleel Bently's tavern. On 16 January 1783, at the first meeting of the lodge after the arrival of Lauzun's Legion, its Lieutenant-Colonel Claude Etienne Hugau, "Br. Hugo," attended as a "visiting brother." We don't know if Hugau returned to the lodge for

³⁶⁰ Blanchard, *Journal*, p. 84 describes parade of freemasons through Providence on 27 December 1780.

³⁶¹ The lodge in the Lauzun Regiment of hussars was constituted only on 14 September 1783 after the return of the Legion to France and its conversion into a regular regiment of hussars. *Loges Et Chapitres De La Grande Loge Et Du Grand Orient De France* (2^e Moitié Du XVIII^e Siècle), Le Bihan, Alain, Paris, 1990).

additional meetings, but on 20 March 1783, Claude Joseph Guy Edouard Blondeau, "Br. Blando," the captain of the artillery company of Lauzun's Legion, the *volontaires étrangers de la marine*, is listed as a visiting brother, and he did return on 17 April 1783, when the lodge met at the home of John Thelwell.³⁶²

The influence of Freemasonry on the approach of French officers to the American War is virtually impossible to gauge. Bodinier's exhaustive research identified 43 officers who were masons.³⁶³ But while Charlus, Chastellux, Fersen, the Deux-Ponts brothers and others left journals or wrote letters, the only officer who mentions any mason activities is Blanchard, but he was only inducted into the mysteries after his arrival in Newport on 1780 when he was already 39 years old.

But even with entertainments "throughout the winter" in the Vernon House, Axel von Fersen, though himself a member of that group, wrote his father how these "*gens de la cour*" were in "despair at being obliged to pass the winter quietly at Newport, far from their mistresses and the pleasures of Paris; no suppers, no theatres, no balls." Those officers who could afford it departed as soon as the troops were settled. Chastellux together with his aides Montesquieu and Lynch traveled through Providence on his way to Philadelphia on 12 November. Armand Charles Augustin de la Croix, *comte* de Charlus Castries, colonel-en-second of the Regiment de Saintonge, Rochambeau's aide the *comte* de Dumas, and Robert Dillon, *colonel-en-second* of Lauzun's Legion arrived at Washington's headquarters in Newburgh on 19 December where they received letters of introduction to Samuel Huntington, President of Congress, on 24 January from Washington.³⁶⁴

And on 18 November, Anne Alexandre, *marquis* de Montmorency-Laval, colonel of the Boubonnois Regiment, the Adam Philippe, *comte* de Custine, colonel of the Saintonge and Christian de Deux-Ponts, colonel of the Royal Deux-Ponts, had also passed through Providence on their way to see some more of the United States. Christian de Deux-Ponts had his own reasons for travel: by the time Laval and

³⁶² By the time the lodge met again on 15 May 1783, the Legion had departed for France. Wilmington Lodge No. 14, Records 1781-1805, Historical Society of Delaware, Wilmington, DE. The official history of the lodge does not mention the visits by the French officers. That Masonry could build bridges between the warring factions is evident from the entry for 18 April 1782: "Jeremia Parker and Charles Cook, Masters of two Flagg Vessels Lying in this Harbour for Permission to spend the Evening with the Worshipful Master and Bretheren of this Lodge." Both were admitted to the meeting..

³⁶³ Bodinier, *de Yorktown à l'an II*, pp. 373/75.

³⁶⁴ As late as 1 March 1781 Dillon and Charlus were still in Philadelphia from where they asked Washington for permission to join Lafayette as volunteers in the Continental Army.

Custine³⁶⁵ returned to Providence on 2 February (Chastellux would dine with Blanchard on 3 February³⁶⁶), Deux-Ponts was still in Pennsylvania. On 13 November 1780, the chevalier de la Luzerne informed Rochambeau from in Philadelphia with the news that the Hessian prisoners of war in western Pennsylvania had spread unfavorable rumors concerning the French troops. Since that threatened to impact French recruitment efforts negatively he proposes that the Deux-Ponts make a tour of those parts of Pennsylvania to counter this ant-French propaganda. Such a journey was particularly important just then since the Royal Deux-Ponts was expanding its recruitment efforts into Maryland.³⁶⁷ On 28 November 1780, the Maryland Council informed the General Assembly that

*On the Application of His Excellency the Chevalier de la Luzerne to this Board, Mr Beyerfalk Lieut. in the Regiment of Deux Pont, in the service of his Most Christian Majesty, is hereby Permitted to enlist into that Regiment any Deserters from the German Troops in the Service of Great Britain which are within this State.*³⁶⁸

It is unknown how successful the *porte-drapeau*, i.e. standard-bearer of the Royal Deux-Ponts Jean Mathieu Beyerfalck was in his recruitment efforts in Maryland, especially since Rochambeau ordered all recruitment stopped on 22 December.³⁶⁹ One of the stipulations in Rochambeau's instructions for the *expédition particulière* had been that one third of his troops consist of German-speaking troops. The Royal Deux-Ponts and the German-speaking Lauzun's Legion The argument was that these units could easily be kept at full strength by recruiting "deserters from the troops that the English have drawn from Germany, and even prisoners, if any are taken."³⁷⁰

³⁶⁵ The journal of his journey which Custine showed Blanchard has disappeared.

³⁶⁶ Chastellux published his travel account in Newport shortly after his return in an edition of 24 copies.

³⁶⁷ Rochambeau Papers GEN MSS 146 Box 2, no. 131, Beinecke Library, Yale University.

³⁶⁸ *Journal and Correspondence of the Council of Maryland, 1780-1781*, quoted from the on-line edition at <http://aomol.msa.maryland.gov/000001/000045/html/am45--227.html> Concurrently the Council informed Colonel Thomas Price of Frederick Town and Thomas Donellan that "Mr Beyerfolk Lieutenant of the Regiment of Deuxpints, in the service of His most Christian Majesty, having obtained the Permission of this Board to enlist the Deserters from the German Troops in the British Service, you are hereby requested to furnish such Recruits, when procured, with Rations on his Demand, keeping a particular Account thereof, which you are to render to us."

³⁶⁹ Beyerfalck was one of the few soldiers who eventually worked their way up into officer rank. Born in 1739, he entered the Berry Regiment in 1758, transferred to the Royal Deux-Ponts as a sergeant in 1766 and became *porte-drapeau* in 1772. He was promoted to sous-lieutenant on 28 October 1781 following the victory at Yorktown.

³⁷⁰ Quoted in Kennett, *French Forces*, p. 23.

On 25 July 1780, only two weeks after Rochambeau's arrival, Joseph Reed, President of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, informed the chevalier de la Luzerne that there was no legal obstacle to their recruitment. The next day, 26 July, Luzerne suggested to Rochambeau he should send recruiters to Philadelphia.³⁷¹

By August 1780, advertisements appeared in newspapers in the Mid-Atlantic States. calling on "all German deserters from the armies of Great-Britain" to enlist "in the hussars, commanded by the Duke of Lauzun, who is in Rhode Island at the head of a Legion, or in the German regiment called Zweybrück or Royal Deuxponts, commanded by the Count of Deuxponts." Concurrently, *sous-lieutenant* Charles de Kilmaine of the Second Squadron of Hussars of Lauzun's Legion was sent to Philadelphia to establish Lauzun's recruiting station. During the course of the war, Kilmaine and his fellow officers from the Royal Deux-Ponts signed up well over 100 soldiers in the two recruiting stations at "the Barracks" on today's Green Street and at "Mr. Peter Hays's, in Third-street, near Race-street."³⁷²

As was almost predictable, many of these recruits deserted again, sometimes on the way from Philadelphia to Newport already. When a whole patrol of hussars, horses and all, deserted into the woods of Connecticut in mid-December 1780, Rochambeau had had enough. On 22 December 1780, he wrote to Lauzun "not to [further] taint yourself with the business of recruiting Hessian deserters, of whom as you know I have never had a good opinion."³⁷³

³⁷¹ Luzerne to Rochambeau with insert of Reed's letter, Rochambeau Family Papers, Gen Mss 146, Box 2, no. 123, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. See my "Hessians Fighting for American Independence? German Deserters recruited for Lauzun's Legion in America, 1780 - 1782." *Journal of the Johannes Schwalm Historical Association* vol. 7, no. 4, (2004), pp. 39-51.

³⁷² The advertisement as quoted here, dated Philadelphia, 29 August 1780, appeared in the *New-Jersey Gazette* [Trenton] Wednesday, 27 September 1780.

The total number of men enlisted in the United States into the French forces was 160: 92 of them enlisted in Lauzun's Legion and 67 in the Royal Deux-Ponts. Only a single soldier enlisted in another unit. Congress had forbidden the recruitment of Americans into the French army; Jean Folmer of Pennsylvania who joined the Second Squadron of Hussars on 5 November 1780 is the only American-born soldier known to serve in any of Rochambeau's units. Having enlisted only for the duration of the war, he was discharged on 1 May 1783.

³⁷³ Rochambeau to Lauzun, 22 December 1780, Rochambeau Papers, Library of Congress, vol. 7. After that recruitment slowed down but never ceased completely: See Bernhard A. Uhlenkopf, ed., *Revolution in America. Confidential Letters and Journals of Adjutant General Major Baurmeister of the Hessian Forces* (New Brunswick, 1957), p. 406: "On the 8th of this month, (January 1781) a French recruiting command left Philadelphia with twenty-eight recruits, among whom were five Hessians and two Anspachers." A recruit joined the Legion as late as November 1782.

Officers such as Blanchard, whose presence was critical to the administration of the army, took short trips into the neighborhood, viz. on 27/28 November 1780, Blanchard, Captain Frederick Charles Baron von Haacke and an anonymous chaplain of the hospital visited Nathanael Greene's homestead in Coventry.³⁷⁴

Last Saturday morning His Excellency the Count Rochambeau, Commander in Chief of the French army at Newport, whose military character is much respected throughout Europe, accompanied by the Count Chaisie, Major-General, and a number of French officers, set out from this town on their return to Newport.— They arrived here on the preceeding Wednesday, in the evening, and on the two following days they visited the castle, Bunker-hill, the lines round Boston, General Washington's former head-quarters at Cambridge, and the university. Every respect was paid them that the time would allow, the shortness of which was much regretted. The General and Count Chaisie resided in the house of His Excellency the Governor.

Independent Chronicle (Boston) 21 December 1780

Accompanied by Axel von Fersen, Rochambeau set out to inspect outposts in Connecticut in early December. Traveling via Windham to Lebanon, he spent the night of 4/5 December in Providence before returning to Newport. Following a brief stay in Newport, the French commander, once again accompanied by Fersen, set out for Boston on 11 December.³⁷⁵ We do not know if any other officers besides Choisy accompanied him or where he stayed the night of 11/12 December; Rochambeau does not mention any, no letters or other primary sources from Choisy are known to

³⁷⁴ Blanchard, pp. 80-81. The Royal Deux-Ponts had two brothers von Haacke as captains: Frederick Charles, born 1744, who was promoted to captain in October 1777 and his brother Frederick Charles Ernst, who was eight years younger and was promoted to captain in August 1779. Both had entered the regiment as *sous-lieutenant* at age 16. Bodinier, *Dictionnaire*, p. 239.

