



National Park Service
Northeast Region
U.S. Department of the Interior

Boston Support Office
Stewardship &
Partnership

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Project Information: Washington–Rochambeau Revolutionary Route Study

Team:

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Schedule:

September 2001	Project team developed, research begun
March & April 2002	Public meetings held
June 2002	Historians seminar
November 2002	NPS and NPS Advisory Board reviews national significance
January 2003	Team develops alternatives
February 2004	Draft report and EIS available for review
October 2004	Final report and EIS issued

Helpful web sites:

W-R project information	http://www.nps.gov/revwar/links.htm
National Trail System home page	http://www.ncrc.nps.gov/PROGRAMS/nts/
National Trail System Act	http://www.ncrc.nps.gov/PROGRAMS/nts/legislation.html
W-R Act of 2000	search at http://thomas.loc.gov/home/c106query.html

French General Jean Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, comte de Rochambeau, sailed into Newport in July of 1780 with an army of 5,300 officers and men. After wintering in Newport, Rochambeau's army marched through Rhode Island and Connecticut, in June and July of 1781, and joined General George Washington's Continental Army in Philipsburg, New York. Abandoning the idea of attacking New York, held by the British under General Henry Clinton, they devised instead a southern campaign to attack General Charles Cornwallis in Virginia. In August and September, Washington's and Rochambeau's armies marched through New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia, reaching Williamsburg in late September. Together they attacked and held under siege the British-fortified town of Yorktown. A French fleet under the command of Admiral De Grasse blocked the Chesapeake Bay to either reinforcement from New York or sea escape from Yorktown. On October 19, 1781, after three weeks of siege, General Cornwallis surrendered to General Washington, marking Yorktown as one of the most decisive American victories in the War for Independence. Shortly afterwards, Washington and the Continentals returned to defend northern posts. Rochambeau and his army wintered in Williamsburg, then marched back in the summer of 1782. While small contingents stayed in different ports and left for France the following year, the bulk of Rochambeau's army sailed from Boston on Christmas Eve 1782. In all, nine states formed the route and supported the march, providing ports, roads, camp sites, officers' lodging, provisions of food and supplies: Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Massachusetts, and the District of Columbia.

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