



Morristown Muster

The Official Newsletter
of Morristown National Historical Park

Winter 2013-2014: Dec., Jan., Feb.

New Jersey Saves Washington's Army

An 18 year-old soldier from Connecticut, named Joseph P. Martin, had not eaten any food for four days and four nights. He sat in his cold log cabin looking for something to eat. He knew other soldiers were eating shoe leather and some officers had killed and ate their pet dog. In desperation, Martin reached into the wood pile and picked out a black birch stick and began chewing some of the bark to ease the hunger pangs in his belly. Many other soldiers from the camp in Jockey Hollow began to steal food from nearby farms. Doctor James Thatcher, an army surgeon from Massachusetts wrote: *"some of the soldiers are in the practice of pilfering and plundering the inhabitants of their poultry, sheep, pigs, and even their cattle, from their farms. This marauding practice has often been prohibited in general orders, under the severest penalties, and some exemplary punishments have been inflicted."*

The heavy snow cover of the "Hard Winter" was preventing the movement of supplies. The nearly worthless Continental Currency also made it difficult to purchase food. It seemed like the Patriot cause had hit rock bottom. Washington wrote to the President of Congress: *"I find our prospects are infinitely worse than they have been at any period of the War."* Washington was desperate. On January 8th, he wrote to Governor Trumbull of Connecticut: *"We are reduced to this alternative either to let the Army disband or to call upon the several Counties of this State to furnish a proportion of Cattle and Grain for the immediate supply of our wants. If the Magistrates refuse their aid we shall be obliged to have recourse to a military impress."*



George Washington's well-appointed personal camp chest, or "mess kit," enabled him to dine in a manner reflecting his position as commander of the Continental Army.

That same day he sent a letter to the Magistrates of each county in the state of New Jersey demanding food totaling: 2,200 cattle and 12, 150 bushels of grain. Each county was given a quota of beef and grain and a certain number of days to bring the food in. Washington promised payment for all the food but warned if the food was not delivered the army would seize it.

The call for food was a great success. On January 25th, The New Jersey Journal in Chatham reported: *"our army is now exuberantly supplied with provision and every other necessary to make a soldier's life comfortable"* Doctor James Thatcher, wrote: *"It is honorable to the magistrates and people of Jersey, that they have cheerfully complied with the requisition, and furnished for the present an ample supply, and have thus probably saved the army from destruction."* In February, Washington wrote to the various New Jersey Magistrates thanking them for their efforts: *"You have given a striking*

proof of your attachment to the service, of your regard to the accommodation of the army" But he tempered his thanks with: *"It is however to be hoped a similar occasion may not again occur."*

But Washington's hope for the future, in terms of food for the army, did not come true. The abundance of food lasted into early March when letters and diaries from the camp again reported food shortages. Unfortunately, the food supplied by New Jersey had run out and the state had no other stocks of surplus to give to the army. Supplies would eventually come in from other nearby states, but the scarcity of food would continue through the remainder of the winter encampment. This led to increased desertions and the mutiny of two Connecticut regiments, but for two months, during the worst winter of the 18th century, the food supplied by New Jersey farmers saved Washington's army.

Letter from Superintendent

Experiencing Morristown NHP

As I write this letter the colors of fall are in full display and the leaves are blanketing the ground in a sure sign that winter is around the corner. Winter is really a great time to visit and experience Morristown National Historical Park. In fact, to really understand and truly experience the Morristown story, the struggle and hardship the Continental Army faced in 1779-80, plan to spend a winter day “in the field” at Jockey Hollow; New Jersey Brigade; and Fort Nonsense units. You are sure to gain a new found respect for the hardship our Army experienced that terrible winter. To warm your bones, head over to Washington’s Headquarters and Museum to visit the impressive galleries and take a ranger led tour of the Ford Mansion where General and Mrs. Washington stayed during the encampment of 1779-80. A listing of free ranger led programs and activities can be found in the back of this publication. So whether you are here for the history or to spend some time in the great outdoors, you are sure to feel, see or experience something new and interesting this winter at Morristown NHP. I do hope you enjoy your visit to **Your** National Park. See you around the park.

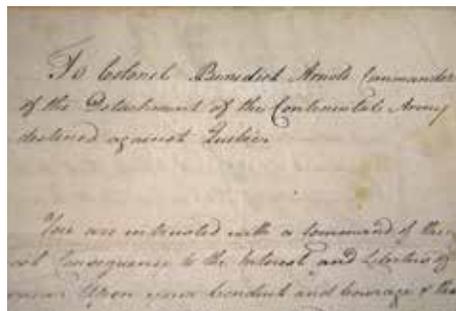
Thomas Ross
Superintendent,
Morristown National Historical Park

Behind Closed Doors

With February commemorating Presidents Day, it seems fitting to feature one of the artifacts in our collection here at Morristown National Historical Park relating to past presidents. With the help of Lloyd W. Smith who donated to the park much of our current archives, Morristown National Historical Park has artifacts pertaining to the first thirty-two presidents, from George Washington to Franklin Delano Roosevelt in our museum collection.