³⁷⁵ On 7 December 1780, Fersen wrote to his sister from Newport: "We have just taken a six days' journey, I and one other with the General, to reconnoiter the country. In a few days we go to Boston." *Marie Antoinette, Fersen*, p. 10. Other officers visited Boston as well, viz. on 28 December the *comte* de Viomenil and the Jean-Baptiste Félix d'Ollière, *comte* de Saint Maisme, colonel of the Soissonois Regiment lodged with Blanchard in Providence on their way to Boston; they returned to Newport via Providence on 3 February 1781. Captain Oyré went to Boston in January 1781 for a careful inspection of the defenses at Bunker Hill before traveling on to Salem and Portsmouth and returning via Providence. Oyré, Notes, pp. 9-22 of the typed copy in the Library of the Society of the Cincinnati, Washington, DC.

exist and Fersen never mentions the visit in any of his letters either. Arriving in Boston on Wednesday, 13 December, the group took lodgings with Governor John Hancock in Beacon Street. Not only Boston papers but others as far away as Philadelphia covered the stay. It is from their accounts that we know where Rochambeau went. When Lauberdière brought news of the death on 15 December of Admiral Ternay, the group returned to Newport but arrived there too late to attend the funeral on 16 December 1780.³⁷⁶

Mostly, however, the French officers were bored. In September, Lafayette's brother-in-law the *vicomte* de Noailles, colonel-en-second of the Soissonnois, had already expressed the frustration of many when he wrote that the "gallant Frenchmen" had come to America "to deliver America entirely from the yoke of her tyrants," but all they seemed to be doing was waste time and money in their less than comfortable winter-quarters in Newport.³⁷⁷ Frustration about this forced inactivity resulted in at least three duels among officers. One of the duelists was Robert Dillon, who had already fought a duel with swords with a gendarme on 21 April 1780 just before his embarkation for the New World. He had been severely wounded in that duel which did not keep him from dueling the *vicomte* de Noailles in Newport on 6 September 1780. Blanchard thought the reason for this duel not worth mentioning.³⁷⁸ In at least one case when the injured party could not extend a challenge to a duel or the challenge was not accepted the officer killed himself to preserve his honor.

Such questions of honor proved a fertile ground for tensions in the officer corps. As the Saintonge prepared for departure in the spring of 1780, the position of Major in the regiment became open. Captain Pierre Rezard de Wouves, a commoner ("*roturier*"³⁷⁹) born in 1740, had entered the artillery at age 13 in 1753 and the Saintonge as a captain in March 1774. A chevalier de St. Louis since 1779 with 27 years of service he had hoped he would be promoted to the position. Instead it went to Teissedre de Fleury, an officer whose nobility was uncertain – "he seems to be noble" writes Bodinier in his authoritative biographical dictionary. Nine years younger than Wouves, Fleury had gone to America with Tronson du Coudray in 1776, after eight years of service in the French infantry, distinguished himself at Fort Mifflin and Stony Point and was wounded at Germantown. He returned as a lieutenant-colonel in the Continental Army. Though he had only been a *sous-aide-*

³⁷⁶ The most detailed account of Ternay's funeral in Hattendorf, Newport, the French Navy, pp. 73/75

³⁷⁷ In a letter to Vergennes of September 1780, quoted in Kennett, *French forces*, p. 87.

³⁷⁸ Blanchard, *Journal*, p. 63.

³⁷⁹ On *roturiers* in Rochambeau's army see Bodinier, *de Yorktown à l'an II*, pp. 83-85.

major or a sergeant-major in the Royal Army, Rochambeau appointed him Major in the Saintonge Regiment.³⁸⁰ Embarked on the same vessel, Wouves, with the compliance of other officers who resented the appointment of a non-noble out-sider and NCO to this coveted position, tried to make Fleury's life miserable until Wouves was court-martialed and sent to prison for a month in late February. Upon release Wouves resigned his commission on 4 April 1781, sailed to Martinique and from there entered Spanish service.

Next the *comte* de Custine, Colonel of the Saintonge, set his eyes on André de Bertrier des Forest, a captain in the Saintonge with 22 years of service, whom he suspected to be next to Wouves "le chef de cabale". When Fleury ordered Forest on 5 March 1781 to have a soldier of his company punished with a number of blows with the sabre, Forest, who thought the soldier innocent, whispered in the ear of the corporal to only "effleurer les epaules" – to only "graze the shoulders." When Custine learned of this he ordered Forest to repeat the punishment. Forest refused. As Custine set out to carry out the punishment himself he made a threatening motion toward Forest with his walking cane calling Forest "a miserable creature whom I shall throw into the dungeon." By then a group of soldiers had gathered and Forest challenged Custine to a duel at 4 p.m. When Forest appeared at Custine's lodging Custine refused to meet him. Next Forest went to Custine's commanding officer, the *comte* de Vioménil. Vioménil threatened to have him hanged, telling Forest that he was "trop heureux qu'on voulut bien ne pas prendre garde à sa mauvaise tête" and that he should submit to his superiors unless he wanted to be made an example of. The next day, upon the orders of Rochambeau, his sword was returned to Forest with the order to get ready to board a frigate about to leave for France. A dejected Forest went to his room and shot himself in the head.³⁸¹ Approached by Forest's fellow officers to take action against Custine, Rochambeau's

³⁸⁰ Fleury had sailed to America in the Fall of 1776 with Tronson du Coudray to join the Continental Army. The *ordonnance du roi concernant l'infanterie* of 25 March 1776 abolished the offices of *aide-major* and *sous-aide-major* and created instead the position of *adjutant*. The *adjutant* was the highest-ranking sergeant-major in a regiment; after ten years of peace-time service in that position, or five years during war, he was to be promoted to *sous-lieutenant*.

³⁸¹ This account is based on *Mémoires de Saint-Cyr*, pp. 47-54. Saint-Cyr was a captain in the Saintonge at the time.

Baron Gallatin recounts this sad event along similar lines. Custine threw the captain out of his room "avec fureur: "Monsieur, vous m'ennuyez; f ... - moi le quand de chez moi". The three dots are in the published version but the meaning is clear nevertheless. Vioménil used similar language against Forest and even Charles François chevalier Chandeon de la Valette, lieutenant-colonel of the Saintonge who happened to be present, took the side of Vioménil and Custine. Gallatin, "Garde Suisse" (August 1931), pp. 22-23. It is also told with similar details by Brisout de Barneville, "Journal de Guerre", pp. 254-55.

comment in the hall behind Vernon's house was: "C'est un fou qui a voulu se tuer – it is a fool who wants to kill himself." That evening while in the addition to the Vernon House, Forest's cousin Captain Alexis Dujast de Vareilles drew his sword and had to be disarmed while other officers moved the Soissonnois out of the room. Though not even 40 years old with over 21 years of service, Dujast resigned his commission on 14 November 1781. Gallatin ended his account in the conviction that "sans eux on aurait déchiré M. de Custine en morceaux – would have torn Custine to pieces.

Saint-Cyr continued that "Les généraux" – the generals took council on how to best end this affair with as little noise as possible and decided to bury the corps secretly, but when an out-cry went through the regiment they had to relent. "The funeral cortege was followed by an immense crowd, everyone was there, from the commanding general down to the lowest valet, nobody was missing except the comte de C ... " who did not have the courage to show himself.

For weeks the company-grade officers refused to have anything to do with Custine as discontent continued to simmer until it erupted again on 28 May. The next day Custine wrote to War Minister Philippe Henri, *marquis* de Ségur that in late April 1780, 32-year-old Lieutenant Claude François la Chesnaye had written him an insolent letter for which Custine punished him with three weeks in prison. Barely released, Custine gave a coveted combat assignment he had wanted to another officer. On 28 May, a very drunk Chesnaye complained to Custine, who however refused to change the assignment. Chesnaye left but returned only a few moments later with "un grand nombre d'officiers" – undoubtedly his fellow company-grade officers with whom he had been drinking. To the great embarrassment of Custine and officers from other regiments present he proceeded to use "les propos les plus malhonnêtes – the most inappropriate language" against his lieutenant colonel the chevalier Chandeon de la Valette, calling him "a dirty bugger." In his outburst he did not forget to mention the man whose appointment to major of the regiment in March 1780 had set this whole series of events in motion: Teissedre de Fleury. La Valette's nephew, sixteen-year-old Emmanuel Joseph de Merendol de la Valette, who served as a *cadet gentilhomme* in the Bourbonnois regiment, witnessed the insult and challenged Chesnaye to a duel. When Merendol de la Valette was wounded, Custine had Chesnaye arrested and demanded that Chesnaye be cashiered.³⁸² Rochambeau, who by appointing Fleury bore a large share of the blame, ordered Chesnaye to be transported back to France on the next frigate with the recommendation that Chesnaye lose his lieutenancy.³⁸³ Upon Chesnaye's return to

³⁸² For an account of the background of the duel see Scott, *Yorktown to Valmy*, p. 40.

³⁸³ Custine's letter in Fonds Vioménil, LB0074-145.

France, Sartine was not quite ready to accede to Custine's and Rochambeau's wishes. On 5 October 1781, Sartine sent Vioménil a copy of Custine's letter informing Vioménil that he could not submit a request to the king, from whom Chesnaye held his commission, to cashier Chesnaye on the basis of Custine's letter alone without supporting evidence.³⁸⁴

By then the affair had become public and been reported in European papers. Upon receipt of Sartine's letter Custine compiled a four-page *Memoire* detailing the course of events, and his role in them. The facts agreed with those reported by Saint-Cyr: ordered to have a soldier in his company punished with 30 blows of the sabre, Forest refused, and as the conversation heated up, Major Fleury was mentioned as well. Custine departed to confer with Vioménil when Forest caught up with him and told Custine that the soldier had received 15 blows. When Custine ordered Forest to mete out the other 15 the next morning, an enraged Forest challenged Custine to a duel and thus began the sequence of events that ended in Forest's suicide later that afternoon.³⁸⁵ Since there could be no doubt that Forest had disobeyed orders, Sartine cleared Custine cleared of all responsibility for Forest's suicide.

Chesnaye's name never came up in the *Memoire* but Vioménil must have provided the requested evidence since Chesnaye's career was over: he never served in the infantry again. A super-numerary officer in the guards of the *comte* d'Artois in 1782, he became a captain in the provincial artillery regiment of Toul in 1785.³⁸⁶ One officer dead, one cashiered, one resignation, a severely damaged *esprit de corps*: the results of the appointment of an outsider to a coveted position.³⁸⁷

Though noblemen all, the gap between the lower nobility and the court nobility was huge, not just in financial resources but in possibilities for advancement and access to resources as well. Besides gambling, travel and balls, hunting was another way that – some – noble officers could spend their leisure hours. On 2 November, Rochambeau gave officers who wanted to hunt permission to do so for nine days, ("une Neuvaine") from 3 November, Feast Day of St. Hubert, the Patron Saint of

³⁸⁴ Sartine's letter dated Versailles, 5 October 1781 *ibid.*, LB0074-144.

³⁸⁵ Custine's *Memoire* of 11 March 1782 *ibid.*, LB0074-117.

³⁸⁶ Bodinier, *Dictionnaire*, p. 305.

