

**"The multitude of women ..."  
An Examination of the Numbers of Female Followers  
With the Continental Army**

*John U. Rees*

(Published in *The Brigade Dispatch* (Journal of the Brigade of the American Revolution) Three parts: vol. XXIII, no. 4 (Autumn 1992), 5-17; vol. XXIV, no. 1 (Winter 1993), 6-16; vol. XXIV, no. 2 (Spring 1993), 2-6; reprinted in *Minerva: Quarterly Report on Women and the Military*, vol. XIV, no. 2 (Summer 1996))



**Emma Cross and Jenny Lynn as followers of the Delaware Regiment, 1781. Cowpens Battlefield, January 2018.**

## Contents

**1777 and 1780: A Common Thread?**

**1776 to 1782: "Necessary to keep the Soldier's clean"**

**1781: "Their Wives all of whom ... Remained": Women on Campaign With the Army**

**1781: "The women with the army who draw provisions"**

**1782: "Rations ... Without Whiskey": Col. Henry Jackson's Regimental Provision Returns**

**1783: "The proportion of Women which ought to be allowed ..."**

### Appendices

**A. Images, Articles and Additional Information Related to Sullivan's 1779 Campaign and Fort Sullivan, Tioga.**

**B. Articles Providing Contextual Information on the 1781 Virginia Campaign**

**C. Miscellaneous References to Army Women**

**1. 1775, 1776, and 1781: "Fire Ships," "Veneral Disorder," and Women in Hospital**

**2. A Woman with the Continental Army, 1777-1783**

**3. Hospitals, Nurses and a Female Spy, 1776 and 1777**

**4. Orders Concerning Female Followers, Maj. Gen. John Sullivan's Division, 1777**

**5. Horses Belonging to Camp Followers**

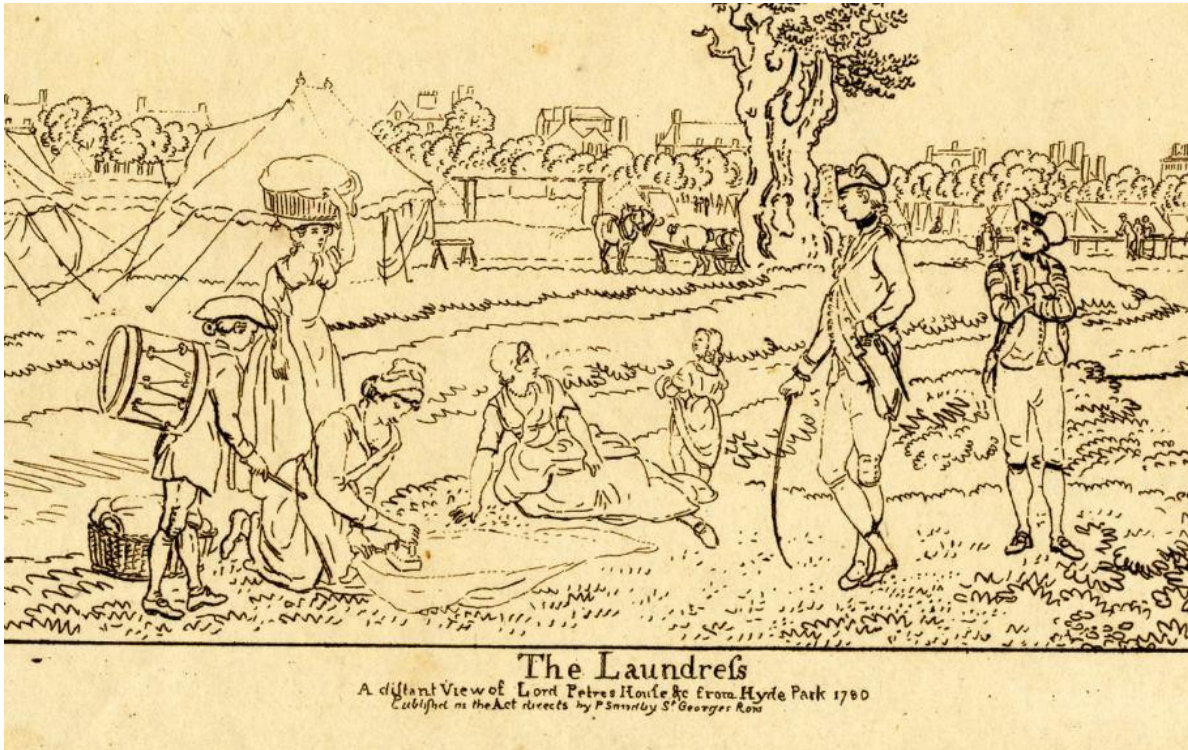
**6. Women Riding Pack Horses on Maj. Gen. John Sullivan's 1779 Expedition**

**7. Women, 1778-1782: On the March, Doing Laundry, Selling Military Goods, and Sergeant's Responsibility For Followers**

**8. Army Orders and George Washington Correspondence Concerning Female Followers**

**9. Link to Second Study Examining Numbers of Continental Army Female Followers**

**D. Additional Articles on Continental Army Female Followers by the Author**





Return of Officers, Ncommissd. Officers & Soldiers,  
Waggoners, Teamsters & Women present in  
the Rhode Island Regiment

Companies	Commissd.			Staff				Ncommissd.					Wagoners	Teamsters	Women			
	Colo	Major	Captain	Lieutenant	Sergeant	Cross	Drum	Trumpeter	Serjeant	Drum	Trumpeter	Colored						
1 <sup>st</sup>	1	2	1	"	1	1	"	1	1	1	1	1	3	2	35	"	"	1
2 <sup>nd</sup>	"	"	1	1	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	4	2	37	"	"	"
3 <sup>rd</sup>	"	"	1	1	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	2	2	42	1	"	1
4 <sup>th</sup>	"	"	1	1	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	4	2	39	"	"	"
5 <sup>th</sup>	"	"	1	1	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	3	2	34	"	"	1
6 <sup>th</sup>	"	"	1	1	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	3	2	54	1	"	2
7 <sup>th</sup>	"	"	1	"	1	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	4	2	40	"	"	3
8 <sup>th</sup>	"	"	1	1	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	4	2	54	1	"	2
Total	1	2	8	6	2	1	"	1	1	1	1	1	27	16	335	3	10	10

Camp near Wilmington, Sept. 4<sup>th</sup> 1781

John Rogers Adj<sup>t</sup>

From 1778 to the end of 1780 the 1st Rhode Island Regiment consisted solely of white soldiers), while the 2d Rhode Island had black enlisted men with white commissioned and non-commissioned officers. In 1781 those two units were combined into a single corps, the Rhode Island Regiment. The companies were segregated, and the 6th and 8th companies were the "black" companies; each had one man serving as a wagoner and each contained two women. Those two companies were also the largest in the regiment. 54 privates in each, 108 total. (32% of privates in the regiment were black.) "Return of Officers, Ncommissd. Officers & Soldiers, Waggoners, Teamsters & Women present in the Rhode Island Regiment," 4 September 1781 (Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society)

At various times during the War of the Revolution General George Washington ordered that returns be made of the women who followed his troops. These women were, whether the high command would admit it or not, a part of the army throughout the war. The varying numbers of women who accompanied the army consumed precious provisions and, especially when on the march, often proved to be an "incumbrance." In August 1777 Washington wrote that

the multitude of women in particular, especially those who are pregnant, or have children, are a clog upon every movement. The Commander in Chief therefore earnestly recommends it to the officers commanding brigades and corps, to use every reasonable method in their power to get rid of all such as are not absolutely necessary ...<sup>1</sup>

He was, however, to find it impossible to rid the army of these persistent females who performed any number of "necessary" tasks. These tasks ranged from the mundane, such as laundering clothes and caring for the sick, to the brave, as when the women of the 6th Pennsylvania Regiment took

the empty canteens of their husbands and friends and returned with them filled with water ... during the hottest part of the engagement [at the Battle of Brandywine], although frequently cautioned as to the danger of coming into the line of fire.<sup>2</sup>

In the numerous accounts of women with the army one question has never been answered with satisfaction: When speaking of "the multitude of women", exactly how many were there at any one period or place? Other, related, questions also beg to be answered: How did the numbers of women as well as their ratio in comparison to the men vary from regiment to regiment? What were the factors that influenced their presence with the army? Was there any attempt in the early years of the war to fix a numerical ratio of women to soldiers as was instituted in the British Army for the purposes of determining rations and shelter? And, given that a preference was shown at the end of the war to limit their numbers to one woman for every fifteen men, how close was this to the actual state of affairs? General research has brought to light some interesting, though not entirely conclusive, documents giving some idea of the answers to these and other questions concerning the numbers of women with the army.

#### 1777 and 1780; A Common Thread?

The earliest available general return seems to show the number of women for the main army under Washington. In December 1777 an "Account of Rations drawn by the Infantry of ye Standing Army" gives a breakdown of the strength of the troops during the first month at Valley Forge. The number of non-commissioned officers was 2,340 while that of the "Privates fit for Duty" added to those who were unfit was 15,417. The number of women with the army or, more specifically, the rations allowed for them, is given as 400. Thus, after arguably the most rigorous campaign of the war, and despite Washington's repeated orders to discourage women from following the army, the number of women with the army amounted to slightly less than 2.5 percent of the N.C.O.s and privates, or one woman for every forty-four men. Unfortunately, this figure of 400 women may not be the actual number of women with the army but only an estimate or, as previously stated, merely the number of rations to be allowed for women. There is no way to determine this satisfactorily,

although the fact that all of the numbers given for the troops are for those actually carried on the strength returns seems to indicate the number of women was probably based on earlier returns. In addition to this the heading of the document indicates that the data was for actual rations issued to those serving with the army. All available information indicates that the women with the army were, like the enlisted men, allotted one ration of food per day.<sup>3</sup>

The return for 1777 can be compared to a second document pertaining to the number of women allowed to accompany the army. "An Estimate of the daily Issues to an Army Consisting of 40,000 Rank & File exclusive of Serjeants," dated 2 June 1780, enumerates the rations and support services required for an army of that size. This purely conjectural return allows 800 "Women & Cooks" for a force of 40,000, giving a ratio of one for every fifty men or 2 percent of the army. This compares favorably with the actual ratio of women in December 1777, even if we take into account that at least some of the "Cooks" were males (i.e., servants, slaves or waiters) rather than females and especially considering that non-commissioned officers were not included in the estimate. Over the progression of the war actual numbers of women with the army would make the 1780 "Estimate" seem rather optimistic from the commanding officers' point of view. It would prove to be impossible to limit the number of females to one for every fifty enlisted men or standardize the number of rations allotted to the women following the troops.<sup>4</sup>