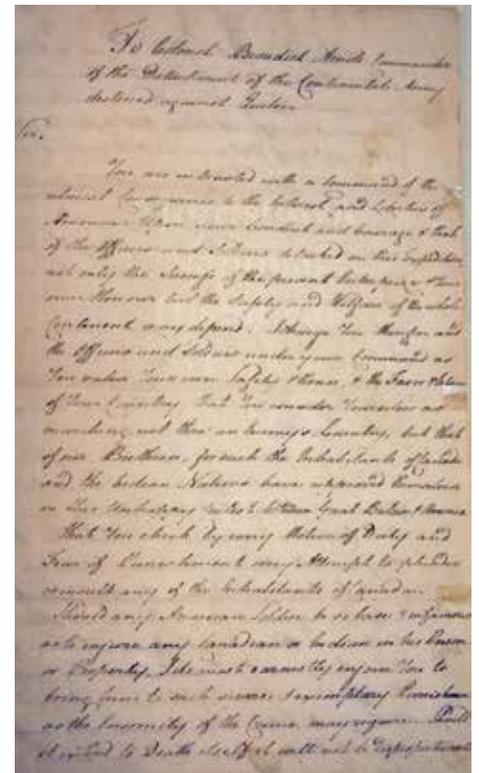
In the picture below you will see the headline “*To Colonel Benedict Arnold Commander of the Detachment of the Continental Army destined against Quebec.*” This intriguing document is a contemporary copy of a letter written from General George Washington to Colonel Benedict Arnold on September 14, 1775.

Washington makes note that Arnold’s command is “*of the utmost consequence to the interest and liberties of America. . .*” and the entire document is symbolic of the wider goal of attracting other British colonies to the cause of American independence. Washington warns Arnold to observe the strictest discipline and order in the ranks, and to “avoid all disrespect or contempt of the religion of the Country.” With religion a hotbed of tension between the Protestant colonies on the eastern seaboard and the French Catholics in Quebec and throughout North America, it was clearly pertinent for the army to avoid all conflicts on the issue.



Beginning of Washington’s letter to Benedict Arnold concerning Arnold’s Quebec Campaign.

In fourteen separate points, Washington details instructions for Arnold and his officers. For instance, Arnold is instructed to pay full price for all provisions, a task hardly accomplished throughout the war, so as not to insult or deprive the Canadians. In essence, Arnold needs to take extreme care in this expedition, as its aims are sensitive to the direction of the war. The last thing Washington wants is to “*irritate our fellow-subjects against us.*” If these inhabitants do not seem open to cooperation with the cause, “*The expense of the expedition and the disappointment are not to be put in competition with the dangerous consequences which may ensue from irritating them against us, and detaching them from that neutrality which they have adopted.*” High hopes were placed on Canada, and though history would play out differently, these documents attest to the importance Washington and Continental Congress placed on incorporating other British colonies in the cause of liberty.



George Washington’s letter to Benedict Arnold outlining 14 separate points for Arnold’s Quebec Campaign.

Martha Washington: The Traveler

Before there was a Martha Washington, there was Martha Dandridge, a woman who married Daniel Custis when she was only 15. Upon Daniel's death in 1758, Martha became solely responsible for two surviving children and an immense widespread estate. Eleven months after Daniel's death, Martha married George Washington on January 6, 1759 and thus began a life of traveling.

Martha may have been supportive but also aware of the risks involved when, in June 1775, George headed for Philadelphia to the Second Continental Congress to accept Command of the Continental Army. English law stated that the taking up of arms against a monarch was the capital offense of treason. Now that George was guilty of treason in the eyes of the law, he could be captured, sent to England for trial and either executed or imprisoned in the Tower of London.



Artist rendition of Martha Washington arriving at the Ford Mansion December 31, 1779.

Each winter for eight years, Martha left the comforts of Mount Vernon to travel with her husband. Traveling with the army meant numerous risks to one's

health and, in May 1776 while George is in Philadelphia, Martha visited and accepted the inoculation for smallpox. This lifestyle came at a high price. In November 1781, Martha's last surviving child Jack died of camp fever contracted at the Siege of Yorktown.

Martha became familiar with the challenges of travel including vicious weather, road conditions and the threat of British capture. Taking nearly a month to travel from Mount Vernon, Martha's added concern was how to pay for rented rooms when her own state's money was not accepted. In Morristown, Martha stayed with George at Jacob Arnold's Tavern in 1777 and at the Ford home in 1779. The fact that Martha survived traveling up and down the East Coast to connect all eight winters with George demonstrates how she became a seasoned traveler.