³⁸⁷ The reaction of Armand Charles de la Croix, *comte* de Charlus, the 24-year-old colonel-en-second of the Saintonge Regiment to the appointment of Du Bouchet is another example of how much these appointments of outsiders were resented. When Rochambeau chose Du Bouchet as an aide Charlus scathingly commented that du Bouchet was but "a brave man who has been to America, [and] who has no other talent than to get himself killed with more grace than most other people". Quoted in Vicomte de Noailles, *Marins et Soldats Français en Amérique pendant la guerre de l'Indépendance des États-Unis* (Paris, 1903), p. 161.

hunters, until 15 November.³⁸⁸ Six officers per day were allowed to go out under certain conditions such as not firing close to the pickets and to avoid any run-ins with Americans. "At the first complaint the officer will be punished and the permission will be revoked." All went well since on 16 November "La permission de chasse est continue jusqu'au nouvel ordre tans qu'il n'y aura pas de Plaintes." Soon the inevitable happened and *baron* de Vioménil had a run-in with an irate American farmer, but as Rochambeau could hardly put his second-in-command under arrest the hunt continued.³⁸⁹ Officers of Schwerin's standing were unlikely to participate in the hunt; in December 1781, Baron Ludwig Eberhard von Esebeck, the 40-year-old lieutenant colonel of the Royal Deux-Ponts informed his father in Zweibrücken, albeit from Virginia, how he "would never have believed ... that I should find in America the means of hunting deer and foxes. In Europe it is the *exclusive luxury of the great*. (my emphasis)"³⁹⁰ That Esebeck was not one "of the great" was driven home to him a few months later when the rewards for the victory at Yorktown were announced. William de Deux-Ponts had returned to France and resigned his commission as *colonel-en-second* of the regiment. A captain in the regiment since March 1758, it had taken him 21 years to reach lieutenant colonel in April 1779. Baron Closen thought Esebeck "had much reason to hope for and even some rights to this position." Instead the appointment of 27 January 1782 went to Rochambeau's 27-year-old aide-de-camp Axel von Fersen, who "was too well liked at Court!!!"³⁹¹

Officers such as Schwerin were not likely to receive an invitation to dine with Rochambeau to celebrate the feats of St. Louis on 23 August with "a large fancy-dress ball" in the evening.³⁹² One had to have been awarded that medal. At best they were allowed to contribute to the festivities by commanding their platoons when they fired a feu-de-joy, a rolling fire first from the left, then from the right of the line and then all together. For that occasion the troops even received *cartouches à balle*. The next time Rochambeau distributed cartridges with balls was ten months later

³⁸⁸ In the Catholic Church a *neuvaine* is a nine day long period of prayer, mourning and hope to obtain certain graces; for an explanation of the neuvaine de St. Hubert see P. -P. Gossiaux, "La neuvaine de Saint Hubert: Une pensée sauvage." *Cahiers Internationaux de Symbolisme* vol. 86 (1997), pp. 143-176.

³⁸⁹ On 30 July 1780 Rochambeau had forbidden any hunting. On 5 January 1781, the chevalier de Chastellux visited Lebanon and where he participated in a squirrel hunt. Chastellux, *Travels*, vol. 1, pp. 229-230.

³⁹⁰ John M. Lenhart, "Letter of an Officer of the Zweibrücken Regiment," *Central-Blatt and Social Justice*, vol. 28, (January 1936), pp. 321-322, and (February 1936), pp. 350-360, p. 322. The letters were mailed from dated Jamestown Island in Virginia and dated 12 and 16 December 1781.

³⁹¹ Acomb, *Closen* p. 242.

³⁹² Acomb, *Closen*, p. 37.

on 6 June 1781, just as the campaign was about to begin, when each soldier received two rounds for live firing exercises. In America just as anywhere else, life was easier if you had money. As Schwerin wrote his uncle on 26 January 1781: "I would get used pretty quickly to living in this country if I were a rich man, but since I have the misfortune of being poor I long for the moment when I return to France." His complaints that the campaign in the New World was ruining him were not without foundation: upon return to France, a compilation of his debts on 25 September 1783 ran to 5,571 livres or nine annual peacetime incomes! For once his superiors shared his situation: baron de Vioménil claimed that he had to borrow 30,000 livres to finance his service in America and the *comte* de Saint-Mesme spent 45,000 livres of his own money.³⁹³

When Count Schwerin of the Royal Deux-Ponts wrote to his uncle on 16 November: "Nos cartirs D'hiver ne sont pas si agreabel quan Europe et les logi sont fort mal – our winter-quarters are not as agreeable as in Europe and the lodgings are quite bad" he spoke for the *noblesse d'épée*, the lower nobility which had few opportunities to share in the amusements of the *noblesse de la cour*. What was more, "the inhabitants are not to my liking ("de mon gout"), victuals are horribly expensive, you can imagine there are more than five thousand men in a small island." Since his arrival four months earlier a marked shift in opinion had occurred. If William de Deux-Ponts had found Rhode Islanders cold but could now imagine living in the United States, Schwerin thought exactly the opposite. On 22 January 1781, William de Deux-Ponts wrote to a friend in Europe that he "could get used quite easily to America. I love the inhabitants very much." But as he loved his wife "more than anything else in the world," he would return to Europe at the end of the war.³⁹⁴ William de Deux-Ponts initial apprehension had turned love; in other officers the fervor of fighting in the New World had turned to disillusionment. Unlike in July 1780, Schwerin now told his uncle "I would never settle down in this country. The inhabitants are dishonest and gloomy." Those officers who were either too poor or too low in rank to get permission to travel continued the activities they had pursued since their arrival in Newport. Foremost besides their military duties was their desire to learn English; for Schwerin the only bright spot in his life was that his English was getting better: "I already understand much. " A few weeks later,

³⁹³ Bodinier, *de Yorktown à l'an II*, p. 142.

³⁹⁴ "si j'étois né dans ce pays ci, si je n'avoie partout de raisons qui m'attachent a 'europe je m'accomoderai fort bien de l'amerique, j'aime assez ses habitants, leurs moeurs, parcequ'elles sont bonnes, leurs usages parcequ'ils sont commodes, et si je n'aimois pas ma femme plus que tout au monde, j'aimerois fort celles de l'amerique qui sont aimables et plus jolies que celles d'aucunnes des parties de l'europe qui je connoisse". I am grateful to Ms Nancy Bayer, a descendant of William de Deux-Ponts, for providing copies of the correspondence in the possession of Anton Freiherr von Cetto in Germany.

on 26 January 1781, he informed his uncle in mocking praise of his teachers where he learned English: "There is not much of a social life here besides cobblers and tailors who are of a great distinction in this country and whom you need to visit a lot to learn the English language."

Though many, if not most, officers agreed with Schwerin's complaints about the expensive living in Newport, there are dissenting voices again, such as those of Cromot du Bourg or of baron Gaspard de Gallatin, like Schwerin a lieutenant in the Royal Deux-Ponts. Gallatin wrote that "we lacked nothing in food supplies, and even at a rather low price ("un assez bas prix"). [...] Meat, vegetables, game, and particularly fish were available in abundance and of an excellent quality. We were frequently invited by them ["chez eux", i.e. the Newporters] it seemed that they vied with each other who provided the best food and who had the most people at dinner."³⁹⁵ Maybe Schwerin had just been unlucky when lodgings were assigned in October 1780. Gallatin wrote that "The officers were lodge with the citizens of the town, who were obliged to provide lodgings. Some found themselves in a good situation, others in a bad one, depending on the character and the good will of their hosts." Gallatin was among the fortunate since his host William Davis welcomed him into the family. The fact that he had two lovely daughters named Polly and Betsy did not hurt either. He enjoyed their society "infiniment" and learned English on top.³⁹⁶

"Amusements are not too frequent on our little island" Schwerin had written on 26 January 1781, but that too depended on one's personality. While Fersen went "sleighting" which he found "as good as in Sweden",³⁹⁷ 22-year-old Gallatin went ice-skating almost every day on a sweet-water lake close to Newport that was frozen almost all winter long (probably Almy or Lily Pond). Occasionally, however, there was some risk involved. One day, he and his fellow officer de Martine broke through the ice but were fortunate enough to be rescued by a musician of the Bourbonnois who happened to be in the vicinity.³⁹⁸

Winter in Newport could be long and cold, "gloomy" just like the inhabitants, but when the French tried to bring some joy into their days, Newporters just peered out from behind their curtains. Lauberdière provided another example for this coldness and reserve, this cultural difference between French and Rhode Islanders. On New

³⁹⁵ Gallatin, "Garde Suisse" (August 1931), p. 329.

³⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 333.

³⁹⁷ "We have already had some very hard frosts and a foot of snow." Fersen to his sister on 13 November 1780. *Marie Antoinette, Fersen*, p. 10.

³⁹⁸ Gallatin, "Garde Suisse", August 1931, p. 334. "Les jeunes gens de Newport excellaient, en général, tous dans cet exercice."

Years's Day 1781, the "*étonnement*, the extraordinary surprise of the inhabitants of Newport when on the first of January they saw the majority of the soldiers of all the regiments mingling with each other, embracing each other, letting go and embracing again, and many officers giving each other similar marks of friendship and joy. The men, the women, the children looked out their windows to be witnesses to this new and to them singular spectacle."³⁹⁹ Each New Years' Day the officers made their obligatory visits to the general officers and their colonels without tarrying in the streets: "It was very cold", wrote Gallatin, "which made us take very big steps in the streets of the city."

By early November the infantry had settled into the houses provided for them in Newport. Gaspard de Gallatin of the Royal Deux-Ponts thought that "our soldiers were rather badly accommodated, having only houses hastily patched up with boards through which the cold entered in sundry places. Nevertheless, that was infinitely better than the tents."⁴⁰⁰ If officers were bored, there were even fewer opportunities for the enlisted men to break the monotony of life in wintry Newport once the first snow had fallen on 13 December. Much of their time was occupied with drill⁴⁰¹ and fixing equipment for the next campaign - positions that were eagerly sought because they meant extra pay.⁴⁰² That included fixing such mundane items as the *Bidon d'Homme de Troupe*, also called *petit bidon*, i.e. their water bottle or canteen. On 7 February 1781, Rochambeau gave orders that "*The regiments were to sent to M. de Villemanzuy 'tous les ouvriers ferblantiers ('tinmen') to help repair the 'marmittes (cooking pots), Bidons (water bottles) et Gamelles (mess-tins) de l'armée.'*"

³⁹⁹ Lauberdière, *Journal*, fol. 33.

⁴⁰⁰ Gallatin, "With Rochambeau at Newport," p. 336. Gallatin was quartered with William Davis, his wife, a son William Jr., and two daughters, Betsy and Polly. The house is no longer standing. The official quartering list reproduced by Simpson and Simpson, "A New Look", gives the names of only 91 (incl. naval) officers. The orders for winter-quarters can be found in the *livre d'ordre*; they concern primarily the boundaries of the encampment, guard and picket duty, and regulations to prevent fires. A copy made for Chastellux is in the Norton Autographs collection in the Houghton Library at Harvard University in Cambridge.

⁴⁰¹ No pre-1789 orderly book for a French Infantry Regiment has survived; the last known copy of such a book was destroyed in an air raid on Tours in June 1940. It was published as *Le Livre d'ordres d'un Régiment d'Infanterie en 1781 d'après un manuscrit original*. Clement de la Jonquière, ed., (Paris, 1898). Jonquière did not publish the book in its original form but instead arranged the information topically. Invaluable for the workings of an infantry regiment is Charles Victor Thiroux, *Manuel pour le corps de l'infanterie: extrait des principales ordonnances relatives à l'infanterie française & le plus journellement en usagë*. (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1781).

⁴⁰² The various *ordonnances* regulating service in winter-quarters for the infantry were the *Ordonnance du Roi concernant l'infanterie française et étrangère* of 25 March 1776, the *Ordonnance du Roi pour régler l'exercice de ses troupes d'infanterie* of 1 June 1776, and the *Règlement provisoire sur le service de l'infanterie en campagne* of 1778.