**(Previous page) Pennsylvania map showing key points on the movement of Maj. Gen. John Sullivan's small army from Easton (B), to Wyoming (C), and north to the Iroquois town of Tioga, where Fort Sullivan was built. "A Map of Pennsylvania Exhibiting not only the Improved Parts of that Provinc but also its Extensive Frontier. Laid down from actual surveys and chiefly from the late map of W. Scull published in 1770; and humbly inscribed to the Honourable Thomas Penn and Richard Penn... London. Printed for Robt. Sayer & J. Bennett, 1775.' This version of William Scull's 1770 map (1770.1) was published separately and appeared in Thomas Jeffreys' The American Atlas published by R. Sayer & J. Bennett 1776 and later. It also appeared in William Faden's North American Atlas of 1777 which is the image here from the Library of Congress. The same image was used for map 1770.1 and the only difference between the two is in the title. Sellers & van Ee #1296, Phillips page 674. Scale: 1 inch = 6 miles. Size: 28 x 52 inches."**

1776 to 1782

"Necessary to keep the Soldier's clean"

In 1779 Washington's main army was in New Jersey and eastern New York covering the British who occupied New York City. During that summer detachments under Major General John Sullivan and Brigadier General James Clinton were sent into Pennsylvania and Western New York to suppress the Indians. The two columns met at Tioga, Pennsylvania, in August and built a small work called Fort Sullivan.<sup>5</sup> There it was decided that as

the Troops should Move as light as possible, the Officers are requested to leave at the Garrison all the Baggage they can possibly spare. All the Women & Children to be left at this place ...<sup>6</sup>

Colonel Israel Shreve, 2<sup>nd</sup> New Jersey Regiment, was left with 250 men to garrison the fort while Sullivan's united force moved on into western New York. On 24 August Shreve was instructed:

It will ... be absolutely necessary to send most of the Women and Children [by boat] to Wyoming, returning only such as may be applied to the use of the Hospital, or may be deem'd necessary to keep the Soldier's clean at their Return. You will give orders to the Commissary at Wyoming to issue Rations to those Women & Children.<sup>7</sup>

The next document, entitled "A Return of the Women & Children Left in Charge of Baggage, Necessary to wash for Genl Clintons Brigade", lists some of the followers who were left behind at Fort Sullivan:<sup>8</sup>

<u>2nd New York</u>	<u>3rd New York</u>
Miss Smith & 2 children	Mrs. Parker
Mrs. Lambertson	Miss Sherlock
	Miss Haburn
	Miss Jackson
<u>4th New York</u>	<u>5th New York</u>
Mrs. Cothal	Miss Weymyre
Miss Smith & child	Miss Clinton
Mrs. Canby & child	Miss Austin
Mrs. Penojer	

Some inferences can be drawn from this return, one of which is that it seems, at least in this instance, to have been acceptable for unmarried women to be attached to a military organization. In addition, two of the women in the roster may have had children out of wedlock, though these, of course, could simply have been someone else's children put under their charge. These women would have been the mothers, sisters, wives, daughters or consorts of non-commissioned officers or privates. A study of the muster rolls brings forth various enlisted men the aforesaid followers probably had some relation to.<sup>9</sup>

<u>2nd New York</u>		<u>3rd New York</u>	
Sgt. John Smith, 4th Co.		Pvt. Edward Parker, Colonel's Co.	
Sgt. Simon Lambertson, 7th Co.		Pvt. John Sherlock, Aorson's Co.	
		Sgt. William Haburn, Tiebout's Co.	
<u>4th New York</u>		<u>5th New York</u>	
Pvt. Richard Cottril, Fowler's Co.		Pvt. Frederick Wemire, Godwin's Co.	
Pvt. James Cambee, Walker's Co.		Pvt. John Clinton, Hamtramck's Co.	
Fifer Jesse Penoyer, Titus' Co.		Pvt. Holms Austin, Johnson's Co.	
Sgt. Josiah Smith, Titus' Co.			

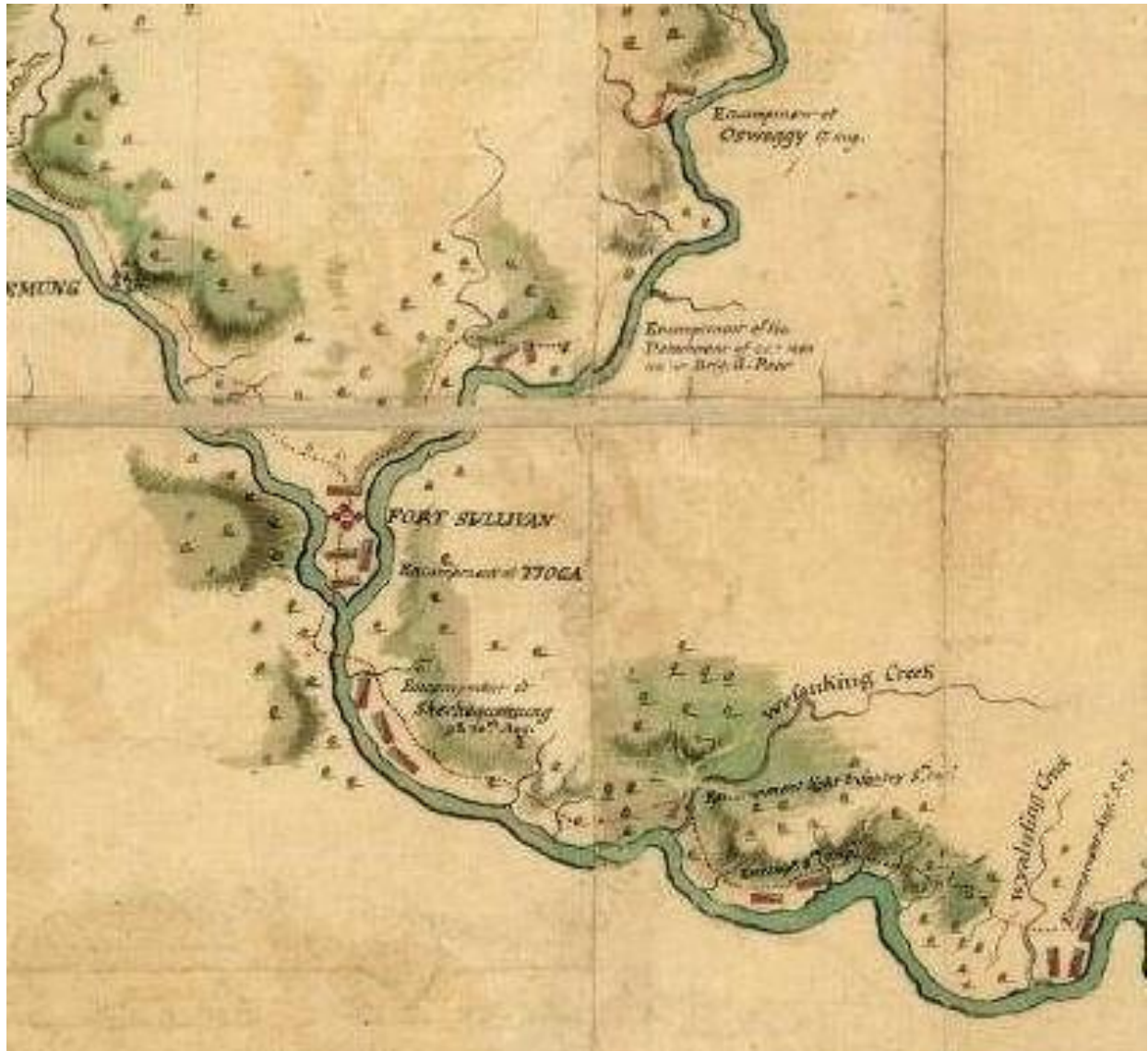
There are at least six other Smiths in the 4th New York, all privates. "Miss Smith & child" could have been attached to any one of them.

Using the returns of the soldiers and washerwomen with the New York regiments in 1779 it is possible to determine the proportions of women "deem'd necessary to keep the Soldier's clean at their Return."<sup>10</sup>

	<u>Officers &amp; Enlisted Men</u>		<u>Ratio of Washerwomen</u>
2nd N.Y.	248	2 women	1 for every 124 men
3rd N.Y.	435	4 women	1 for every 109 men
4th N.Y.	327	4 women	1 for every 82 men
5th N.Y.	374	3 women	1 for every 125 men

As can be seen, the workload for these women must have been heavy when Clinton's Brigade finally returned to the post at Tioga at the end of September 1779; of course some soldiers reported their clothes were tattered and torn beyond use; washing them may have been a moot point. The proportion of washerwomen to soldiers in this case can be compared to several other instances. In June 1776 a return of Captain Joseph Bloomfield's company of the 3rd New Jersey Regiment listed seventy-one enlisted men and three "Washer-Women", giving a ratio of one woman to twenty-four soldiers. In sharp contrast to these numbers was the proportion used in Colonel John Lamb's Artillery Regiment in September of 1780; "one Woman to Wash for ten." A final comparison is the number of "Wash Women" in the 9th Massachusetts Regiment over a period of three and a half months during the summer of 1782. The approximate average for those months was one laundress for every thirty-five enlisted men<sup>11</sup>





**Detail of the map of Sullivan's march from Easton to central New York. Fort Sullivan at Tioga Point, and the army's encampment on the peninsula is clearly marked. (For more images and information on the Tioga camp and Fort Sullivan see Appendix)**

Another document relating to the 3rd New Jersey Regiment may have some correlation with the 1776 return from the same unit. It is possible that the similarity in their proportion of women may indicate an attempt to standardize the numbers of washerwomen within the regiment. This supposition does not, however, take into account the impossibility of such standardization due to the under strength status of many regiments and companies and their lack of uniformity during the early war years. The document, dated 1777, is also significant in that it reveals the inclusion of females along with enlisted men in the mess squads of an individual company.<sup>12</sup>

"A Mess Roll of Captn. Ross's Compy." 3<sup>rd</sup> New Jersey Regiment  
(A listing of mess squads for June 1777)

1st	2nd
George Grant, sgt.	Samuel Johnson, cpl.
William Andrews, cpl.	Margaret Johnson
George Leadbetter [captured 9/11/77]	Jonathan Emmons
Jacob [Likens?]	Edward Howell
Daniel Danaly	
3rd	4th
Jonathan McCully	Abraham Peterson
Vincent Bishop	Aaron Deacon
Francis Carbury	Daniel Ellis
Jonathan Williamson	Thomas Holland
Simon Boney	Thomas Morris
	Benjamin Norcross, drummer
5th	6th
Emmanuel Evans	Thomas Dixon [deserted August 1777]
Elizabeth Evans	Jonathan Howard
Edward Brady	Martin Wholahan [deserted 7/1/77]
Joseph Johnson	Abel Addams
Patrick Ryan	James Milsop
	Paul Brewer
7th	8th
Henry Burgher	William Gibson, sgt.
James Deharmond	James Shea, cpl.
William Smith [captured 9/11/77]	Thomas Gibson
Levi Johnson	Henry Quigg [killed 10/4/77]
Henry Flitcraft [deserted 9/1/77]	James Morris
William [?]	
9th	10
John Roy [died 8/31/77]	Capt. Ross
John Walter	Ensign Kersey
Jonathan Freeman	John Guy
Frederick Campbell	Joseph Hunter
John Higgins	William Lyons
Peter [Bruchaw?]	John Higgins

49 enlisted men and 2 women (1 woman for 24 men)

Most of the squads listed contained five or six people. These numbers coincide with common usage during the war, which was a standard complement of six men per mess, though this number was sometimes increased to as many as twelve. The use and size of mess squads was related to the number of men (and also, it seems, women) assigned to each tent. In the Continental Army

throughout the war the optimum number of occupants for each common soldier's tent was six, with occasional exceptions due to a shortage of tents or a desire to minimize the baggage carried by the army. In June 1776 Captain Joseph Bloomfield's company, 3rd New Jersey Regiment, had one tent allotted to shelter six enlisted men while General John Sullivan's division orders of 17 August 1777 not only stipulated the same number of enlisted men per tent but allotted one tent for every six "Waggoners [or] weomen" as well. It is probable that, due to the exigencies of army life, the women included with the two mess squads in Ross's company in June 1777 shared a tent with the men of their squad.<sup>13</sup>

The mere fact that women were included in these groupings along with the soldiers is of some note. This, along with the allotment of tents to women, is an indication that even at this early period of the war females with the army were considered an integral part of the army.