Changes in Hours and Closures

Dear Friends,

Effective March 1, 2013, Morristown National Historical Park was required by "sequestration" (a series of automatic, across-the-board permanent spending cuts) to reduce its annual budget by five percent. The park has made several adjustments to ensure a continuation of the high level of service that you expect from your National Parks.

Beginning on January 5, 2014, the Jockey Hollow Visitor Center will be closed, and will not reopen until February 16. During that same period, the Washington's Headquarters Museum and the Ford Mansion will only be open on Saturdays and Sundays. The grounds of the park will remain open and restroom facilities in Jockey Hollow will also be accessible during the normal hours listed at www.nps.gov/morr. In order to ensure high quality programming and services, we will be closing the Jockey Hollow Visitor Center, Wick House, Washington's Headquarters Museum and Ford Mansion on Wednesdays beginning March 2014. We will resume 7 day operations between Memorial Day and Labor day. This closure provides the park with the flexibility to continue offering education programs and workshops, and allows time to develop new and exciting programming.

We are sorry for the inconvenience that this may cause and thank you for your continued support during these times of fiscal constraint.

Sincerely,
Thomas Ross
Superintendent, Morristown National Historical Park



Morristown National Historical Park, Junior Ranger

Planning a trip to Morristown National Historical Park? Explore our revolutionary past and discover fascinating facts about the events, people, places, and things in historic Morristown by asking for a Junior Ranger Handbook. You can get a copy of the handbook at Jockey Hollow or at Washington's Headquarters.

Complete and present the handbook to a park ranger at Jockey Hollow or Washington's Headquarters and receive your Junior Ranger badge for a job well done.

Go to www.nps.gov/morr/forkids to download a copy of the Junior Ranger booklet and get started today!





Winter Ranger Led Activities 2013-2014

DECEMBER

Saturday, December 14th: *U, Me and Us in the Museum* - Looking into our past we can see the impact everyday life has on history. Explore the Washington's Headquarters Museum with a Park Ranger to find evidence of each stage in life, from birth to retirement. *1:30pm, 2:30pm and 3:30pm at the Washington's Headquarters Museum.*

JANUARY

Saturday, January 25th: *Dining with Washington* - What was Washington's favorite breakfast? What food did Martha Washington enjoy? Discover dining habits of George Washington, his family and associates, as well as eating customs and preservation methods from the 18th century. *1:15pm, 2:15pm and 3:15pm at the Washington's Headquarters Museum*

FEBRUARY

Sunday, February 16th: *The Making of an American Icon* - We remember George Washington as the father of our country and arguably the greatest American to ever live. Join a Park Ranger to discover the early years of Washington's life and see how he became the man Americans love and idealize. *1:30pm, 2:30pm and 3:30pm at the Washington's Headquarters Museum.*

Saturday, February 22nd: *Myths of George Washington* - Did Washington really have wooden teeth? Did he chop down a cherry tree? Revisit these and other Washington stories, investigate their truthfulness, and discover why such tales were and are so popular. *1:15pm, 2:15pm and 3:15pm at the Washington's Headquarters Museum.*

Saturday, February 22nd: *Winter of 1777* - The Winter of 1777 was an interesting time in Washington's Army. They had just won battle at Trenton and Princeton and wintered in Morristown. Join a Park Ranger at Fort Nonsense to discover what the army was doing in Morristown at that time and why Fort Nonsense got its name. Call 973-539-2016 ext. 210 for details. *1:30pm, 2:30pm and 3:30pm at Fort Nonsense.*

Sunday, February 23rd: *African American Patriots* - Did you know that 5,000 African Americans served in the Continental Army? Join a Park Ranger at the Wick House to discover the role these soldiers played in Morristown and throughout the war. *2:00pm, 3:00pm and 4:00pm at the Wick House.*



North Jersey American Revolution Roundtable

Long before New Jersey was the Garden State, the colony of New Jersey was known as the 'Cockpit of the Revolution' and the 'Crossroads of the Revolution'. New Jersey witnessed many events; both high points and low points that were critical to the cause of American independence. Join us as we discuss the ideas, men and events which led to the founding of the American republic, the oldest constitutional democracy in the world.

Programs begin at 7:15pm at the Washington's Headquarters Museum:

January 9, 2014 Speaker: Dr. Raymond Frey from Centenary College

February 13, 2014 Speaker: John J. McLaughlin, Esq. "The Black Loyalist"

For more information call the Washington's Headquarters Museum at 973-539-2016 ext. 210 or go to www.njhistoryroundtables.org/NJARRT