Since the work was "Très considerable" the men were to work until 9 at night, i.e., past the time when they were supposed to be in quarters.⁴⁰³

Just like for the officers, learning English stood high on the list of activities of enlisted men. Upon arrival Private Flohr had noted that "we could not talk a word with them because their language was English, but at the same time they could not talk to us." But English, or French in the case of Rhode Islanders, were not the only languages learned: enterprising New Englanders learned whatever language was required. Shortly after his arrival Flohr recorded that "We got along very well with the inhabitants though we could talk but little with them; everyone among us soldiers tried to find a girlfriend in order to learn the English language a bit that way." The soldiers were taking private lessons with the local maidens and soon, according to Flohr, "we found ourselves quite comfortable in our camp because we had in our vicinity two beautiful neighbors who lived in a windmill; one of them was named Hanne, the second Malle, who already spoke some broken German" and who undoubtedly taught the soldiers some English as well. In this context it may be well worth remembering that the French army of the *ancien régime* was a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual army. That applied to Rochambeau's little army as well: more than one quarter of his troops spoke German. For the daily routine this meant not only that orders had to be given in the language the troops understood but that drill manuals be translated as well.⁴⁰⁴ Ordinances concerning hospital service or the justice system were translated and interpreters were available as well: e.g. when the Bourbonnois provided the guard at the hospital on 20 July 1780, the Royal Deux-Ponts was to provide a man "qui parle et Comprend le françois et L'allemand –

⁴⁰³ Keeping equipment in working order was a never-ending process. The "Journal de guerre" of Brissot de Barneville for 24 September 1780 reads: "On doit chercher du fer blanc pour renouveler une partie des bidons grands et petits et raccommoder les marmites et les couvercles."

⁴⁰⁴ The *régiments étrangers*, the foreign regiments, were not considered "German" or "Italian" in the nineteenth-century, post-French revolutionary, were not defined by nationality as such, but rather by the language of command used in these units. There are bilingual German-French editions as well as German-only translations of the 1750, 1764, 1775, and 1776, ordinances regulating drill and training of infantry, and the 1775 regulation is known to have been translated into Italian for the Royal Italian Regiment of Infantry as well. There is even an edition of the 1776 Drill manual, the *MANUEL DU CIPAYE* "adapté à la formation particulière des Corps des CIPAYES" published 1784 in Pondichery.

The most thorough discussion of this issue can be found in André Corvisier, *L'Armée Française de la fin du XVII^e siècle au ministère de Choiseul. Le Soldat*. 2 vols., (Paris, 1964), vol. 2, pp. 257-274: "Le Recrutement Etranger." The language issue is addressed on pp. 262-265.

who speaks and understands French and German. He will report to the hospital to serve there as interpreter and he will remain there until further orders.”⁴⁰⁵

Language and communications issues could arise at the most unexpected moments: on 9 August 1780, General William Heath informed Washington from Howland’s Ferry that he had supplied Rochambeau with drivers for the artillery and ammunition wagons. Since the horses did not understand French commands “it would be impossible for the Frenchmen to drive the American horses without creating the greatest confusion and disorder especially in action.”⁴⁰⁶



French Artillery Teamster

There were few if any problems communicating with Hanne and Malle, however, who had also “very quickly opened a tavern as well” next to Flohr’s encampment.

⁴⁰⁵ In his pension application (R5062) of 5 March 1833, John Hites of the Royal Deux-Ponts stated that during the winter of 1781/82 he was “employed, as an express, to carry letters to other military stations, as I understood the German, French, and English languages, and could on that account better avoid dangers, as it was thought by my officers”.

⁴⁰⁶ Heath’s letter to Washington is quoted from The Heath Papers. Part III. *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society* Seventh Series, vol. 5 (Boston, 1905), p. 103.

For Heath’s impressions of French forces see his *Memoirs of Major-General William Heath by Himself* William Abbatt, ed. (New York, 1901), pp. 225. Heath learned of the 2 May departure from Brest of Ternay on 2 July. Heath, who was at Providence at the time, learned of the arrival of Ternay’s fleet at 01:00 a.m. on 11 July; he reached Newport at midnight of 11/12 July.

“All soldiers flocked to it, not only because of the liquor but also because of the two beautiful girls who provided the soldiers with many a good times.” Once the troops had entered winter-quarters on 1 November, visits to these taverns was no longer permitted, supposedly for health reasons: que le Rhum et toutes les liqueurs qui se vendent dans les cabarets de la ville sont pernecieux à la santé du Soldat ... – because the rum and all other liquor sold in the taverns of the town are dangerous to the health of the soldier it is forbidden under punishment of 25 blows with the sabre to drink anywhere else but with the sutler of his regiment.” Maybe Rochambeau should have permitted that contact a bit longer since the language-learning process apparently did not go as fast as one would think. As late as 15 February 1781 had to issue these instructions for the picket posts:

whenever a sentinel shouts qui vivent at someone other than a Frenchman it is expressly recommended to each sentinel to first shout qui vive and afterwards if he does not get a response, Who is there which is pronounced Ou is dair , which is the way to shout qui vive.

Livre d'ordre 15 February 1781

The order prohibiting purchase of liquors from private sellers outside camp was repeated on 3 January 1781 with the admonition to strictly enforce it because “le jour des roy”, i.e. Epiphany, was coming up. “No disorderly conduct was to be tolerated during the celebrations (gaité) of the day. While the locals ignored the day, some rejoicing with subsequent disorder seems to have occurred nevertheless: on 9 January 1781, Rochambeau learned that some soldiers had gotten into a fight and ordered their arrest and punishment “suivant la rigueur des ordonnances”. In future would the soldiers who fought not only get punished but their whole company would be confined to their rooms and their officers put under arrest “pour très longtems – for a very long time.”

Less than a week later Rochambeau had to enforce his order. The chasseurs of the Saintonge had gotten into a fight with a corporal of the company of Captain Joseph de Bedée de Bois Bras. Both companies and their officers were put under arrest and

ordered to stay in their rooms “until new orders”. These incidents show how quickly the tensions could erupt into violence. The inevitable boredom of winter quarters and confinement in close quarters certainly played a role and some causes for the friction were inevitable, but others were not. Corporal punishment was rare in the French army and if at all carried out by blows with the flat of a corporal’s sabre.⁴⁰⁷ While in Rhode Island, however, the officers of the Bourbonnois in particular had a metal rod made which they substituted for the sabre “pour punir leurs malheureux Soldats - to punish their unfortunate soldiers” in a way that added injury to insult: the men were beaten on the buttocks as if they were “school boys”. Lauberdière claims to have seen repeatedly how soldiers of the Saintonge and Bourbonnois spit blood after such a beating.⁴⁰⁸ This form of punishment, detested by the enlisted men, by the corporal’s meting it out, and by many officers alike, even played a role in the suicide of Captain Forest.

If such treatment was uncommon, unknown and completely unnecessary in the French army, a second big cause for complaint could not easily be solved. French soldiers enlisted for periods of four or eight years. Within weeks of their arrival in Newport the terms of soldiers began to expire.⁴⁰⁹ Some re-enlisted voluntarily,

⁴⁰⁷ A breakdown of punishments can be found in *Le Livre d'ordre*, pp. 84-92. The maximum number of blows was 50 for stealing from the hospital, missing roll-call in the evening or degrading one’s equipment 30, and selling a piece of the uniform was punished with 25 blows; corporals and sergeants were not subject to this punishment. Punishment with the cat-o-nine tails as in the Continental Army was unknown in the French army.

⁴⁰⁸ Relations between the officers and soldiers seem to have been tense throughout the stay in the New World. When the *Bourgogne* carrying a detachment of the regiment hit a reef and sank off the coast of Venezuela in February 1783, the officers saved themselves first; some soldiers claimed their comrades were pushed off the boats and rafts by the officers and left to drown. Upon arrival in Venezuela the survivors of the wreck mutinied though the unrest could be put down without bloodshed. Scott, *Yorktown to Valmy*, p. 108. In 1789/90, the Bourbonnois had the highest desertion rate of any of Rochambeau’s units. Ibid. p. 144.

⁴⁰⁹ Initial enlistment terms were for eight years with a 50 livres enlistment bonus and a 30 livres *pour boire*. An eight-year extension was rewarded with a 100 livres bonus, after sixteen years the soldier was to receive 120 livres, and after 24 years the bonus rose to 150 livres. After eight years a soldier could re-enlist for four years at a time at half the bonus. The ordonnances allowed for an unspecified extension of service during a military campaign; once the campaign was over the soldier was supposed to receive his discharge. Since this was not feasible during the American deployment, Rochambeau re-enlisted the men whose terms were up and who did not want to re-enlist for one-year terms. Soldiers whose *congé de semestre*, the six-month leave they had a right to after eight years of service, had expired without the men having been able to go on leave, were paid a compensation the equivalent of a re-enlistment. The 20 grenadiers and 24 fusilier and chasseurs per company were to go on *congé de semestre* from 1 October to 15 April were also compensated similarly. *Manuel pour le corps*, pp. 167 *et passim*. See also the relevant sections in *Ordonnance du roi, portant règlement sur l'administration de tous les corps, tant d'infanterie*,

others after pressure from NCOs and officers. Some, however, expected to be discharged and either be transported back to France or be allowed to settle in the New World. Since Rochambeau was losing men by the hundreds already he could hardly afford to agree to the demands for discharges, at least not during the first few months in Rhode Island before the arrival of replacements. The number of these men held back “en violation du pacte fait avec eux – in violation of the agreement made with them” was large enough and they complained loudly enough to find mention in accounts of officers such as Lauberdière.⁴¹⁰

When Rochambeau wrote to Barras from New York on July 1781 that no man had been left behind “except ten love-sick soldiers of the Soissonnois who returned to see their sweet-hearts at Newport” and asked Barras to send them to New York, he made light of a more serious problem.⁴¹¹ Professor Scott’s research has shown that desertion rates lay well below the French annual average of 5%, but a deserter was much more difficult to replace in America than in France. The reasons to desert are as varied as those for enlisting; generalizations about causes of desertion are difficult and dangerous.⁴¹² In the case of Rochambeau’s forces, ethnicity and religion played a role it would not have played in Europe: in the fall of 1780 and prior to their departure for New York, few Catholic Frenchmen would venture out into New England. Neither did many members of the Royal Deux-Ponts – during the first two months in Rhode Island Rochambeau had not a single deserter. Between September and the end of December, only 30 men deserted French colors, among them five members of the Royal Deux-Ponts, eighteen from Lauzun’s Legion and only seven

que cavalerie, dragons & hussards : sur l'habillement, sur les recrues, rengagemens & remontes : la discipline, la subordination, la police intérieure : les récompenses, les punitions : la nomination aux emplois vacans : la formation des troupes en divisions : les congés, les semestres : les revues des commissaires des guerres, & celles des officiers généraux : du 25 mars 1776.

Initial enlistment terms were for eight years; another eight-year term was rewarded with 100 livres, after sixteen years the soldier was to receive 120 livres, and after 24 years the bonus rose to 150 livres. After eight years a soldier could re-enlist for four years at a time at half the bonus.

⁴¹⁰ All in all Rochambeau discharged 110 men, about 2% of the total, in the New World plus 30 that had been recruited in America; following their return to France the regiments discharged 830 men in the second half of 1783. Another 45 soldiers were dropped from the contrôles without reasons given and sixteen retired with military pension. Scott, *Yorktown to Valmy*, p. 103.

⁴¹¹ Scott, *Yorktown to Valmy*, p. 55.