**Boiling laundry. Redoubt Building event, Fort Ticonderoga, New York, 2016.  
(Margaret Staudter and Jana Gail Violante)**



1781  
"Their Wives all of whom ... Remained"  
Women on Campaign with the Army

When the troops to which they were attached entered upon an active campaign against the enemy the lives of their female followers were disrupted to a great degree. If they remained behind in a garrison or camp they were sometimes not provided for, and uncertainties concerning the fate of their men would only have aggravated their situation. If, on the other hand, they moved with the troops their subsistence was sometimes more certain, though the rough conditions and makeshift living quarters created their own problems. A detachment commanded by the Marquis de Lafayette embarked upon a campaign in the first half of 1781 that helps to illuminate duties that women performed and the conditions under which they lived. In addition to this information a series of returns for one of the battalions has been included which give some indication of the numbers of women accompanying light troops during a highly mobile campaign.

In February 1781 British forces in Virginia were wreaking havoc with no effective Continental troops present in that state to oppose them. In consequence of this dilemma General Washington resolved to send to the south a detachment of light troops under Lafayette "to act against the corps of the enemy [under British General Benedict Arnold] now in Virginia." The detachment was composed of various standing and provisional light infantry companies from the New Jersey, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Massachusetts Lines, as well as Hazen's Canadian Regiment.<sup>14</sup> On February 19th Lafayette wrote that

... the troops will begin marching on the twentieth for Morristown ... the detachment will leave tomorrow. It is composed of three battalions of 400 men under Colonels Vose, Gimat, and Barber ... Our destination is a deep secret, and everyone believes we are going to Staten Island or Bergen Neck ...<sup>15</sup>

The officers and men in the detachment thought that, as Colonel Elias Dayton was informed, "The service will be but a temporary one." It was due to this desire to keep "Our destination ... a deep secret" that the troops traveled in light order relying on the procurement of supplies in the various localities through which they would march. Ensign Benjamin Gilbert of Massachusetts wrote that he "was ordered to march ... as on a Tempory Expedition, we weir ordered to take only our light Baggage. According[ly] we only took a Shift of Shirts and hose not in the least suspecting that we should be absent from our Regiment more than six Days ...", while Lafayette stated: "It is amusing to see us traveling. We haven't a sou, a horse, a cart, or a wisp of hay ..."<sup>16</sup>

Stated practice in the Continental Army through most of the war was that any women attached to the various regiments were to travel with the troops (or, at least according to general orders, with the baggage of the army) when on active campaign. However, when a detachment was formed for a short-term expedition or mission these women were often left behind at their current post or at some other designated location. Earlier in the war, on 1 August 1780, when Washington's Army was preparing to move against the British in New York City, it was ordered that the division and brigade commanders were<sup>17</sup>

to exert themselves to get in readiness as fast as possible ... Convalescents and such men as are otherwise absolutely unfit to march yet capable of doing duty in a fixed post are to be left at Verplanks and Stoney points ... All the Women and Children of the Army are also to be left at these Posts for a few days where the commanding officers will see that they are furnished with rations as usual.<sup>18</sup>

A year later when a portion of the army was readying itself for the southward march to Yorktown it was desired that

as the Detachment under ... Major General Lincoln are to consider themselves as Light-troops who are always supposed to be fit for action and free from every incumbrance [the Commander in Chief] cannot help advising them to take the present opportunity of depositing at West Point such of their Women as are not able to undergo the fatigue of frequent marches and also every article of Baggage which they can in any wise dispence with ...<sup>19</sup>

It was with the false belief that their absence from the main army would be but a short one that the troops under Lafayette marched in late winter of 1781. When it was realized later that the detachment was to remain in the south for a long period, some of the women who were left behind apparently decided to join their men. This is evidenced by fresh references as to the presence of women with the troops in the spring and early summer of 1781.

After the New Jersey companies joined the New England troops on 26 February the entire detachment made its way south to Maryland. There it was learned that the French fleet (with which they were to cooperate in the blockade and capture of the British troops under Arnold) had been defeated and the original purpose of their expedition was no longer possible. Rather than turning back as his original orders stated, Lafayette was ordered to "turn your detachment to the southward" to reinforce Nathanael Greene's forces in North Carolina.<sup>20</sup> The circumstances and misapprehensions of the troops, as well as the morale problems in the detachment, were described by Lafayette on April 17th:

When this Detachement Was ordered out Every Individual in it thought they were Going on a tour of duty of two or three days and Provided Accordingly ... Thus Circumstanced our officers Had No Monney, No Baggage of Any Sort, No Summer Cloathes and Hardly a Shirt to Shift. To these Common Miseries the Soldiers Added their Shocking Naked[ness] a want of Shoes &c.&c ... [After learning of the defeat of the French fleet] Every thing However Went on Very Well, and the troops Being Ready to March [north] from Elk, Reconforted themselves with the Pleasant Prospects of Returning towards Home, Seeing their Wives *all of whom Had Remained*, [author's emphasis] and Getting Large Sums of Monney which You know the New England States Have Sent to their troops. When My Countermanding the Order was ... Imagined to Relate to a Retrograde March to the Southward. The officers did not like it More than the Men, and the Men Whose discipline does not Give them the Idea of Complaining Began to Desert in Great Numbers ... The New England troops Have taken An idea that Southern Climates Are Very Unwholesome and that of Carolina Mortal to them.<sup>21</sup>

Following an address to the troops (in which Lafayette probably promised them a supply of clothing and perhaps also the possibility of some women joining the detachment), the execution of

one deserter and the dismissal of another "Soldier who Behaved A miss," the detachment left Baltimore on the 19th of April 1781. Travelling in light order once more, the troops reached Richmond on the 29th and remained in the area until late in May. There, after learning that the British forces of Cornwallis and General William Philips had been united at Petersburg, Virginia, Lafayette received orders from Greene "to halt and take command of all the troops in Virginia, and defend the State." His forces for the purpose consisted of his own light infantry, any Virginia militia that was available, and General Anthony Wayne's detachment of Pennsylvania Continentals which would not join him until 10 June 1781.<sup>22</sup>

The light battalion commanded by Colonel Joseph Vose on this expedition was comprised entirely of companies from Massachusetts Line Regiments. From 22 February until 9 May 1781 entries for rations in Vose's Battalion specified only the numbers of officers and enlisted men in the regiment. On 10 May, after Lafayette's troops reached Richmond, a new column was added to the returns that denoted the number of women. At first only one woman was listed, she being attached to Captain White's Company [probably Haffield White, 5th Massachusetts Regiment]. The initial return for May, was as follows:<sup>23</sup>

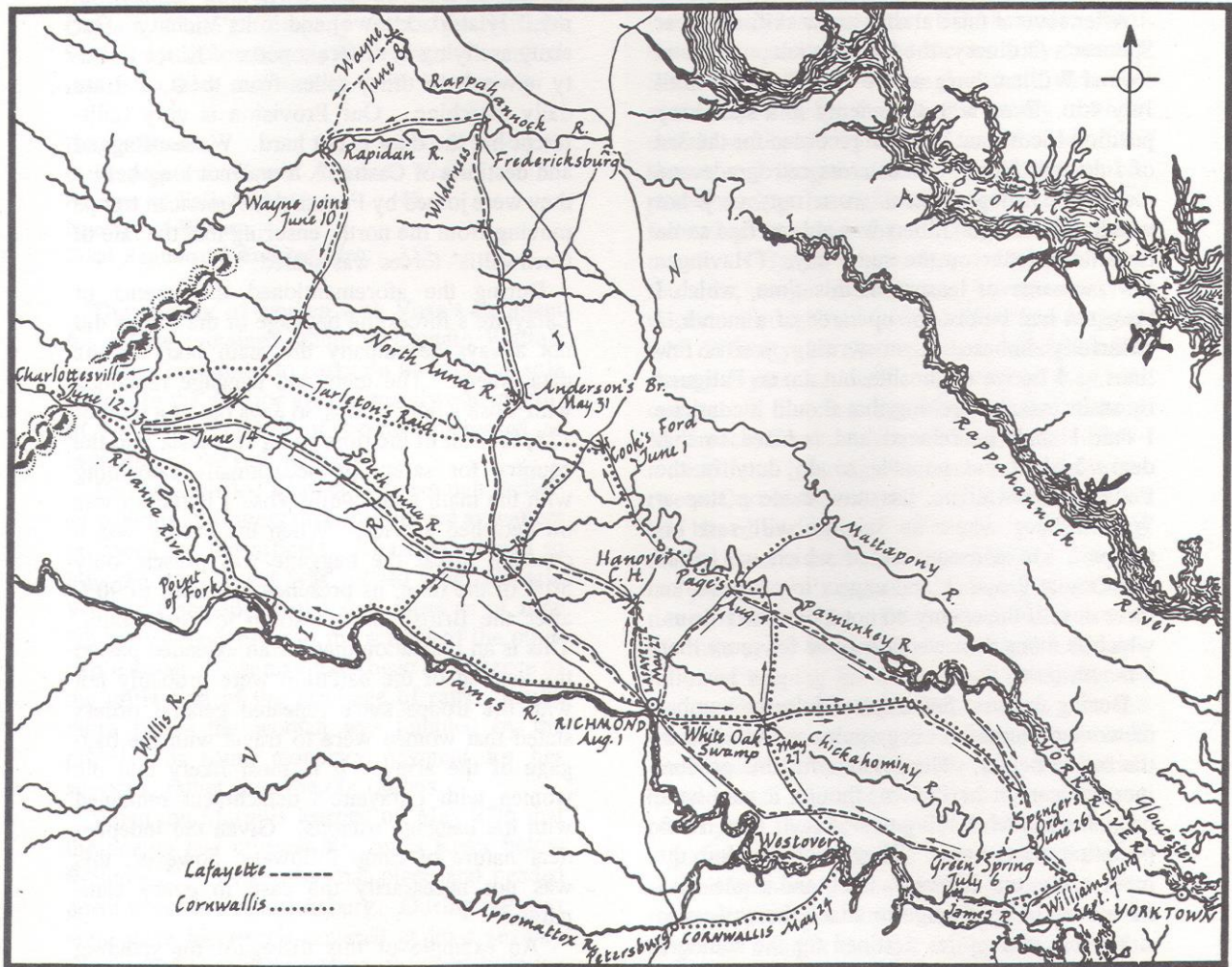
Date of Return: 10 May to 12 May 1781  
 Companies With Women Attached: White's  
     Number of Enlisted Men: 46  
     Number of Women: 1  
 Total Regimental Enlisted Men: 355

