



*The First RI Regiment in Providence, 1780
by David Wagner, used with permission*

Promoting Heritage Today

In 2009 the U.S. Congress designated the WRRR as a National Historic Trail under the management of the National Park Service.

The **National Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route Association (W3R®-US)** is a non-profit [501(c)3] corporation dedicated to identifying and preserving the documents, routes, and associated historic sites and to helping the public enjoy and understand the WRRR.

Since 1999 the W3R®-US has initiated, coordinated, and publicized the efforts of individuals and of like-minded history, lineage, and government groups in developing the WRRR National Historic Trail as a public resource.

The W3R®-US welcomes your interest, participation, donations, and membership.

www.w3r-us.org

Completed Projects that Develop the WRRR's Potential

- research reports for all nine states
- several books for various audiences
- a Web site with an extensive history of the W3R®, touring information, calendar of upcoming events, and photo-reports of recent events
- hundreds of educational presentations
- dozens of historical & cultural symposia
- sixty illustrations by a commercial artist
- several DVDs of video dramatizations
- a play and several musical events



Boy Scouts pass flags down the WRRR, 2006

- hundreds of route-marking signs
- dozens of interpretive signs
- several state-specific tourist guides
- several re-enactment marches along the entire route from Newport to Yorktown
- many group hikes over shorter sections
- grave markings & commemorations for allied soldiers who died on the WRRR

You are invited to explore the



Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail

From 1774 to 1783 the WRRR was a major route for communications, troops, and supplies. In September of 1781 some 7,500 U.S. and French troops marched south on the last major battle on U.S. soil -- **Yorktown**.



Land and Sea Routes to Yorktown [Nat Park Service]

French Aid Brings Victory

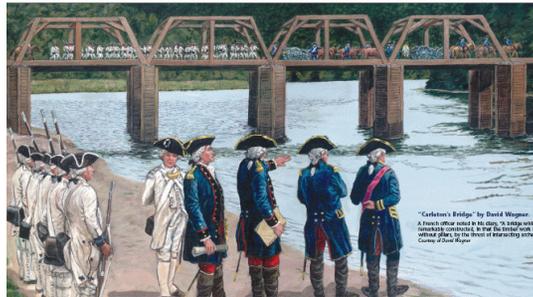
In June of 1781, after a year camped at Newport, Rhode Island, 4,000 French troops under General Rochambeau marched 230 miles to the main U.S. camp near White Plains, New York. Here the allies learned that a French fleet might sail to Virginia to help trap General Cornwallis and 9,000 British troops who were already being harassed by 5,000 Continental and militia troops under American General Lafayette.



Re-enactors of French troops in Newport RI, 2006

While the New Jersey militia built bread ovens to make the British garrison in New York City think that French troops were about to attack them, General Washington led 2,000 Continental troops and General Rochambeau led the French force on a rapid march and sail south 460 miles to Yorktown, Virginia.

Cornwallis hoped to be relieved by a British fleet of 25 ships-of-the-line (one-quarter of the British navy). This hope was crushed when a comparable French fleet under Admiral de Grasse (one-quarter of the French navy) fended off the British fleet and blockaded the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay.



Carleton Bridge over the Housatonic River CT by David Wagner, used with permission

Transports accompanying the French fleet brought 3,500 more French soldiers, fresh from a significant allied victory at Pensacola, Florida. A French squadron under Chef d'escadre de Barass came from Newport, Rhode Island with Rochambeau's siege cannon. Soon allied siege lines surrounded the town of Yorktown.

After enduring ten days of continuous bombardment Cornwallis surrendered his army on October 19, 1781 -- a day celebrated at Yorktown for 240 years.

During their thirty months in the U.S. the French paid in silver for food and repairs. Roughly 10% of the French soldiers who came here died here.



Washington and Rochambeau at Yorktown (detail from a painting by Auguste Coubert)

What is the WRRR?

1. **A physical trail** -- Walk along paths on which the allied troops marched. You can walk, bike, and drive along this trail to appreciate the hardships they faced in marching and camping for weeks at a time.

2. **A "string of pearls"** -- Many major Revolutionary War sites are located on or close to the trail. As you travel south on the WRRR you can visit sites that follow the sequence of the war -- first in Massachusetts at Lexington, Concord, and Boston; then Newport, Providence, Hartford, West Point, Princeton, Trenton, Philadelphia, Wilmington, Baltimore, Annapolis, Richmond, Mt. Vernon, and Williamsburg, and finally Yorktown.

3. **A tribute to the vital role of our strong ally, France** -- As the only nation that formally recognized U.S. independence before the war's end. France provided substantial military and monetary support from 1775 to 1783; preventing early military defeat & collapse of the U.S. financial system.

4. **Many cultures with one goal** -- The diverse religious, language, and racial groups in the U.S. at the time of the Revolution united to fight for the common goal of independence to gain liberty, justice, and opportunity for all.

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