⁴¹² An in-depth study of desertion of French forces in American does not exist; for Crown Forces see Arthur N. Gilbert, “Why Men Deserted from the Eighteenth-Century British Army” *Armed Forces & Society* vol. 6 (Summer 1980), pp. 553-567; for the Continental Army see the overview in Robert Fantina, *Desertion and the American Soldier, 1776-2006* (New York, 2006); the War of Independence is covered on pp. 9-28.

from the other three infantry regiments and the Auxonne artillery. Two more hussars were executed after failed desertions. Three of the five deserters in Royal deux-Ponts and four of the eighteen deserters in Lauzun's Legion had been recruited in Philadelphia. During these first few weeks a pattern was established that would hold for the remainder of the stay of Rochambeau's forces in America. By the time Rochambeau forces broke camp in June 1781, another thirty-two had deserted: 13 from the Royal Deux-Ponts, 10 of them American recruits, and nine from Lauzun's Legion with one American recruit.

The temptation to desert increased exponentially, however, as the regiments marched south. It increased across the units around New York but rose almost exponentially as the Royal Deux-Ponts and Lauzun's Legion marched through Pennsylvania. Flohr wrote, half of the regiment met friends and relatives anxious to help a fellow countryman disappear.⁴¹³ Desertion, like emigration, is based on a combination of push— living conditions, arbitrary punishment,⁴¹⁴ desire to escape the military life, and pull factors, specifically in the New World the pull of freedom and the possibility to establish an independent life on land held free from centuries-old fees and obligations.⁴¹⁵ For hundreds of landless sons of impoverished peasants in the Royal Deux-Ponts in particular, the strangely wonderful New World of German-speaking Pennsylvania exerted a powerful temptation to desert.⁴¹⁶ Of 316 deserters from Rochambeau's corps who avoided recapture, 104 came from the Royal Deux-Ponts alone, another 186 deserters were German-speaking subjects of the king of France (mostly from Alsace and Lorraine) serving primarily in Lauzun's Legion. It should be noted, however, that 35 of the 104 deserters from the Royal Deux-Ponts and 46 of the 131 deserters from Lauzun's Legion were deserters from among Britain German auxiliaries. Nevertheless, these two units provided 235 deserters, more than 75% of the 316 deserters of Rochambeau's forces. The remaining three infantry regiments and the artillery account for the remaining 81

⁴¹³ In his *Journal de Guerre*, Lauberdière wrote that "it had always been the goal of our generals to hurry the march of the troops through Philadelphia to prevent desertion."

⁴¹⁴ Hugau accused Captain Louis Henry de Beffroy, the aide-major and commanding officer of the First Escadron of Hussars "of "throwing soldiers in jail indiscriminately and for all kinds of reasons, humiliating the poor soldiers with punishments, treating them ignominiously, handing out three punishments at a time to the same person, prison, standing at the stake, and beatings with a cane." Massoni, *Détails*, p. 159.

⁴¹⁵ When the *chasseur* Jean-Claude Passant of Lauzun's Legion threatened to desert, he told Hugau that he "would rather stay with his girl-friend (*maitresse*) in a country that offered him the sweetness of liberty." Passant, however, did not act on his anger but returned to France where he was discharged in October 1783. Quoted in Massoni, *Détails*, p. 161.

⁴¹⁶ Congress used the promise of free land, with mixed results, to encourage Britain's German auxiliaries to desert. See Daniel Krebs, *A Generous and Merciful Enemy. Life for German Prisoners of War during the American Revolution* (Norman, 2013), pp. 188 *et passim*.

deserters of the *expedition particulière*.⁴¹⁷ These figures suggest that few Frenchmen were prepared to venture into a country inhabited by locals some of whom were anxious to make a livre or a louis d'or, by returning deserters to their units. Here too Americans seem to have made a distinction between Frenchmen and Germans: as they entered New Jersey from Suffern "the inhabitants would ask you if you wanted to stay with them and promised to hide you until the French were gone!"

Deserters had a six day grace period to return to the colors without fear of punishment and returns to the colors even after many years were not uncommon and even encouraged by general pardons issued at infrequent intervals by the crown. In July 1785, French consul Martin Oster wrote from Virginia that he had granted passports to 13 deserters who wanted to return to France under an amnesty granted by the king on 17 December 1784, and valid for six months beginning on 1 January 1785.⁴¹⁸ The decision to returning to the colors could have many causes, in the case of "Lewis Luandres" in the spring of 1788 it seems to have been sickness and poverty.⁴¹⁹

By orders of the overseer of the Poor of Mill Creek Hundred
1788 For keeping Lewis Luandres a Sick French Soldier from the beginning of April
to May twentieth being seven weeks at 15 sh the first five week 3/15/0 and at 7 sh
the last two weeks at 7/6 = 15 sh
For one gallon wine by order of the doctor 0/6/0
For one day with a horse helping him out of the County 0/5/0
For cash given him at his going 0/7/6
For the overseers at the poor 0/10/0
Total 5/18/6
Joseph Ball

In at least one known case the local community provided funds to rid itself of a deserter that had fallen on hard times. Jacob Burke, born Johann Burg in Birckenfeld in Baden, had enlisted as a 20-year-old in the Royal Deux-Ponts in April 1778, but

⁴¹⁷ Desertion figures from Scott, *Yorktown to Valmy*, p. 103 and Scott, "Rochambeau's Veterans: A Case Study in the Transformation of the French Army." *Proceedings, the Consortium on Revolutionary Europe 1750-1850* (Athens, 1979), pp. 155-163, p. 156, as well as Samuel F. Scott, "The Soldiers of Rochambeau's Expeditionary Corps: From the American Revolution to the French Revolution." in: *La Révolution Américaine et l'Europe*, Claude Fohlen and Jacques Godechot, eds., (Paris, 1979), pp. 565-578.

⁴¹⁸ J. Rives Childs, "French Consul Martin Oster reports on Virginia, 1784-1796" *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* vol. 76, (1968), pp. 27- 40, p. 37. Unfortunately Oster does not provide the names of these men.

⁴¹⁹ Executive Papers, Treasurer 1788, Delaware Public Archives, Dover, Delaware.

deserted (in Newport ?) on 22 July 1781.⁴²⁰ The date of his marriage is not known but in the fall of 1790 he and his American wife Rebecca Pariel moved from Newport to North Providence with their three children. Afraid that the property-less couple might become a charge to the town he was warned out but somehow managed to remain in Providence. In October 1803, however, he was convicted for the rape of Elizabeth Stafford of Coventry, Rhode Island and sentenced to death. Since Elizabeth Stafford was known as “infamous for lewdness and disregard to truth, so that her testimony is not entitles to credit”, Burg, with the support of 202 Rhode Islanders, asked that his death sentence be commuted to “voluntary exile or some other punishment.” Within days “An Act for the Relief of Jacob Bourke” suspended his execution for seven months during which he as to be deported “to some part of Germany”, albeit “free of expense to this State”. The exact date of his departure is unknown but must have been some time before November 1804 when he disappears from the records.⁴²¹

Many of those who successfully integrated into American society, and who lived long enough, applied for pensions under the federal pension acts of 1818, 1820 and/or 1832. Almost all of their applications were denied because they had not served in the Continental Army and, since most of them were deserters, could not produce any proof of service or discharge papers. Upon retirement in France, a few former soldiers returned to the United States. Among them were men such as Flohr or Michael Joseph Plattner aka Paul de St. Pierre, the Catholic priest of the Royal Deux-Ponts, but some Frenchmen such as Caesar Duvall of the Saintonge as well.⁴²² On 2 January 1841, a 102-year-old veteran with the anglicized name of Joseph Morgan who claimed to have served in the Saintonge Regiment applied for a pension in Platte County, Missouri. At first glance his account of his services seems

⁴²⁰ The date is difficult to read in the contrôle. It could also be 1784, in which case he returned to the United States following his discharge.

⁴²¹ Burg is listed as “Bourg” in the contrôle of the Royal Deux-Ponts. His story is retold in Ruth Wallis Herndon, *Unwelcome Americans: Living on the Margin in Early New England* (Philadelphia, 2001), pp. 150-154.

⁴²² His pension application in the South Carolina Department of Archives and History in Columbia, SC is transcribed in the Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Roster website, search by name. Duvall took a circuitous route to South Carolina: after the surrender of Cornwallis “this declarant marched to Boston and embarked on the fleet to sail from that place to Jamaica for the purpose of attacking the British but was unfortunately taken prisoner with many others by the British frigate and conveyed to Jamaica and confined in prison for three months and a half. On the making of peace, this declarant was released from confinement and he sailed to Port au Prince, San Diego, then to France and then to America. He landed in Charleston and from there removed to Newberry District South Carolina about the year 1789, where he has resided ever since.” The account perfectly credible and is confirmed in the account of Flohr.

highly questionable: Morgan claimed to have been taken prisoner on the *Ville de Paris* in the Battle of the Saintes on 12 April 1782.

After the Battle of York Town this Affiant state he Imbarked on the Fleet under the Command of Count Le Grass [sic: Comte de Grasse] and sailed for Jamaica he states that he was drafted out of the Troops under the Command of De Rochambeau and was put on board of the Ville De Pary [sic: Ville de Paris] under the Command of Count Le Grasse who was on board of the said Valle De Parry in person and had under his Command Ten ships of war and Two Scouting Friggets and set sail for Jamaica for the purpose of attacking the same in aid of the Spaniards The Expected to meet with the Spanish Fleet on their way but instead of which they met with the English Fleet of war Commanded by Admiral [Sir George Brydges] Rodney with whom they had a hard Battle and was defeated [Battle of the Saintes, 9 - 12 Apr 1782]; had some of our ships taken prisoners among the number Ville De Parry the ship Count Le Grasse was upon and your affiant Admiral Rodney discharged Count Le Grasse and his men. said he could not keep them. sent them home to France upon Count Le Grasse pledging his honor that he would not fight any more against England during the war. This was in the Fall as well as this affiant now recollects and the next Spring [15 Apr 1783] peace was made between England and the United States When your affiant got Back to France he landed at Bordaux [sic: Bordeaux] where your affiant received his discharge which your affiant states he has lost Your affiant states he Remained in France about a month when he set sail in a merchant ship bound for Philadelphia landed at Philadelphia in the latter part of the Fall in the same year after peace was made Remained there all winter the next Spring Removed to Franklin County in the State of Pennsylvania where he settled in Chambersburg.⁴²³

Yet his story was true: As it turns out, four soldiers of the Saintonge had deserted during the siege of Yorktown to join Lord Cornwallis and were captured on 19 October 1781. They were sentenced to death by hanging but only one of them, suffered this penalty. The other three were pardoned to serve on the vessels of Admiral de Grasse for an undetermined term. Morgan had been one of these men.⁴²⁴

⁴²³ Pension Application of Joseph Morgan, R7382.

⁴²⁴ Scott, *Yorktown to Valmy*, p. 83. The original correspondence is in Rochambeau Papers vol. 2, pp. 56-57 and vol. 12, p. 227, Library of Congress.

Rochambeau showed no mercy with the actually five, not ten, “love-sick soldiers of the Soissonnois who returned to see their sweet-hearts at Newport” or with any of the other deserters – three from Lauzun’s Legion and one each from the Royal Deux-Ponts and the Saintonge - during the crucial weeks of the march to White Plains.⁴²⁵ On 20 June 1780, *The American Journal* had carried an advertisement for two deserters from the Soissonnois Regiment.