The number of women with Vose's regiment for a time remained stable as Captain White's company continued to carry on its rolls the sole female in the unit for approximately one month. In June the number of women increased as follows:

<u>Date of Return</u>	<u>Companies With Women Attached</u>	<u>Number of Enlisted Men</u>	<u>Number of Women</u>	<u>Total Regimental Strength (Enlisted)</u>
13 June	Bradford's	51	1	341
to	Webb's	48	1	1 woman for 113 men
15 June	Staff Mess	2	1	
		(plus 2 officers in staff mess)		
29 June	Bradford's	46	1	314
to	Webb's	45	1	1 woman for 104 men
30 June	Staff Mess	2	1	
		(plus 1 officer in staff mess)		

The two enlisted men included with the staff mess probably served as waiters or cooks for the officers, while the single woman would have performed the duties of cook or laundress. The first woman to join the detachment was moved from Captain White's Company to the staff mess as of June 7th, a few days prior to the arrival of the other two women. This may have been an instance of the utilization of the privilege of rank, though more likely the woman was tempted by the promise of some monetary payment for her services, rather than merely rations.





**Area of operations for the armies of Lafayette and Cornwallis in late spring, summer, and autumn of 1781. Henry P. Johnston, *The Yorktown Campaign and the Surrender of Cornwallis 1781* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1881; reprinted by Eastern National Park & Monument Association, 1975), 57.**

When the Marquis learned on 27 May that the enemy had crossed the James River below Richmond he evacuated that place and headed north towards Fredericksburg. During the next eight days his troops covered at least seventy miles. This retreat away from the British, in the direction of reinforcements from the north, was merely the beginning of a period of almost incessant marching which was to last a month.<sup>24</sup>

Following the junction with Wayne's Pennsylvanians on 10 June Lafayette's force moved immediately towards the British under Lord Cornwallis and encamped the next day near the South Anna River. Here Lafayette chose to avoid exposing his flank to the enemy on their march southward by using "an old road, little known and long unused." This road was repaired during the night of the 11th and on the following morning the troops resumed their march.<sup>25</sup>



Hardly more than a foot-path they found it, rough and narrow, overgrown with thickets, through which the artillery was dragged with difficulty; but they were concealed from the enemy's patrols, and ... at evening they encamped in 'an impregnable position' behind Mechunck Creek, thirteen miles east of Charlottesville ... [placing] themselves directly between Cornwallis and the magazines which he had hoped to destroy. [Just prior to or during this arduous march the two additional females had joined Vose's regiment, bringing the total to three.]<sup>26</sup>



**A female follower loaded for the march.  
(Sara Elizabeth)**

On the 15th of June Cornwallis turned his little army towards the east and Lafayette followed keeping his men almost constantly on the move until the end of the month. On the whole conditions during the subsequent marches were quite difficult. On the day the British headed south Lieutenant William Feltman wrote: "A great scarcity of water, and a very fatiguing march ...", while the heat, sometimes described by the soldiers as being "excessive", was repeatedly referred to. During this period it might be thought that women who followed the troops during the past month may have regretted their decision. This does not, however, take into account the sturdy constitutions and single-mindedness of women who probably had just traveled 300 miles or more of their own volition.<sup>27</sup>

After several false alarms and a skirmish near Spencer's Ordinary, the British took post in and around Williamsburg where they remained until July 4th. Even with the enemy in a stationary position Lieutenant Feltman recorded for 3 July that "[our] Manoeuvres retrograde and many; the troops almost worn out; very hot weather."<sup>28</sup> Ensign Gilbert was able to find some time for a letter on the same day.

Having a few moments of leasure at this time, which I have not had before for upwards of a month, I chearfully imbrace it in writing you a few lines ... I enjoie my health, but am so Fatigued by an insessant marching that should it continue I fear I shall be relaxed and reduced to that degre I shall not be able to do duty in the Field ... Cornwallis ... has now made a stop at Williamsburg wheir he sais he will rest his troops ... In consequence of which we halted this Day at 9 oclock and expect to tarry two or three days if the enemy do not move towards us, which is more than we have done for more than a month past.<sup>29</sup>

During the first few days of July the number of women increased once again. The reasons for this gradual increase in the numbers of women with Vose's Battalion cannot be known, though it may have been due to their having to find their own transportation southward. They probably left the main army on different dates and some may have been lucky enough to attach themselves to shipments of supplies destined for the southern forces.

<u>Date of Return</u>	<u>Companies With Women Attached</u>	<u>Number of Enlisted Men</u>	<u>Number of Women</u>	<u>Total Regimental Strength (Enlisted)</u>
1 July	Bradford's	32	1	343
to	Claye's	49	1	1 woman for 86 men
3 July	Webb's	48	1	
	Staff Mess	2	1	
(plus 2 officers in staff mess)				

Cornwallis left his post at Williamsburg on 4 July and moved to Jamestown. Following a brief but severe action near that place on the 6th, known as the Battle of Green Spring, the British moved on to Portsmouth, Virginia, where they remained until the beginning of August. On 2 August 1781 they were disembarked from on board ship to take up their new post at Yorktown. Sometime during that month Benjamin Gilbert, an ensign with Lafayette's light troops, wrote that "... the Enemy ... ly at York[town] and in its Vicinity. Our army are lying in different parts of Kings County upwards of thirty miles from them, and are daily marching. Our Provision is very Indifferent but the duty is not



hard. We are Ragged and destitute of Cash..." It was not long before they were joined by French and American troops moving from the north, ensuring that the fate of Cornwallis' forces was sealed.<sup>30</sup>

During the aforementioned movements of Lafayette's forces the baggage of the troops did not always accompany the main body of the detachment. The tents and baggage remained with Vose's light troops 84 days out of a total of 128, the rest of the time being sent back into the country for safety or occasionally remaining with the main body while Vose's Battalion was on detached service. Between 6 May and 7 July when the enemy was a constant threat the baggage was present only 49 percent of the time; its presence increased to 83 percent when the British moved south to Portsmouth after July 7th. This is an indication that for an extended period the women of the battalion were probably not with the troops since repeated general orders stated that women were to travel with the baggage of the army. It is most likely that the women with Lafayette's detachment remained with the baggage wagons, though, given the independent nature of female followers, this was not necessarily the case in each and every campaign.<sup>31</sup>

An example of this disregard for standing orders was given by those women who were present at the Battle of Brandywine four years earlier. One account describes a woman from an unknown regiment trying to cook while under fire during the battle while another describes the women of the 6th Pennsylvania Regiment carrying water for the troops. The day before the action a directive was given that "No baggage is to be kept [with the army] ... that can be dispensed with ..." The inclusion of women with this unnecessary baggage is inferred by the General Order for 10 July 1777 that all "Women [were] ... to march with the baggage." Additionally General Orders for September 13<sup>th</sup>, 1777 attempted to rein in any recalcitrant followers by ordering that "No woman under any pretence whatsoever to go with the army, but to follow the baggage." This last order indicates that the disobedience of the female followers was an ongoing problem. Other women known to have marched among the troops or been present on the field of battle, were Mrs. Grier and Mrs. Warner who marched with Arnold's troops to Quebec in 1775, Margaret Corbin at Fort Washington in 1776, Anna Maria Lane who was wounded at the Battle of Germantown and Mary Hays at the battle of Monmouth in 1778.<sup>32</sup>

Any shelter used by the women with Lafayette, whether accompanying the baggage train or marching with the troops, must have resembled that which was used by the men. On 5 May a Massachusetts officer wrote that "... After a very fatiguing march we have arrived at this place and are Quartered in a piece of pine woods, nothing better than the topmost boughs [i.e. boughs], to cover us from the inclemency of season", the tents having been left in Baltimore. A month later one of Wayne's officers wrote that "This day built a fine brush Hutt ..." Such temporary shelters, known by a number of names, were used intermittently during this campaign and throughout the rest of the war. On 9 June, after Wayne's Pennsylvanians had joined with Lafayette all the tents of the light troops were left behind; Wayne's detachment likewise divested themselves of their tents and baggage five days later. It was not until the end of June that the tents and baggage returned, though tents remained in short supply and there continued to be references to both tents, brush huts, booths, and "bowries" being used at the same time. The foregoing information takes for granted that women were allowed tents for their own use; it is possible that they usually, if not always, had to make use of the previously mentioned makeshift shelters.<sup>33</sup>



**An elongated brush bower (lean-to), used for sleeping as well as shade. Brush structures were also flat-topped, conical, or A-frame in form. (Capt. Jonathan Phillips' company, 2d New Jersey Regiment, 2013 Monmouth battle event.)**



The women following Vose's Battalion, as well as those with Wayne's troops and the others who had undoubtedly joined the light corps were, as previously stated, supposed to march with the baggage wagons. In 1777 it was stipulated that "women are expressly forbid any longer, under any licence at all, to ride in the waggons" but the most recent orders had been amended, directing the officer commanding the baggage escort "to allow no women to ride in the waggons unless their peculiar circumstances require it." Sarah Osborn, the wife of a commissary sergeant who in the company of three other females traveled with the baggage of Washington's Army as it marched to Yorktown in the late summer of 1781, was one of the lucky ones. She was allowed the use of a horse for at least part of the trip southward, though at other times she walked or rode in a wagon. It is extremely doubtful that many female followers were afforded the use of a horse. If the women with the troops elected (and were permitted) to stay with the soldiers, they would have had to rely primarily on their own two feet.<sup>34</sup>

As Sarah Osborn related, the duties of the women were "washing, mending, and cooking for the soldiers" as well as being employed carrying "in beef, and bread, and coffee ... to the soldiers in the entrenchment[s]" at Yorktown. These tasks may also have been required of those women who followed the soldiers serving with Lafayette, though throughout the war the men usually cooked and washed for themselves. However, the mobile nature of the campaign, in conjunction with their remaining with the oft-absent baggage, would have rendered their jobs more difficult than the static conditions of a siege. When present with the troops their method of working may at times have been similar to that used by the Jersey troops during a period of extremely active campaigning in 1778. While harassing the British Army in their march across New Jersey, Major Richard Howell related that "Provisions is extreamly difficult to procure as the Enemy have swept all before them, but my Method is [to] Leave men behind to Cook & bring on [to] the rendezvous where we meet in the Evening." In this way the women, like the male cooks, could have worked in a place of comparative safety while the troops would have had a secure and reliable base of operations from which to procure their cooked rations. One point of note concerning the probability of these women also washing clothes for the common soldiers to earn their keep is that, beginning in June, the ratio of women to men is comparable to that of the women of the New York brigade left at Tioga in 1779 to perform the same task.<sup>35</sup>

The attachment of these women to the Massachusetts troops may have been due to several reasons and accomplished by any one of a number of methods. One possible (perhaps even probable) reason why they had joined may have been due to the instigation of Lafayette himself. In his previously quoted letter of 17 April he noted the general discontent of the troops. The Marquis may have attempted to mollify the men's tempers by promising that some of those women who had been left behind with the main army could join the southern detachment if they wished. It is also possible that all or some of these women might have been found locally and joined the battalion to wash and cook for the enlisted men or, perhaps more likely, the officers. Women who had no personal attachments among the men could not have joined with any thoughts other than that of being provided with a daily subsistence since the prospect of monetary rewards must have been slim indeed.

