

# Along the Allied Route Today

## Discover a Revolutionary War Trail

The Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail is a network of roads and waterways used by allied forces in the march to and from the Siege of Yorktown.

Although population growth and urban development have erased almost all traces of the rural campsites and small taverns that once sheltered Revolutionary War soldiers, the legacy of the Washington-Rochambeau journey endures. You can explore historic sites that bring this story to life: Stroll the green in Lebanon, Connecticut; sail the scenic Chesapeake Bay; observe a captivating Revolutionary War reenactment at Colonial Williamsburg; or stand on the hallowed battlefield of Yorktown.



Time of day and geographic location were basic concerns for soldiers on the march. To determine both, they may have relied on an instrument like this pocket compass and sundial.

COURTESY NATIONAL PARK SERVICE MUSEUM MANAGEMENT PROGRAM AND MORRISTOWN NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

This map of Connecticut from Rochambeau's personal collection is titled "Connecticut, from the best authorities." In 1780-81, his special cavalry—Lauzun's Legion—spent eight months camped just west of Lebanon Green.

ROCHAMBEAU MAP COLLECTION, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

On July 6, 1781, the French and Continental Armies joined in White Plains. Initially planning a siege around New York City, Generals Washington and Rochambeau changed strategies to attack General Cornwallis and British forces in Yorktown, Virginia. The armies broke camp on August 18-19 to begin their "celebrated march" south towards Yorktown.

NEW YORK

NEW JERSEY

PENNSYLVANIA

MARYLAND

DELAWARE

VIRGINIA

ATLANTIC OCEAN



This atlas page records a camp occupied by Rochambeau's troops in Philadelphia, 1782.

ROCHAMBEAU MAP COLLECTION, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Having marched all the way from Williamsburg to Boston, Rochambeau's infantry sailed out of Boston Harbor for the Caribbean on December 25, 1782.

MASSACHUSETTS

Lebanon provided winter quarters for some 220 of the 300 hussars of Lauzun's Legion from November 20, 1780, until June 20, 1781.

On July 11, 1780, French forces under General Rochambeau arrived in Newport, marking the beginning of formal French military support for the American Revolution.

On June 10, 1781, Rochambeau's forces departed Newport to join the Continental Army in New York.



0 20 Kilometers  
0 20 Miles

### NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL ROUTE

- French Army
- French Army-water route
- French Army-return route
- Continental Army
- Continental Army-water route
- National Park Service site
- Interstate 95

### Colonial National Historical Park



Leaving Elkton early on September 8, Washington covered the 120 miles to Mount Vernon in two days, arriving at his estate late on September 9, 1781.

On September 9-10, 1781, about 1,450 Continental Army and 1,200 French soldiers embarked at Elkton for Virginia.

On September 16-17, 1781, about 600 Continental Army soldiers embarked in Baltimore for Virginia.

Late in the afternoon of September 21, 1781, the rest of the allied forces, about 3,800 French and 200 American soldiers, sailed from Annapolis.

Around 200 Continental Army soldiers escorted a wagon train and about 1,500 horses by land from Annapolis to Williamsburg.

Washington and Rochambeau stopped briefly at Mount Vernon while marching troops to Virginia, departing on September 12, 1781.

The Battle of the Hook on October 3, 1781, in Gloucester County, was the largest cavalry engagement of the American Revolution. The French victory prevented the British from supplying reinforcements to Yorktown.

The Battle of the Capes, fought on September 5, 1781, was a critical naval victory for the French that prevented British reinforcements for General Cornwallis, aiding the success of the Siege of Yorktown.

After the Siege of Yorktown, Rochambeau's forces wintered in Virginia. The troops headed north in summer 1782, continuing all the way to Boston.

Reinforced by French forces under the marquis de St. Simon, as well as Continental Army troops under the marquis de Lafayette, the combined allied armies—9,000 Americans and 9,000 French—set out for Yorktown on September 28, 1781.

The Siege of Yorktown began on September 28, 1781. British forces under General Cornwallis surrendered on October 19, 1781, a major turning point that led to the end of the war.

**More Information**  
Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail  
[www.nps.gov/waro](http://www.nps.gov/waro)

The National Park Service works with federal, state, and local agencies, as well as private organizations, in the District of Columbia and along the nine-state corridor that constitutes the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route.



GPO:2024-427-085/8293 Last updated 2024