Forty Silver Dollars Reward.
DESERTED, this Day, from the Soissonnois Regiment of his Most Christian Majesty, encamped at this Place, a Soldier, named **PIERRE LE LARGE DOMBE**, a Native of France, Twenty-six Years of Age, 5 Feet 10 Inches high, has Chestnut coloured Hair and Eyebrows, blue Eyes, and is round favoured. — Also another Soldier, named **JEAN CEZARD**, a Native of France, Twenty-five Years of Age, 5 Feet 10 Inches high, has brown Hair and Eyebrows, grey Eyes, is round favoured, and slightly marked with the Small-Pox.
 Whoever shall apprehend the said Deserters, and deliver them to either of the Officers of the said Regiment, or confine them in either of the Gaols in the United States, and give Notice thereof to either of said Officers, or the Commanding Officer of the French Troops at Newport, or Providence, shall receive the above Reward, or **TWENTY SILVER DOLLARS** for either of the above Deserters.
 Providence, June 18, 1781.

On 4 July 1781, Jean Cezard was sentenced to death by hanging for his desertion on 19 June 1781.

<i>François Cezard Roy fct. des. fct. Claude Le De. France Cezard dit Cezard Guadalupe de 1781.</i>	<i>nait le 10 Mars 1750 de France de 22 ans, l'air de 25 ans pour les cheveux de couleur bruns les yeux plus le visage rond le teint le nez épais une cicatrice sur la joue droite une autre sur Menton.</i>	<i>12. 3. 1773.</i>	<i>decreté le 19 juin 1781 jugé le 24 juin 1781 condamné à être pendu.</i>
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⁴²⁵ On 26 June, 1781, Pierre Colet of the Soissonnois was sentenced to eight years in chains for his desertion on 5 June 1781. That same day Nicolas le Blanc of the same regiment was also sentenced to eight years in chains for his desertion on 20 June 1781.

On 4 July 1781, 22-year-old Corporal Jean Nicolas Carrey was sentenced to death by hanging for his desertion on 19 June 1781.

Jean Nicolas Carrey fils de Jean Claude et de Jeanne Claude Carrey est Carrey Caporal du 6 avril 1780	natif de Montluel p ^{re} de Dombes p ^{re} de l'armée taille de 18 ans 8 pouces 9 lignes Sort du 6 avril 1780	25 juillet 1777	Deserte le 19 juin 1781 - Jugé à la guill. 1781 à la guill.
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On 4 July 1781, François Roy, who had enlisted in December 1772 was sentenced to death by hanging for his desertion on 19 June 1781.

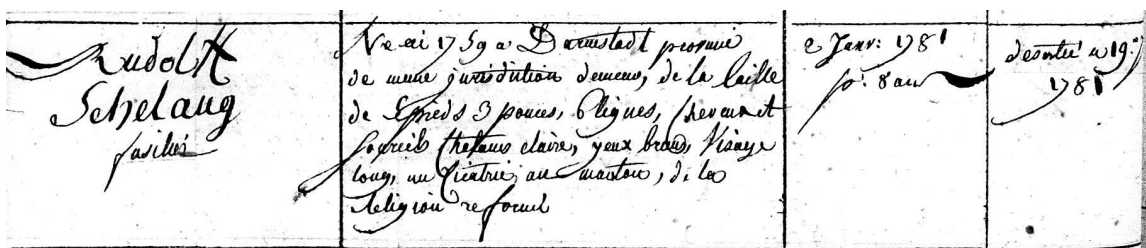
Joseph Martel, who had enlisted in the Soissonnois in February 1773, was one of two who got away. He was sentenced to eight years chains on 28 October 1781 "par contumace" - in absentia.

Joseph Martel fils de J ^{se} Joseph et de Jeanne Marie J ^{se} J ^{se} est Martel	natif de Montluel p ^{re} de Dombes p ^{re} de l'armée age de 22 ans taille de 5 pieds 8 pouces 9 lignes Sort du 6 avril 1780	14 février 1773	Deserte le 19 juin 1781 - Jugé à la guill. 28 oct 1781 - Jugé à la guill. 8 ans
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The other was Dombes, who is also mentioned in the newspaper advertisement. According to the regimental contrôle he rejoined his regiment almost two years later on 20 March 1783 in Porto Cabello in Venezuela and was discharged without punishment on 1 May of the same year in St. Domingue, modern-day Haiti. How he got to Venezuela in 1783 after having deserted in Providence on 19 June 1781 remains unknown.

Grenadier du 5 ^e rég ^t Augustin Lorge est Cap ^{te} du 15 avril 1780 Dombes Cap ^{te} de grenadier du 15 avril 1780	Sort de Chaligny du 15 avril 1780	11 janvier 1773	Deserte le 19 juin 1781. Arrive au S ^{te} le 20 mars 1783 - Condamné à la guill. 1783
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The deserters from Lauzun's Legion – Jacob Brosch of the First Escadron of Hussars, Jean Kinee of the Second Escadron and Christian Schmidt from the artillery company, all men recruited in America, Brosch as late as 6 May 1781 – got away.



Rudolf Schelau of the Royal Deux-Ponts, who deserted on 19 June 1781, had also been recruited on 2 January 1781 only. Even Paul LeVol of the Isle de France, who had enlisted as a 34-year-old shortly before departure from France on 2 March 1780 escaped re-capture. No matter their fate, however, many if not most of the men who deserted had, at least in their own minds, every right to leave the colors: they had enlisted for right years and their time had expired. They were, to quote Lauberdière, held "in violation of the agreement made with them".⁴²⁶

During winter quarters the enlisted men had time on their hands, but what they had very little of was money: the soldier of the *ancien régime* everywhere was notoriously underpaid. When salaries for the troops were increased by 50 percent for the *expédition particulière*, a fusilier received 9 sols 6 deniers per day or 14 livres 5 sols per month/171 livres a year.⁴²⁷ The better-paid grenadier made 11 sols per day, 16 1/2 livres per month or 198 livres per year, as did a hussar. A sergeant-major, the highest-paid NCO, had 486 livres per year. Before departure, the rank and file received one month's pay plus 18 livres from the *masse générale* to equip themselves; another 18 livres from the *masse* were distributed upon arrival in Newport.⁴²⁸ But they also had stoppages taken from their pay. The *ordonnance* of 20 March 1780, set food costs at 2 sols for bread and 1 sol 6 d for beef per day. This meant a monthly food bill for every NCO and enlisted man of

⁴²⁶ Another big burst of desertions came in late July and early August 1781 outside New York City. About two dozen men deserted, eight of them from Royal Deux-Ponts, incl. one American recruit, and about a dozen from Lauzun's Legion. A number of them immediately signed up with Crown forces, e.g. Victor Clement, 25 years old at the time of his enlistment on 12 April 1780, six days after the troops had embarked on 6 April 1780, deserted on 10 August 1781 from the artillery of Lauzun's Legion. Clement came into the British lines on 25 or 26 July 1781 and immediately enlisted in the King's American Dragoons from where he deserted on 29 October 1781. The muster rolls identify him as a "Foreigner" and the register says "French deserter." He disappears from the incomplete rolls of the unit by early 1782. The muster rolls for the King's American Dragoons are in RG 8, "C" Series, vol. 1901, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, Canada.

⁴²⁷ For administrative purposes the French military counted every month as having 30 days.

⁴²⁸ All contributions to the *masse générale*, increased from 36 livres for the French infantry and 72 livres for the Foreign infantry to 48 and 84 livres to account for the anticipated high expenses of the American campaign, were covered by the crown.

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

5 livres 6 sols 6 deniers⁴²⁹

Also increased were the deductions for the *masse de linge et chaussure*, the regimental fund to pay for a soldier's uniform and for his shoes. NCOs contributed 16 deniers per day to this *masse*, corporals and enlisted men half as much. That meant additional stoppages of 2 livres for a sergeant and 1 livre for each hussar, fusilier, grenadier, or *chasseur*, leaving a fusilier or *chasseur* with 7 livres 18 sols 6 deniers per month, a grenadier or hussar with 10 livres 3 sols 6 deniers per month, or 122 livres, 2 sols per year.⁴³⁰ Since wages had been doubled for the American Campaign, a soldier stationed in France received around 60 *livres* in cash wages per year, one fourth the wages of a domestic servant and half the annual monetary value of a slave's labor to his owner which was set by the *Parlement* of Paris throughout the 1760s and 1770s at 120 *livres*, again not counting expenses for food and clothing.⁴³¹ To put this figure into perspective it may be worth mentioning that Axel von Fersen estimated that it cost him 20 livres a month to keep his dog!

No wonder that the soldiers anxiously sought opportunities to earn extra income, especially since it could be three times their regular pay, viz Rochambeau's order of 26 July 1780 stipulating that every enlisted man on work detail cutting firewood was to be paid an extra 20 sols, one whole *livre*, per day without deductions.⁴³² That was three times the regular daily pay of 6 sols 9 1/2 deniers of a grenadier or hussar. By late September the soldiers excluded from these lucrative assignments – hussars detached for scouting, reconnaissance or courier duties, grenadiers and chasseurs detached for the 50-man strong guard at head-quarters &c - began to grumble. When one officer, three NCOs and 22 men per regiment were detached to begin preparing houses for winter quarters on 19 September, a task that did not warrant additional pay, the *chasseurs* had had enough. Apparently they, and their officers, complained loudly enough since on 8 October Rochambeau decreed that because the chasseurs, who received the same pay as fusiliers but so far had not yet had the opportunity to earn additional pay, should be chosen first next time the opportunity arose. Rochambeau was as good as his word: until the defensive works

⁴²⁹ Officers had their own butchery on Thames Street near the pier of Samuel Freebody.

⁴³⁰ This compilation of a soldier's income is based on *Manuel pour le corps*, pp. 178-190.

⁴³¹ Peabody, *Slaves in France*, p. 91.

⁴³² *Livre d'ordre*, 26 July, 19 September, and 8 October 1780.

at Howland's Ferry and Butts Hill Fort were finished in late February 1781, the chasseurs of the also received the opportunity to earn extra pay as well.⁴³³ But a look across the battlefield shows that his British and German enemies were even worse off. A common soldier in the British army received 8 pence a day or £1 pound per month, a little over 23 livres. Stoppages (2d. per day "for cloaths, &c." and stoppages for "furnishing stockings, shoes &c. when the regimental ones are worn out") reduced his wages so much that he received less than a French trooper.⁴³⁴

But a livre was not a currency commonly used in Rhode Island, where account ledgers were kept in pounds and shillings and pence. But even there Rhode Island invoices and bills pose their own problems. The British pound, minted in sterling silver and identified by the symbol £ for the Latin *librum*, was divided into 20 shillings (symbol: s) of 12 pennies (symbol: d for Latin *denarius*) each or 240 pennies to the pound. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries British-minted specie or "hard" money was rare in America, and even in Rhode Island, the most commonly circulating coin was the Spanish milled dollar of eight reals, also called a piece of eight. Minted in silver, it was similar in size and weight to the German *thaler* or the French *écu* of 6 livres. A little less than a troy ounce of British sterling silver (.925 fine silver, valued at 62d. or 5s. 2d.), a Spanish dollar was worth 54d. or 4s. 6d. sterling in England. In the colonies, however, where the demand for silver coinage far exceeded the available supply, silver coins traded at a premium; the premium above the 54d. level was termed the "crying up" of coinage. In order to limit this crying up, Queen Anne issued a proclamation in 1704, passed into law by parliament in 1707, which specified that a full weight Spanish dollar would pass in the colonies at 72d. or 6s., a third above the sterling rate. Since 5s. were called a *Crown* in Britain and Spanish milled dollars circulated at exchange rates between 4s. 6d. and 6s., milled dollars were also known as *Spanish crowns*. French *écus* of 6 livres, almost exactly 5s., came to be called *French crowns*. During the Revolutionary War, New England, including Rhode Island, Virginia, the Carolinas and Georgia

⁴³³ Defenses consisted of a seven-gun battery to protect the ferry crossing and the Sakonnet River. There was also a gun battery on the Tiverton side of the river. "The redoubt still exists on Butts Hill (aka Windmill Hill) behind the American Legion Post on Sprague Street, along with nearby markers. Probably used by French troops in 1781. A museum and/or visitor center is planned in the future." <http://www.northamericanforts.com/East/ri2.html> Here also an excellent overview of the forts in Narragansett Bay with information concerning French involvement in their construction and/or manning.