If the females who joined Vose's Battalion while on campaign did indeed come from the main army they may have traveled southward with one or several trains of baggage for the troops. On 11 April General Washington had written to the Marquis, "... If the officers will write back to their Friends here for any additional Baggage of which they may stand in need, it shall be forwarded

under careful conductors", thus providing one way for someone who wished to do so to make her way south. On 6 May a detachment escorting "tents & baggage left at Elk ridge" (located south of Baltimore) joined the troops near Richmond. The woman who was listed in the return as of May 10th may have arrived with this baggage and not attached to a specific company and allowed rations until the 10th. Two women who later joined Vose's Battalion on 13 June could have marched with the baggage of Wayne's detachment, which arrived on 10 June or shortly thereafter, while the woman who arrived on July 1st may have traveled with the baggage that joined the troops on 30 June. Two occurrences just prior to the return of additional women on 10 May and 13 June may have been connected to their arrival. Five days before the first return and three days before the second, shipments of clothing from Baltimore joined Lafayette's detachment, a coincidence which may or may not be of significance. No matter who these women were and how they made their way to Lafayette's forces, the returns for Vose's Battalion seem to reinforce the contention that women were an inherent part of the Continental Army and, when absent, were sent for or actively sought after in order to ease the daily lives of the officers and their men. These laborers did their part even though, as has been seen, the living conditions for women on campaign were quite rigorous and not for the fainthearted or those with a less than vigorous constitution.<sup>36</sup>

Another insight into the status of women with the army can be found in several accounts which recorded the march of Wayne's Pennsylvanians south to join Lafayette. The incident in question occurred during their crossing of the Potomac on 31 May 1781. Several officers, in their description of an accident on the river seem to indicate their regard, or lack thereof, for women accompanying the troops. Ensign Ebenezer Denny wrote:

... here we were detained for want of craft - boats few and in bad condition. The artillery passed over first ... The second flat-boat had left the shore about forty yards, when the whole sunk. Several women were on board; but as hundreds of men were on the bank, relief soon reached them; none were lost - got all over.<sup>37</sup>

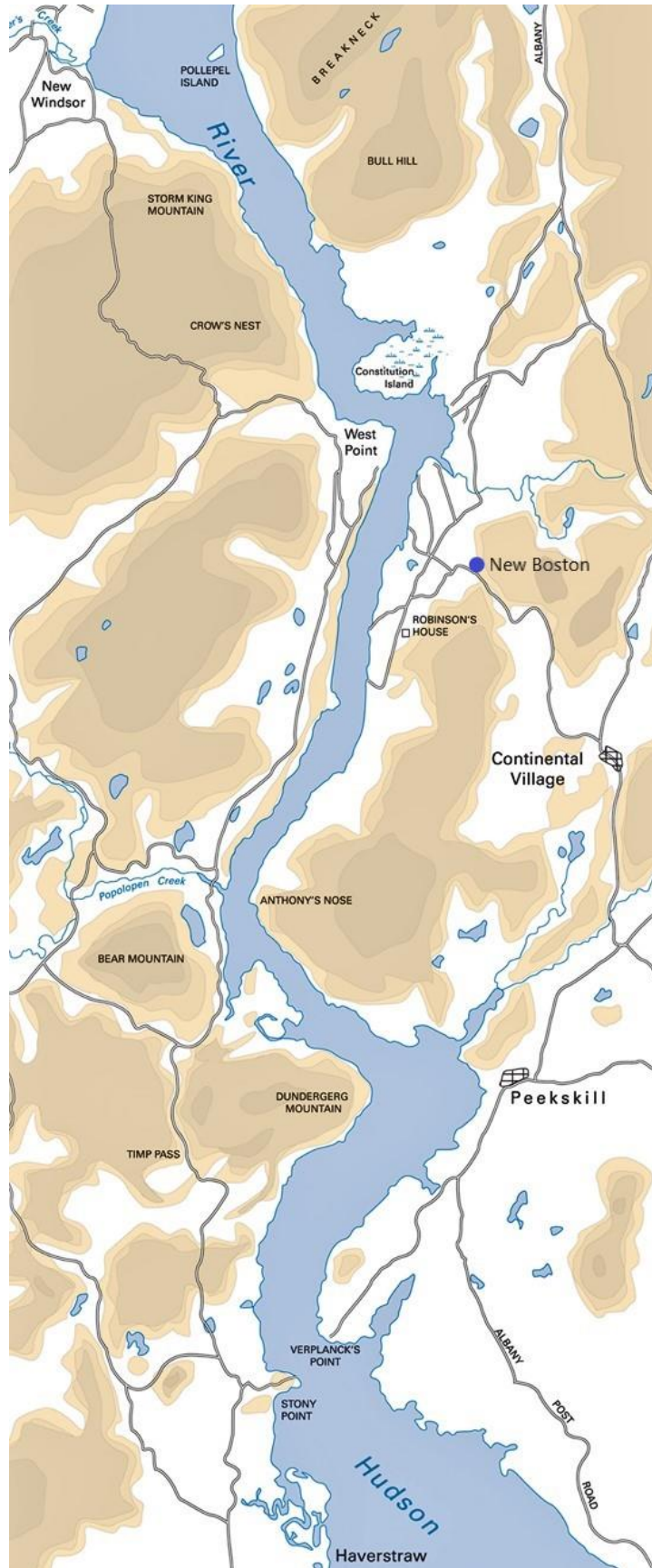
Four other journals describe what can only be the same incident with the difference that the women are mentioned only in Denny's account. Captain John Davis's account is more or less typical of the other narratives: "... reach'd Powtomack ... which in crossing in Squows [scows], one unfortunately sunk loaded with (artilry, & Q[uar]ter]. M[aster]. Stores &) men, in which one Sergeant and three men were drowned ..." Although evidently not thought to be worth particular mention by Captains Davis, McDowell, McClellan and Feltman (perhaps they equated the women with the "Stores"), it is at least heartening to know that although four soldiers were lost the spectators made a successful effort and rescued all of the women.<sup>38</sup>

**Note: For contextual information on the 1781 Virginia campaign see Appendix B.**





**“A Soldier’s Wife Begging” (1764) by Daniel Chodowiecki**



**(Previous page) The Hudson Highlands 1780, from Newburgh to Stony and Verplanck's Points, site of the King's Ferry river crossing. (United States Military Academy Department of History)**

1781

"The women with the army who draw provisions"

During the early summer of 1781 while Lafayette's detachment was shadowing the British in Virginia Washington's main army remained encamped in and around the state of New York. In compliance with the commander in chief's orders of June 1781 a "Return of Women that draw provisions in several Brigades and Corps of the Army. New Windsor" was compiled. The following numbers are given:<sup>39</sup>

<u>Brigade</u>	<u>Number of Women</u>
1st Massachusetts Brigade (4 regiments)	31
2nd Massachusetts Brigade (3 regiments)	20
3rd Massachusetts Brigade (3 regiments)	28
Stark's New Hampshire Brigade (3 regiments)	13
Artillery (13 companies)	38
Commander in Chief's Guard	5 [69 enlisted men]
Corps of Sappers and Miners	<u>2</u>
Total	137

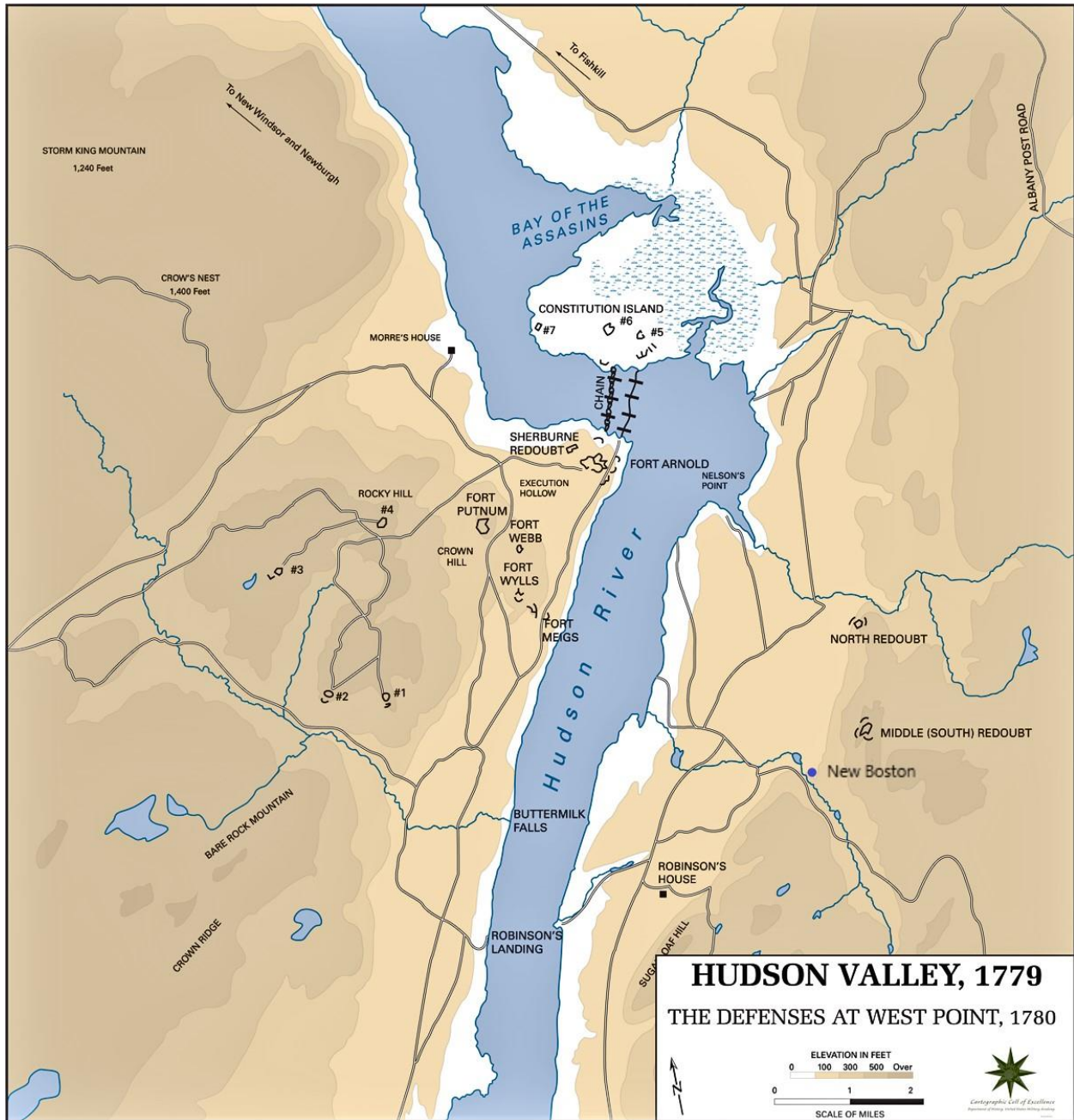
(No return was received from the Connecticut Line)