⁴³⁴ Deductions from the pay of a British soldier can be reconstructed from John Williamson, *A treatise on military finance: containing the pay, subsistence, deductions and arrears of the forces on the British and Irish establishments; and all the allowances in camp, garrison and quarters, &c. &c. : with an enquiry into the method of cloathing and recruiting the Army: and an extract from the report of the Commissioners of Public Accounts, relating to the office of the Pay-master-General* (London: Printed for T. Egerton, 1782), p. 73.

adhered to this "Proclamation Rate" of a one third "up-crying" and currency issued at this rate was known as "Current Money" or "Lawful Money," abbreviated as L.M. or L. Money. This made 4s. 6d. British equal to 6s. Rhode Island or, expressed in terms of the value of £1 (240 d.) British = £1 6s. 8d. (320d.) Rhode Island.⁴³⁵

Since specie money had an intrinsic value in itself based on weight and purity of the metal used, it did not really matter whether the coin bore a picture of George III, Louis XVI, or Carlos III. As far as the soldiers in Newport were concerned, a Spanish milled dollar at 6s. Rhode Island Lawful Money was the equivalent of 5 livres 8 sols. If the *sergeant-major* was left with 37 livres 13 sols 6 deniers per month after all deductions, a sergeant with 28 livres 13 sols 6 deniers, a corporal with 15 livres 3 sols 6 deniers, a grenadier had all of 10 livres 3 sols 6 deniers per month, just about 9s. or 41 sols or 2 livres 1 sol every six days. That was not much if we remember that the daily wage rate for a hired hand a day's worth of work was 3 s in Providence in 1780/81⁴³⁶ or 69 sols. But even so for the people in Newport it meant that every two weeks a grenadier was paid 5 livres 1 sols 9 deniers. Some of this money was spent in the market and the taverns of the town.

Compared to skilled labor, this was very little indeed. In the autumn of 1783, Dr. Isaac Senter paid a carpenter working on his barn 8 shillings per day. On the other hand, on 20 March 1781, Samuel Freebody recorded in his ledger book "I writ to Mr Saml Hopkins that I was willing to give him Ten Silver Doller p year while he continewed to preach to the People at Newport."⁴³⁷ The salary of ten silver dollars for a year's worth of preaching express the depth of the poverty in Newport. Ten silver dollars were the equivalent of 54 livres, yet even a common fusilier, the lowest-paid soldier in Rochambeau's army, received 171 livres cash wages a year.

⁴³⁵ 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 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).

⁴³⁶ Daniel Rodman Ledger 1770-1781 in RIHS Mss 9001-R Box 6.

⁴³⁷ NHS, Shelf no. 10, call no. 413, Ledger Book Samuel Freebody, 1739-1792, p. 100. Hopkins was pastor of the First Congregational Church.

What was even more important was that they were paid regularly every two weeks without fail in specie, more and more with Spanish dollars as the war progressed, but during the fall and winter of 1780/1, they received their wages in French coin. The kind and denomination of French coinage had been set in an *ordonnance* of 23 May 1774. There were three kinds of copper coin: the liard at 3 deniers, the 1/2 sol at 6 deniers, and the one sol coin worth 12 deniers. There were five different kinds of silver coins: the écu of six livres, the 1/2 écu worth three livres, the 1/5 écu at 24 sols, the 1/10 écu at 12 sols, and the 1/20 écu at 6 sols. If a common hussar was used to handling an écu even if six livres were more than two weeks of wages, one of the three gold coins was less likely to pass through his hands: the 1/2 louis d'or at 12 livres, the louis d'or at 24 livres, and the double louis d'or at 48 livres. The double louis d'or at 48 livres was 18 weeks wages for a grenadier, and more than six months wages for a common fusilier.⁴³⁸

What could they buy with their money? Not much. A loaf of bread, often laced with corn-meal, sold for 1 livre 2 sols per pound in Newport, more than 3 daily wages for a grenadier. A pound of potatoes, a relatively new food for some of these men, sold for 4-6 sols a pound or 12 livres to 18 livres per bushel in Newport in the fall of 1780. 1 lb of snuff, potentially of interest to a soldier, cost 5 s in the store of Daniel Rodman on 12 July 1781. That was just about 5 livres or half a grenadier's monthly wage of 10 livres 3 sols 6 deniers. In June 1781, New England Rum, also potentially of interest to a soldier, cost 6s p/gallon, at 10 s per gallon, West Indies rum was quite a bit more expensive.⁴³⁹ That was down quite a bit from the prices in the summer of 1780, when 1 gallon New England Rum had cost £ 22 10s 6 d in July, and a gallon of West India Rum as much as £ 42 in Aaron Lopez' store.⁴⁴⁰ In the absence of detailed ledgers, however, it is unknown how much money the soldiers themselves spent in Newport.

9.7 The Visit of Washington to Rhode Island, 6-13 March 1781

In January, the Pennsylvania and New Jersey lines mutinied, and French officers were convinced that the Americans had reached the end of the line. It was partly in order to reassure his allies of the reliability of his forces that Washington decided in February 1781 on a journey to Rochambeau in Newport. Having set out from New Windsor with Major General Robert Howe and his aides Tench Tilghman and David

⁴³⁸ The *livre* as a coin did not exist; it was minted briefly in 1720 by the French East India Co.

⁴³⁹ RIHS, Daniel Rodman Ledger 1770-1781, Mss 9001-R Box 6. On 8 March 1781, 1 bushel wheat cost 45 silver dollars, 1 bushel potatoes was 3s on 26 May 1781, and Indian corn 4s p/bushel on 6 June 1781.

⁴⁴⁰ Aaron Lopez Blotter/Day Book for 1780, NHS Shelf no. 18, number 674.

Humphries on 2 March, spent the night at Col. Andrew Morehouse' of the Dutchess County militia on the Fishkill-Hopewell road, near the Connecticut State line. From there he rode via Bulls Falls, Litchfield, Farmington to Hartford Ferry, and arrived in Hartford for a meeting with Governor Trumbull and his son Jonathan Jr. on 4 March. Escorted by the younger Trumbull, Washington rode into Lebanon in the evening of 4 March where he spent the night in the home of Jonathan Trumbull Jr. Before leaving the next day, Washington reviewed Lauzun's hussars.⁴⁴¹ From Lebanon, Washington, who was in a hurry to get to Newport, hired a guide who took the party due east to Preston, Connecticut, Voluntown, Hope Valley and Usquepaugh on the old Kingstown Road to Little Rest, and a tavern run by Colonel Thomas Potter in what is today Kingston at the intersection of RI-SR 108 and 138, where he spent the night of 5/6 March 1781.⁴⁴² The next day, 6 March, Washington and his military family took the Narragansett ferry to Jamestown and Newport. Here a "Poor Woman at Newport" was given \$75, and \$1,450 was paid for board at Newport. Upon arrival he boarded the *chevalier* Destouches' barge that took him to the *duc de Bourgogne*.

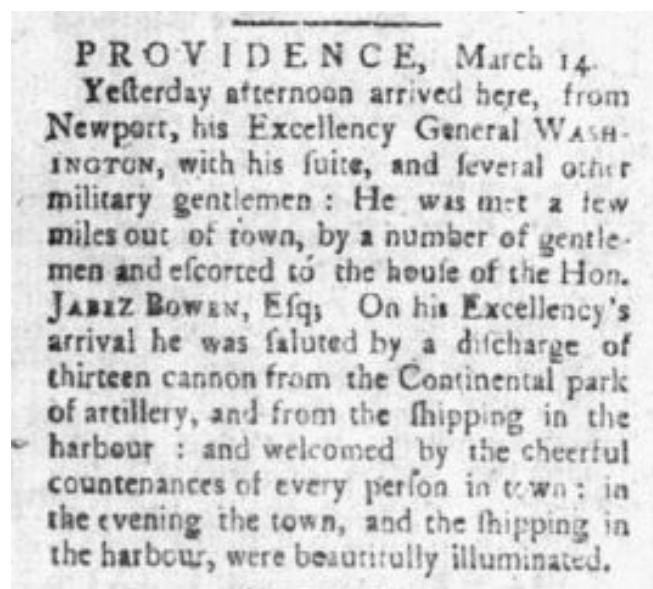
Newport wanted to honor the commander-in-chief. As early as 6 February, the Town Council Minutes record that since Washington "will soon Honor this Town with his Presence it is voted that the Town be illuminated from 7 o'clock untill Nine." The town would furnish the candles to illuminate the "Church Lanthorn and the poor in Congress, Lewis & Thames Street be supply'd with candles, for sd Illumination, from the Town Treasurer." A committee was formed "to Patroll the Streets during the Illumination, & confine each disorderly & unruly Person." And another committee was charged with draw up an address to the general.⁴⁴³ Following dinner with the admiral, Washington arrived in Newport in triumph. On 6 March Rochambeau ordered that "the town [be] illuminating this evening to celebrate the arrival of His Excellency General Washington, officers will have lampions or candles placed in the windows of the houses they occupy; the same will apply to windows of enlisted men's quarters, where feasible, and expenses are to be reimbursed." In the evening a banquet was held in the hall of the Colony House.

⁴⁴¹ While in Lebanon Washington offered the Governor's 41-year-old son the position as his private secretary. Trumbull's "Minutes of Occurrences respecting the Seige [sic] and Capture of York in Virginia, extracted from the Journal of Colonel Jonathan Trumbull, Secretary to the General, 1781." *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* vol. 14, (April 1876), pp. 331-338, begin with 12 August 1781, and end with an entry for 4 November 1781.

⁴⁴² See French E. Chadwick, "The Visit of General Washington to Newport in 1781." *Bulletin of the Newport Historical Society* 6 (February 1913), pp. 1- 19. Baron Closen, who stopped at Little Rest on 5 March 1781, on his way to Newport to announce the arrival of Washington, admonished the eight hussars stationed there to guard Washington "carefully during the night, as there were many Tories in the neighborhood."

⁴⁴³ NHS, Town Proceedings vol. 1, 24 November 1779 – 17 April 1818.

Washington stayed for week and watched the departure on 8 March of the French fleet under Charles René Dominique Gochet *chevalier* Destouches with 1,500 French troops under the *baron* de Vioménil for the Chesapeake.⁴⁴⁴ Vioménil was to join forces with Lafayette in an attempt to capture the traitor Benedict Arnold.⁴⁴⁵ Following consultations with Rochambeau over plans for the 1781 campaign, Washington departed again on 13 March "at 10 O Clock for head Quarters, attended out by Genl Rochambeau and the Officers of the Army, he has paid every attention & marks of respect since his arrival in Town, he proposes to go through Providence."⁴⁴⁶ Travelling via Bristol Ferry and Warren, Washington reached Providence where he spent the nights of 13/14 and 14/15 March.⁴⁴⁷ Early in the morning of Thursday, 15 March, Washington and his military family rode on toward Dorrance's Tavern, about 26 miles from Providence. Rather than spend the night at this well-known inn after a journey of only 26 miles, Washington pushed on through Canterbury and Scotland to Windham and Lebanon, where he spent the night after 60 miles on horseback.⁴⁴⁸ The visit was covered widely in the local newspapers:



Newport Mercury 17 March 1781

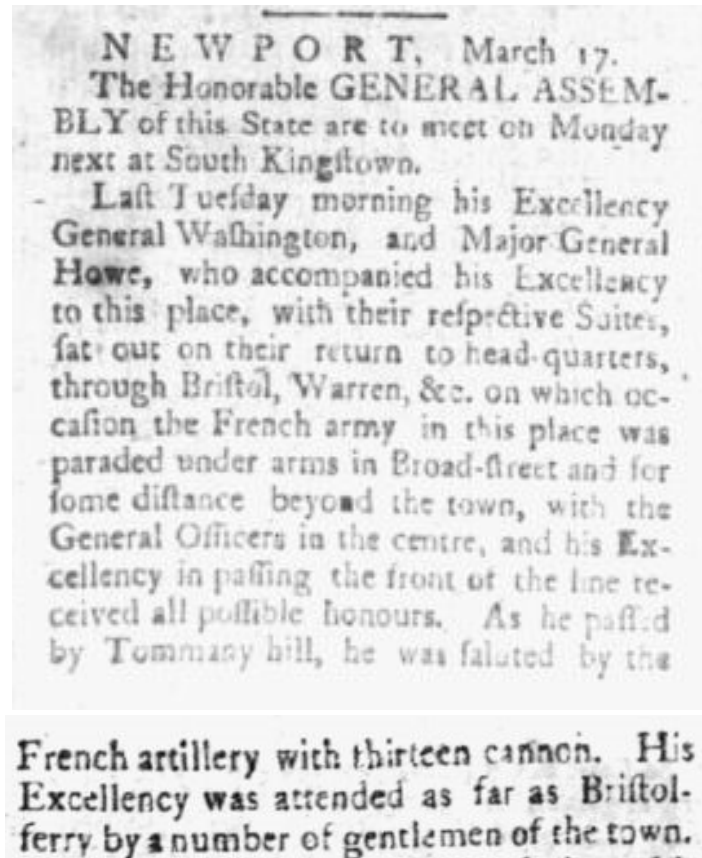
⁴⁴⁴ Deployment of French forces to the Chesapeake does not constitute part of this report.

⁴⁴⁵ Following the death of Ternay, Destouches assumed temporary command of the French fleet in Newport from 15 December 1780 until the arrival of Jacques Melchior Saint-Laurent, *comte* de Barras on 8 May 1781. Destouches returned to Newport on 26 March.

⁴⁴⁶ NHS Box 49, Vernon Papers, folder 5.

⁴⁴⁷ Providence Town Papers vol. 6, January 1781 to August 1782, p. 44 lists £ 2 10/ 8d expenses for 38 candles to give to poor for illuminating town during Washington's visit there in March 1781.

⁴⁴⁸ A note of thanks for Rochambeau by his aide-de-camp Tench Tilghman is dated "Lebanon, le 16 mars 1781."



Newport Mercury 17 March 1781

9.8 Rochambeau's Journey to the Wethersfield Conference, 19-26 May 1781

By 22 March Washington and his family were back in Newburgh. The visit to Newport had brought few if any results. The high hopes connected with the arrival of French forces had yet to materialize. Ever since their arrival in Newport nine months earlier, America's allies had been encamped in Newport while Cornwallis was marching almost at will across the southern colonies. Almost despairingly Washington wrote to Lieutenant-Colonel John Laurens on 9 April 1781: "We are at the end of our tether, and ... now or never our deliverance must come."⁴⁴⁹ The campaign of 1781 would have to produce results, but no plans could be made before the return of Rochambeau's son returned from France. Finally, on 10 May 1781, the *vicomte* arrived with much-needed cash but also with the news that the second division would not be coming after all. Rochambeau was advised to draw up plans for the campaign, possibly in cooperation with Admiral de Grasse, who had left Brest for the Caribbean on 5 April, and who might be able to provide naval support.

⁴⁴⁹ Washington, *Writings*, vol. 21, p. 439.

Now that Rochambeau knew what his resources for the summer campaign would be, there was no time to lose. Throughout the spring Washington had talked about an attack on New York,⁴⁵⁰ By 13 May, Washington had received word of the arrival of the *vicomte* and Admiral Barras, Ternay's replacement. Rather than meet in Hartford, which was bustling with legislators assembled for their annual meeting, Washington suggested the quiet village of Wethersfield a few miles south of the capital. The day was to be 21 May,⁴⁵¹ but just as Rochambeau and his party were about to leave Newport, British vessels once again appeared off of Newport and forced Barras to remain behind. Since he wanted to have a second general officer present, Rochambeau asked Chastellux to accompany him to Wethersfield.

If eyewitness accounts about the Hartford Conference at least exist, we know much less about proceedings at Wethersfield. Rochambeau most likely traveled the same route he took to get to the Hartford Conference, but in the case of Wethersfield we do not know who accompanied Rochambeau and Chastellux on the way. None of the seven aides who left diaries, journals, or letters -- his son,⁴⁵² Baron Closen,⁴⁵³ Axel von Fersen,⁴⁵⁴ Mathieu Dumas,⁴⁵⁵ Cromot du Bourg,⁴⁵⁶ the *marquis* du Bouchet,⁴⁵⁷ and the *comte* de Lauberdière⁴⁵⁸ -- mention Wethersfield on their itineraries. Though it is unthinkable that the generals rode to Wethersfield alone, we do not know who their aides were at the conference.⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁰ See, e.g., his letters to Rochambeau of 8 and 10 April 1781, in Washington, *Writings*, vol. 21, pp. 435/36 and pp. 441/442.

⁴⁵¹ *Diaries of George Washington*, vol. 2, p. 213.

⁴⁵² See Rochambeau, *Journal*, pp. 218/19.

⁴⁵³ See Acomb, *Closen*, p. 79.

⁴⁵⁴ See Fersen's letter of 3 June 1781. *Lettres*, p. 117.

⁴⁵⁵ See Dumas, *Memoirs*, pp. 50/51. Dumas called the town "Westerfield."

⁴⁵⁶ Cromot du Bourg, "Diary," pp. 211/12.

⁴⁵⁷ See *marquis* du Bouchet, *Journal d'un Emigré* in the Division of Rare and Manuscripts Collections at Cornell University, esp. pp. 212/13.

⁴⁵⁸ Lauberdière, *Journal*, p. 50.

⁴⁵⁹ I have been unable to get access to the letters of an eighth aide, Charles Malo François *comte* de Lameth, who may have accompanied Rochambeau and Chastellux, in the archives of the Département Val d'Oise,

J. Watson Webb, *Reminiscences of Gen'l Samuel B. Webb of the Revolutionary Army* (New York, 1882), p. 70, writes: "Tradition says, that the suites of the two commanders consisted of sixty-five persons; and that only Washington and Rochambeau, with one Aide-de-camp each, slept in the house; while the other members of the two suites were billeted upon the hospitable villagers." The villagers may have been "hospitable," but refused the bills offered by the state as payment for expenses. On 18 May, the American deputy quartermaster in charge of accommodations had to appeal to the General Assembly for "real" money to cover expenses. "As no Person or Persons in that town can be found ... to make the necessary

On Saturday, 19 May 1781, Rochambeau and Chastellux set out for Connecticut. Rochambeau, as usual, is rather terse in his 1781 *Memoir*: "Thus when the Comte de Rochambeau had decoded his dispatches, he did nothing more pressing than to suggest a conference with General Washington which was set up at Weathersfield (sic), near to Hartford, for May 23. The Comte de Barras was not there."⁴⁶⁰ The first night was again most likely spent with Governor Bowen in Providence, the second night of 20/21 May, at White's Tavern in Andover.⁴⁶¹

On Monday, 21 May 1781, Washington, who had arrived at Wethersfield on the 19th and whose suite included Generals Knox and Duportail, rode up to Hartford to welcome Rochambeau and Chastellux. While the Americans were lodged in the home of Joseph Webb,⁴⁶² the French lodged nearby at Stillmann's Tavern.⁴⁶³ In the terse words of Washington's diary: "21st (Monday). The Count de Rochambeau, with the Chevlr de Chastellux, arrived about Noon -- the appearance of the British fleet off Block Island prevented the attendance of the Count de Barras."⁴⁶⁴

In the evening of the 21st, Washington and his staff, Governor Trumbull, Jeremiah Wadsworth, and probably also their French guests, attended a concert at the Wethersfield Congregational Church. The next day, Tuesday, the two delegations met at the Webb House. Washington's diary tells us: "22^d (Tuesday). Fixed with Count de Rochambeau upon plan of Campaign."⁴⁶⁵

In celebration of the event, Washington, Rochambeau, Trumbull and Wadsworth had dinner that night (22 May) at Stillman's in the only event worth mentioning, at

supplies without some part of the payment in Specie" he urged a grant of £35 in hard money in addition to the £ 500 in state bills already appropriated. Crofut, *Guide*, vol. 2, p. 345.

⁵⁷ Rochambeau, *Mémoire*, p. 51.

⁴⁶¹ Chastellux used the opportunity to mail Washington "a confidential and rather scheming letter indicating the substance of a plan likely to be discussed at the conference." Chastellux, *Travels*, vol. 2, p. 563, note 6. The letter, dated "May 21, 1781," at "White Tavern" is among the Washington Papers in the Library of Congress. Washington decided not to show the note to Rochambeau. Chastellux does not comment on the conference in his *Travels*.

⁴⁶² The Webb family papers do not mention the presence of Washington and Rochambeau. Worthington C. Ford, *Family Letters of Samuel Blachley Webb, 1764-1807* (New York, 1912).

⁴⁶³ Chastellux, *Travels*, vol. 2, p. 367. Stillmann's Tavern is no longer standing. See also Sherman W. Adams and Henry R. Stiles, *The History of Ancient Wethersfield* 2 vols., (1904, repr. Wethersfield, 1974), vol. 1, pp. 475-480.

⁴⁶⁴ Washington, *Diaries*, p. 217.

⁴⁶⁵ The original minutes of the conference survive in the Rochambeau Papers in the Paul Mellon Collection at the University of Virginia. An abbreviated version can be found in Washington, *Writings*, vol. 22, pp. 105/06.

least as far as Governor Trumbull was concerned, among all the important decisions of that day: "Fair - dined with General Washington, Rochambeau, &c at Stillman's."⁴⁶⁶ The next day, "23^d Count de Rochambeau set out on his return to Newport, while I prepared and forwarded dispatches to the Governors of the four New England States calling upon them in earnest and pointed terms, to compleat their Continental Battalions for the Campaign."⁴⁶⁷ Rochambeau and Chastellux got no further than Hartford where a big reception was waiting for them at Collier's. Again Governor Trumbull's diary: "Wednesday, twenty-third. Fair-dined at Colyer's with the Generals-supra public expense. Guards. Artillery."

On 24 May the French continued their journey for Newport. Even if they had set out early in the morning from Hartford on horseback, they could not have reached Providence by nightfall. Following the pattern established on previous journeys, they may have stopped once again at White's Tavern in Andover on the evening of 24 May 1781. Though there is no documentary evidence for such a stop, it is also suggested by the fact that the two generals were back in Newport only on 26 May after another night spent in or near Providence.

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

⁴⁶⁶ All quotes from the Trumbull Diary in CTHS.

⁴⁶⁷ Washington *Diaries*, p. 218. Washington's "Circular to the New England States of May 24, 1781, is printed in Washington, *Writings*, vol. 22, pp. 109/11.