In the above list the 3rd Massachusetts Brigade is noted as consisting of three regiments, while the May 1781 return for the army lists four, the 1st, 5th and 7th Massachusetts Regiments, and the 1st New York. At the time of the June provision return the 1st New York Regiment was not present with the 3rd Brigade, having left West Point sometime during the first five days of June. Additionally all those men listed on the general return as sick, on furlough and on command (detached duty) have been included in the unit strengths.<sup>40</sup>

	<u>Non Commissioned Officers and Privates</u>
1st Massachusetts Brigade	1104 in four regiments (1 woman for every 36 men)
2nd Massachusetts Brigade	813 in three regiments (1 woman for every 41 men)
3rd Massachusetts Brigade	811 in three regiments (1 woman for every 29 men)
Stark's New Hampshire Brigade	1134 in three regiments (1 woman for every 87 men)
Artillery	429 (1 woman for every 11 men)
Commander in Chief's Guard	69 (1 woman for every 14 men)
Corps of Sappers and Miners	50 (1 woman for every 25 men)



The ratio of women to men for the entire force of 4,410 was one to thirty-two, or slightly more than 3 percent. This percentage, though higher, is not too far removed from the 1777 ration issue and the 1780 estimate.



West Point, New York and surrounding area, 1780. The New Boston huts were not built until December 1781. (Courtesy of the United States Military Academy Department of History)

1782  
"Rations ... Without Whiskey"  
Colonel Henry Jackson's Regimental Provision Returns

During 1782 the main tasks of Washington's army were to retain its readiness for military action and observe the activities of the British forces in the city of New York. It was a period of watching the enemy and waiting for the outcome of the peace negotiations in Paris which were not to bear fruit until the next year. As a result of this the various regiments of the main army spent most of their time either in the static garrison at West Point and its dependencies, at short term garrisons in the posts along the Hudson or in taking their turn on the front lines facing Manhattan Island. One of those regiments which was kept more or less active during the year was Colonel Henry Jackson's 9th Massachusetts Regiment. Jackson's regiment, or detachments thereof, spent much of the summer garrisoning small advanced posts or doing duty as light infantry.<sup>41</sup>

From 21 May to 8 September 1782 a series of thirty provision returns were made for Jackson's Regiment denoting the number of men, women and children for which rations were allowed. One of the salient features of these returns is that they give a view of the numbers of women attached to a single regiment in a relatively stable environment over a period of approximately three and a half months. These documents also give us some other interesting information concerning women with the army, viz.: the inclusion of women to serve with the light infantry company when on detached duty and some idea of the restrictions thereof; the fact that on most of the returns female followers were specifically listed as "Wash Women", an indication that this was their primary duty; and, finally, more evidence that women with the Continental Army (at least during this period of the war) were given one ration per day and their children a half ration. (Of particular note on the returns was the stipulation that the provisions allotted to the women and children were to be "Rations... Without Whiskey.")<sup>42</sup>

First Provision Return for Jackson's 9<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Regiment

Period Covered	21 to 24 May 1782
N.C.O.'s Rank & File Present	321
Number of Women	12
Number of Children	5
N.C.O.'s Rank & File Absent	7
Total Rank & File	388
Ratio	1 woman to 32 men

(The main body of the regiment was located at the "Huts New Boston" until 5 July 1782)

**(Note: Historian Bob McDonald notes, "The New Boston site is located along the road that runs northwest from Continental Village, ending just north of the Robinson House. Starting from the latter, it is located about one-third of the way to the Albany Post Road, perhaps just past the "hump" in the cross road, known as the Old West Point Road." The huts at New Boston were built beginning in December 1781. )**

Using the ration returns for the summer of 1782 it is possible to follow the fluctuation in the number of women with Jackson's Regiment. From 21 May 21 to 8 June, during the time when the regiment was quartered in the "Huts [at] New Boston", there were twelve women and five children receiving rations. These numbers were to remain more or less stable through the entire series of returns. On the 9th of June the number of women dropped to eleven. Such a reduction has several

alternate explanations. It is possible that, at various times, the women missing from the returns may have been serving temporarily as nurses in hospital or could have been there as patients themselves. Any women, as well as any soldiers, in hospital, would have been given their rations by the institution at which they were working or convalescing. Additionally, some women may have been absent at various times with the men of the regiment who were "on command" (i.e., detached service). This last explanation seems to be borne out by the provision returns themselves during those instances when the light infantry and other detachments were sent on duties away from the main body of the regiment.<sup>43</sup>

The following series of returns show the first period during which the light infantry company was absent from the regiment and the variation in the numbers of female followers:

Returns for Jackson's Regiment While the Light Infantry was Detached "At the lines"  
June to July 1782

<u>Period Covered</u>	<u>N.C.O.'s &amp; Rank &amp; File Present</u>	<u>Number of Women</u>	<u>Number of Children</u>	<u>N.C.O.'s &amp; Rank &amp; File Absent</u>	<u>Total N.C.O.'s &amp; Rank &amp; File</u>	<u>Ratio</u>
25-28 June	380	11	5	29	409	1 woman to 37 men

The returns from 29 June to 12 July show 47 rank and file of the light company "At the lines."

29-30 June (1 woman absent, probably with the light company)	325	10	5	25		
1 July to 4 July (Light company strength included in absentees)	333	10	5	82	415	1 woman to 38 men
5 July to 8 July (Light company strength included in absentees)	332	11	6	86	418	1 woman to 38 men
9 July to 12 July (Light company strength included in absentees)	347	(17 total) (Probably includes 11 women)		78	425	1 woman to 39 men

The main body of the regiment was encamped at Nelson's Point from 12 July to 19 July 1782)

13 July to 16 July (The light company has returned to the regiment)	399	(18 total) (Probably includes either 12 or 13 women)		24	423	1 woman to 32 men
17 July to 20 July	376	13	6	21	397	1 woman to 30 men
21 July to 24 July	403	12	6	24	427	1 woman to 35 men





**(Above) Woman holding a camp kettle while two soldiers with spoons eat from it, east side of the Hudson River, directly across from West Point. (Painted in August 1782.) Detail from Pierre Charles L'Enfant's painting of West Point and dependencies. Penciled on back, "Encampment of the Revolutionary Army on the Hudson River" (Library of Congress description, "Panoramic view of West Point, New York showing American encampments on the Hudson River"), watercolor, 142.7 x 27.7 cm (sheet), Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540. (Below) Soldier group, detail from the same L'Enfant painting.**



Throughout the summer there was always a varying number of men absent on detached duty. For approximately one third of the period covered by the returns, 33 days out of a total of 103, the light infantry company was doing duty away from the regiment. The light company's first absence covered fourteen days in late June and early July and was spent manning the front lines. The orders for the army of 4 June 1782 stated that "The detachment on the Lines is to be relieved by entire

Companies of Light Infantry in rotation ..."<sup>44</sup> (Previous to this order the detachments for the lines were composed of men drafted from all the companies of the regiment.) During this first period of detachment for the light troops there was one woman also absent who probably accompanied the forty-seven soldiers of the company. Her absence from the provision return, along with that of the light company, may be explained by the June 4th orders which made the following allowances for the rationing of absent troops:

all Guards and Detachments are to draw Provisions with their Regiments sufficient to serve them during their Tour if possible; when Provisions will not keep the length of time they are detached for, or when there is a probability of their being victualed at any other Post ... they are to carry back to their regiments Certificates shewing for what time they have been victualed during their absence.<sup>45</sup>

Thus any women and children present with these detachments would have been included in this alternate source of provisions.

Almost immediately after the light troops of the 9th Massachusetts Regiment returned the entire unit was sent for a short term to garrison several important posts along the Hudson River. Colonel Jackson wrote that

by General Orders of the 23d July my Regiment was Ordered to march on the 24th to relieve the Posts of Verplanks, Stony points & Dobbs Ferry - three Companies under the command of Major Trescott was stationed at Verplanks and Stony point / with the six remaining Companies I took Post at Dobb's Ferry ...<sup>46</sup>

The first two places guarded the river crossing at King's Ferry while the latter post, in the words of the commander in chief, "is now the only avenue of intercourse with the Enemy, by Flags ...". Four women had accompanied the six companies stationed at Dobb's Ferry while the returns seem to indicate that four women had marched with the other three companies to the posts covering King's Ferry. The other four women must have remained behind in the camp at Nelson's Point. The 9th Massachusetts was posted in these garrisons until "[August] 10th in the morning was Relieved by the first Connecticut Regiment."<sup>47</sup>

Duty at Dobb's Ferry, Stony and Verplank's Points  
24 July to 10 August 1782

<u>Period</u>	<u>N.C.O.'s</u> <u>Rank &amp; File</u>	<u>Number</u> <u>of</u>	<u>Number</u> <u>of</u>	<u>N.C.O.'s</u> <u>Rank &amp; File</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>N.C.O.'s</u>	
<u>Covered</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Rank &amp; File</u>	<u>Ratio</u>
25 July to 26 July	410	12	6	not returned		1 woman to 34 men

(The following return is for "a part of the 9th Massa. Regiment ... at Dobbs Ferry for five Days." The remainder of the regiment was at Verplank's and Stony Points.)

24 July to 31 July	303	(5 total, probably includes 4 women)				1 woman to 76 men
--------------------	-----	--------------------------------------	--	--	--	-------------------

24 July to 10 August 1782 (continued)

<u>Period Covered</u>	<u>N.C.O.'s Rank &amp; File Present</u>	<u>Number of Women</u>	<u>Number of Children</u>	<u>N.C.O.'s Rank &amp; File Absent</u>	<u>Total N.C.O.'s Rank &amp; File</u>	<u>Ratio</u>
1 August to 4 August (at Dobb's Ferry)	293	4	2	not returned		1 woman to 73 men
August 5 to 8 August (at Dobb's Ferry)	293	4	2			1 woman to 73 men
9 August to 10 August (at Dobb's Ferry)	293	4	2			1 woman to 73 men
11 August (At King's Ferry where the regiment was reunited.)	415	8	2			1 woman to 51 men
12 August to 16 August	407	12	5			1 woman to 34 men
17 August to 20 August	415	12	5			1 woman to 34 men

(The regiment was encamped at Nelson's Point from 18 August to 31 August 1782)

On the 21st of August the light companies of the various regiments were organized into combined battalions and formed a "Corps of Light infantry." This corps was ordered "to encamp forthwith on the high ground in front of Peekskill ... The duty on the Lines is to be done by them as usual." When the light troops of the 9th Massachusetts were detached on that date two women most probably went with them to their advanced post, since the departure of the light troops coincided with a reduction in the number of females from twelve to ten. This is in contrast with the light company's detached service in early July when only one woman probably had accompanied a similar number of men. At the end of the month the Light corps was ordered "to advance in front of the army, and take the best ground at or near the fork of the roads leading to this place and peekskill, they will keep out proper picquets and small scouts to patrol as far as Croton independent of the battalion on the lines." Once again women seem to have been a constant presence with the troops no matter how rigorous the service.<sup>48</sup>



Women With the Light Infantry Company  
21 August to 8 September 1782

<u>Period Covered</u>	<u>N.C.O.'s Rank &amp; File Present</u>	<u>Number of Women</u>	<u>Number of Children</u>	<u>N.C.O.'s Rank &amp; File Absent</u>	<u>Total N.C.O.'s Rank &amp; File</u>	<u>Ratio</u>
21 August to 24 August (The light infantry company was on detached service and its strength not included.)	366	12	5	not returned		1 woman to 30 men
25 August to 28 August (Light company strength included in absentees)	353	10 *	5	87 **	440	1 woman to 37 men
29 August to 31 August (Light company strength included in absentees)	357	10 *	5	87 **	444	1 woman to 37 men
1 September to 4 September (Light company strength included in absentees)	357	10 *	5	89 **	446	1 woman to 37 men
5 September to 8 September (The regiment was with the main army at Verplank's Point from 31 August to 27 September 1782)	348	7	4	92 **	440	1 woman to 50 men

\* Not including the women with the detached light company, for which, see the following table.

\*\* Light company strength included with absentees.

Women With the Detached Light Company

<u>Period Covered</u>	<u>Number of Women</u>	<u>Light Company Strength</u>	<u>Ratio</u>
25 August to 28 August	2	49 **	1 woman to 24 men
29 August to 31 August	2	47	1 woman to 23 men
1 September to 4 September	2	46	1 woman to 23 men

\*\* The light company strengths were taken from the regimental returns for 23 and 31 August, and 6 September 1782. These numbers do not include sergeants or musicians, only the rank and file.



**Rear Guard event, Fort Ticonderoga, July 2016.  
(Eliza West, Heidi Shoaf, and Carrie Fellows)**

Shortly after the formation of the Light Infantry Corps the "moving Army" travelled to a new encampment on the east side of the Hudson River at Verplanck's Point. At seven o'clock on the morning of 31 August 1782 "the two Connecticut, and three Massachusetts Brigades" embarked on board boats and moved down river to their new post. The detailed orders concerning this movement specifically stated that "No women [are] to be allowed into the boats with the troops on any pretence whatsoever." Due to the ease with which these orders could have been enforced it would have been extremely difficult for women to circumvent them. Whether this was an attempt to discourage the women from following the army, or merely to reserve limited space aboard the boats for soldiers is not known. Whatever the purpose of the order it did not deter at least some females from making their way from West Point down to Verplank's Point, a march of approximately

eleven miles (not including the crossing of the Hudson at King's Ferry). Immediately following the movement of the troops down the Hudson there seems to be some discrepancy in the ration returns which begs the following question: How long did it take for the abandoned followers to rejoin the army? If they travelled by foot they would have taken at least two days, especially if the women were encumbered by children. They may also have found some way to manage transport by water or by wagon (army orders do seem to have left open the possibility that women could float downriver on the baggage bateaux), though these modes would have been more haphazard unless arranged by their commanding officer. In either event it is unlikely that the ten women and five children listed on the first full provision return at the new encampment were present with the 9th Regiment as early as the 1st of September. It is possible that these followers were not actually with the regiment but may have been carried on the rolls in anticipation of their rejoining in a few days. This conclusion could be supported by the final return which gives seven women and four children with the troops as of 5 September; either the only followers to have made the march or the first contingent to have arrived. This last return leaves three women and one child unaccounted for, as two women were most likely with the light company.<sup>49</sup>

From the foregoing returns it can be seen that the lives of the female followers of the army and their children were of necessity highly mobile, even when the army operated within a confined geographical area. They also indicate that the number of women and children present with the main body of a regiment could fluctuate to a lesser or greater degree during a short period of time. These followers may have been detached from the regiment according to the needs at the time, possibly to tend the sick or accompany a detachment of soldiers on extra duty. Whether or not this was done at the express order of an officer or was due to the desire of the women to accompany their associated company or mess squad is open to some conjecture. Understandably a common practice of simply shunting these followers from place to place, and task to task, without regard to their families and friends would have invited discipline problems among the troops.

1783

"The proportion of Women which ought to be allowed ..."

To conclude this study of women with the army a return of followers from the final year of the war will now be examined. The "Return of the number of Women and Children in the several regiments and Corps stationed at, and in the vicinity of West Point and New Windsor, that drew Rations under the late Regulation, shewing also the Number of Rations allowed for Women and Children by the present system" is dated 24 January 1783.<sup>50</sup>



<u>Organization</u>	<u>Number of Women</u>	<u>Number of Children</u>	<u>Number of N.C.O.'s and Privates</u>	<u>Ratio</u>
Maryland Detachment	20	3	251	1 woman to every 13 men
1st Jersey Regiment	19	14	426	1 woman to 22 men
2nd Jersey Regiment	20	13	404	1 woman to 31 men
1st York Regiment	52	58	524	1 woman to 10 men
2nd York Regiment	36	39	537	1 woman to 15 men
1st Hampshire Regiment	7	3	431	1 woman to 61 men
2nd Hampshire Regiment	4	3	416	1 woman to 104 men
1st Massachusetts Regt.	17	3	561	1 woman to 33 men
4th Massachusetts Regt.	15	8	553	1 woman to 37 men
7th Massachusetts Regt.	14	10	555	1 woman to 40 men
2nd Massachusetts Regt.	16	17	557	1 woman to 35 men
8th Massachusetts Regt.	11	10	561	1 woman to 56 men
5th Massachusetts Regt.	13	9	561	1 woman to 62 men
3rd Massachusetts Regt.	18	8	560	1 woman to 31 men
6th Massachusetts Regt.	16	11	559	1 woman to 35 men
<u>1st Connecticut Regt.</u>	10	8		
<u>3rd Connecticut Regt.</u>	11	6		
<u>Connecticut Brigade Strength</u>			1196	1 woman to 57 men
2nd Connecticut Regt.	12	8	603	1 woman to 50 men
<u>2nd Artillery Regiment</u>	22	28		
<u>3rd Artillery Regiment</u>	40	28		
<u>Artillery Brigade Strength</u>			787	1 woman to 13 men
Corps of Sappers & Miners	<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>1 woman to 14 men</u>
<u>Totals</u>	405	302	10443	1 woman to 26 men

For the entire contingent of 10,443 troops the ratio was one woman for every twenty-six men, about 4 percent of the total. This increase in the numbers of women and children may be explained by the fact that at this period of the war these regiments were in a relatively stationary situation. When the duties of a regiment were confined to a limited area or, more importantly, a single location, the circumstances were more conducive to the presence of the soldier's families than were the rigors of an active campaign with its constant movements and uncertainties. This seems to be borne out by the large proportion of women in the Artillery Brigade and the Invalid Corps, two organizations that by the nature of their duty performed most of their service in the garrison of various fortifications. The artillery units especially seem to have had a much larger proportion of female followers than the other branches of the army. This is evident when compared with the 1781 return of women for the invalids and artillery. Additionally, a comparison with the 1781 return of women, just a year and a half earlier, indicates an increase in the number of women with the army as the war entered its final year. This addition is in conjunction with an increase of 1,830 men in 1783 for those units present on the returns for both years. Despite the expanded number of followers the ratio dropped from one woman for thirty-three men in 1781 to one for thirty-one in 1783.<sup>51</sup>

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Number of Women in 1781</u>	<u>Unit Strength in 1781</u>	<u>Number of Women in 1783</u>	<u>Unit Strength in 1783</u>
New Hampshire Brigade	13	1134	11	847
1st Massachusetts Brigade	31	1104	46	1669 *
2nd Massachusetts Brigade	20	813	40	1679 *
3rd Massachusetts Brigade	28	811	34	1119 *
Artillery Brigade	38	429	62	787
Corps of Sappers & Miners	<u>2</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>70</u>
<u>Totals</u>	132	4341	198	6171

\* Less the 9th and 10th Massachusetts Regiments which were disbanded as of January 1, 1783 and incorporated into the remaining regiments for that state. Fred Anderson Berg, *Encyclopedia of Continental Army Units - Battalions, Regiments and Independent Corps* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1974), 74.

Another consideration concerning the difference in the numbers of women from unit to unit was the locale from which the individual regiments were recruited. When the army was ordered in 1782 to limit the number of rations to one woman for every fifteen men, Washington himself wrote that the plan was unworkable

as some of those Corps were, and still are, under particular circumstances, for instance the Regiments of York, which, in part, are composed of Long Islanders and others who fled with their families when the enemy obtained possession of those places and have no other means of Subsistence. [He therefore] directed that the whole of the Women and Children then with the Troops, should be allowed to draw as usual. So far as the Artillery Regimt. was under the same circumstances they are entitled to the same indulgence ...<sup>52</sup>

It seems, however, that in general only a few regiments in the army exceeded the proposed limit, thus prohibiting a strict quota of women from being set for the whole.



**""Order out of confusion': Marching to Monmouth Courthouse" special event.  
Monmouth Battlefield State Park, 24-26 June 2016.**

### Conclusion

Information on the numbers of women and children with the Continental Army during the war remains sketchy at best. Some suppositions can be made, however, with the data at hand. Contrary to the estimate of Linda Grant De Pauw that at "some times, in some places, the women's branch of the Continental Army may have been 20% the size of the regular male Continental force in service", the number of adult female followers was in fact a great deal less, closer to 3 percent, or approximately one woman for every thirty men. Even allowing for the possibility of women not returned on the rolls for the reason that they were not allowed rations, De Pauw's hypothetical percentage is insupportable.<sup>53</sup>

It is evident that from the beginning of the war the numbers of women fluctuated greatly from regiment to regiment and, apparently, from company to company within each regiment. In December 1777 the return for the main army at Valley Forge showed one woman for forty-four enlisted men (though it is probable that there were more women with the army during the spring and summer of that year). In January 1783 the return for the main army at New Windsor gave an

average of one woman for every twenty-six enlisted men. During the intervening years the average ratios may have been within the range of one to thirty and one to thirty-five. From the available information it seems that early in the war it would not have been at all remarkable for an individual company to contain no women. This situation had changed by 1783 when the average was two women for each company with the main army.<sup>54</sup>

The information which we do have concerning female followers with the American army is particularly interesting when compared to the numbers attached to the regiments of the Crown forces, especially those of the British troops. In February 1783 Robert Morris referred to "the british Prisoners of War who have Herds of Women with them." This comment is borne out by the returns of British followers throughout the war. In May 1777 the ratio of women with the British forces in New York was about one for every eight men, while the Germans had approximately one woman for every thirty men. Later in the war, during August 1781, the troops in New York and its outposts were shown to have a ratio of one woman to every four and a half British troops, and one to fifteen for the Germans.<sup>55</sup>

Regardless of their numbers, the women who followed the Continental Army during the war were important in a number of ways. Unlike some of their British counterparts most could not pay their own way if they were not on the list of those who drew rations. In their own words they "could earn their Rations, but the Soldier, nay the Officer, for whom they Wash has naught to pay them." They did, however, perform duties such as washing and cooking for those men they were related to or had some association with. Additionally, it seems that as the war progressed these dual duties (most particularly laundering) were increasingly required of them in return for their continued acceptance with the army. Most importantly, besides these practical tasks, they provided some semblance of home life for the men in the army. This seemingly minor service was extremely important considering that the war of the Revolution continued for eight years and the soldiers fought tedium more often than they did the enemy. This was in some part attested to by Washington himself when he wrote "I was obliged to give Provisions to the extra Women in these Regiments, or loose by Desertion, perhaps to the Enemy, some of the oldest and best Soldiers in the Service."<sup>56</sup>

Any clarification of the number of women with the army must influence how we view the social structure of the army and demands that we take their presence into consideration as a constant, though at times unwanted, part of the armed forces. The presence of women and children influenced the logistics of the army, its inner workings and daily concerns. From the point of view of those involved with "living history" this attempt to number the women in the regiments may be used to incorporate a more proper portrayal of them in their modern recreations. Finally, any study of the number of women brings forth other questions that beg to be answered: How were these women treated within their units by regimental and company officers? Were they always allotted tents for shelter when on campaign and huts when in winter quarters? and was it common practice for these dependents to be cared for in the hospitals of the army when the need arose? These and other important questions may never be addressed satisfactorily, but undoubtedly some answers still lie untapped in the journals, letters, order books and other documents of the Revolutionary period.

#### Acknowledgements

**There are a number of people without whom the writing of this work would have been a more difficult task than if I had attempted it on my own. Foremost among these is Dr. Holly Mayer whose encouragement and advice enhanced my meager writing skills and helped to make the text more**



cohesive and understandable. My gratitude also extends to Dr. David Fowler and the David Library of the American Revolution whose assistance has been invaluable and whose collection, thanks to an accident of geography, has been almost at my beck and call.

The following people have also contributed valuable information and advice in the construction of this piece: Henry M. Cooke IV, Bob McDonald, George Stillman, Gilbert Riddle and Don N. Hagist.

Finally I am very grateful to Peter F. Copeland for his interest and permission for the use of his illustrations for this article.



Dunlap's Partisan Corps, Brandywine Picquet Post, Brandywine Creek State Park, Delaware, 2010.



**Hugh Douglas Hamilton, *The cries of Dublin &c: drawn from the life*, William Laffan, ed. (1760; reprinted Dublin: Irish Georgian Society, 2003)**

## Appendices

### ***A. Images, Articles, and Additional Information Related to Sullivan's 1779 Campaign and Fort Sullivan, Tioga.***

#### Women Riding Pack Horses on Sullivan's Expedition, 1779

General orders, 31 May 1779, Easton, Penna.

"The first Jersey regiment will march at six o'clock tomorrow morning, with two days provision, leaving their tents & such other baggage as requires waggons to transport; one company to remain for guard to the baggage left behind, which will follow the regiment in a day or two."

General orders, 2 June 1779, Easton.

"Officers are urged not to carry any baggage from this place which they can possibly spare; and [the commanding officers of regiments are directed to examine particularly the baggage of their soldiers & women and prevent their carrying more than their circumstances absolutely demand.](#) Should even the expedition last longer than is expected, there will be frequent opportunities of sending for, and being supplied with necessaries."

General orders, 8 June 1779, Easton.

"The remainder of the first Jersey regiment to march tomorrow morning at six with all the tents & other baggage of the regiment which will be carried on pack horses."

General orders, 19 June 1779. "Pokono-point."

"Officers commanding corps are requested to see that the men's packs be not placed upon the waggons as they are already so heavily loaded as to impede the advance of the troops."

General orders, 27 July 1779, Wyoming.

"The Comdg. officers of regiments & corps will forthwith draw axes & slings at the rate of two for each company. They are also to furnish their troops with knapsacks, haversacks and canteens complete.

Every article in every department that can possibly be loaded on Pack horses is to be fixed for that purpose and carried in that manner."

General orders, 29 July 1779, Wyoming.

"The Commissary & Qr.Master will attend to the loading of the necessary articles on the boats & pack horses. The Brigadier & field officers will give every necessary direction for having things in perfect readiness for the army to move early on Saturday morning."

General orders, 30 July 1779, Wyoming.

"The army will March at 8 o'Clock tomorrow morning ... The whole of Colo. Proctor's regiment will go in the boats."

After orders, 2 August 1779, "Quilutmiak."

"Comg officers of regiments will please to order all the women belonging to their respective corps, who can ride, immediately to quit the boats & proceed by land, as there will be a sufficiency of pack horses & as the women going on horseback will diminish the number of drivers from the army."

Order Book of Lt. Col. Francis Barber, 26 May 1779 to 6 September 1779, Louise Welles Murray, ed., *Notes from Craft Collection in Tioga Point Museum on the Sullivan Expedition of 1779*, (Athens, Pa., 1929), 45.

---

“The end of the war will be the commencement of our felicity.’: Insights on Two Campaigns, Col. Israel Shreve (1779) and Lt. Col. Francis Barber (1781),” *American Revolution* (Magazine of the American Revolution Association), vol. 1, no. 3 (October 2009), 47-52. <http://revwar75.com/library/rees/pdfs/Shreve.pdf>

“Make use of Pack-Horses as far as may be practicable ...’: Baggage Carried on Horseback during the American War, 1776 to 1781”

Contents

American Campaigns, 1755-1764.

The British Army in 1776.

The 1777 Campaign.

Marching Through New Jersey, 1778.

**Going Against the Iroquois, 1779.**

Continental Army, 1780-1782.

Cornwallis’s Campaigns, 1781.

Addenda: Miscellaneous Pack Saddle Images and Narratives

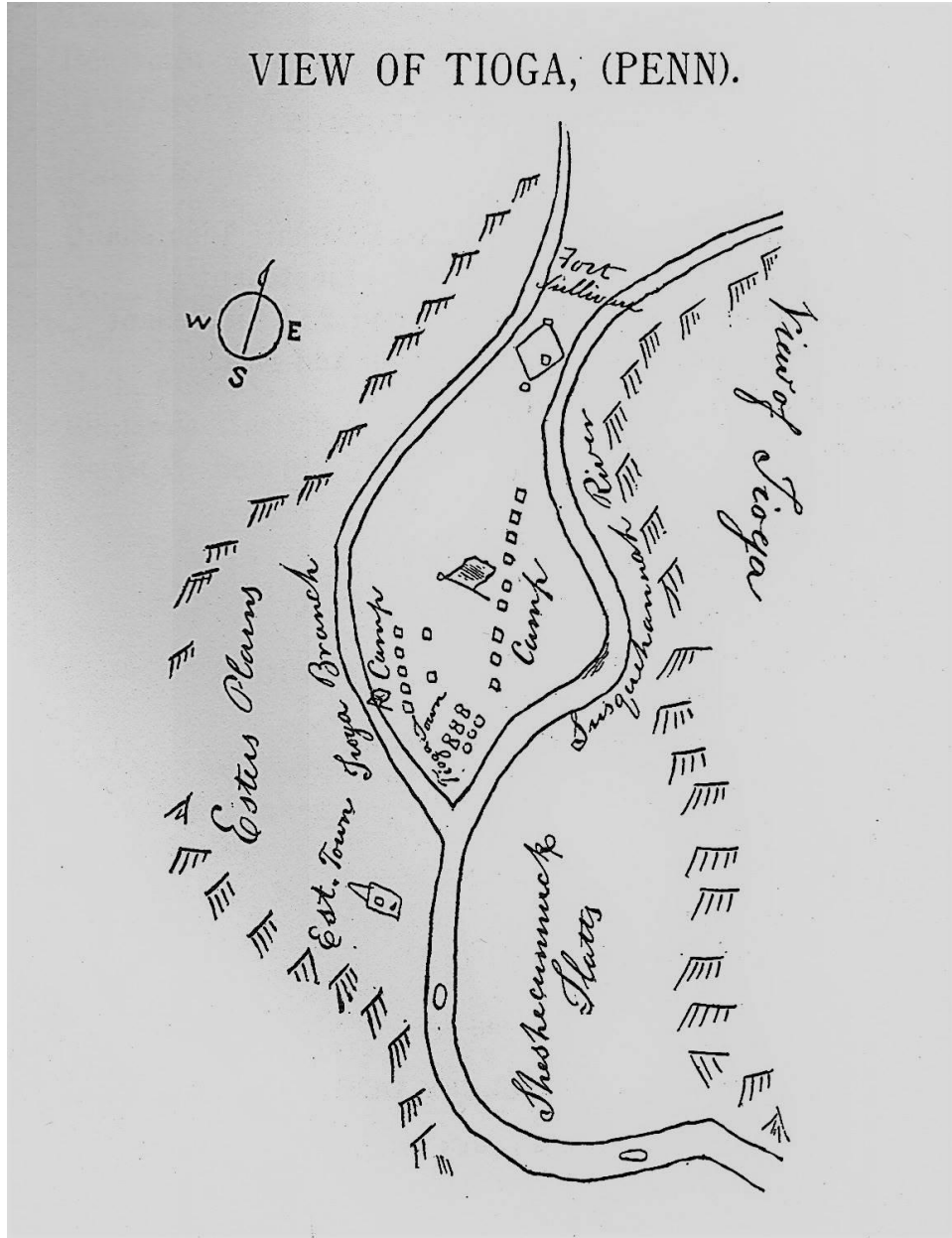
<http://www.scribd.com/doc/132177295/%E2%80%9C-Make-use-of-Pack-Horses-as-far-as-may-be-practicable-Baggage-Carried-on-Horseback-during-the-American-War-1776-to-1781>



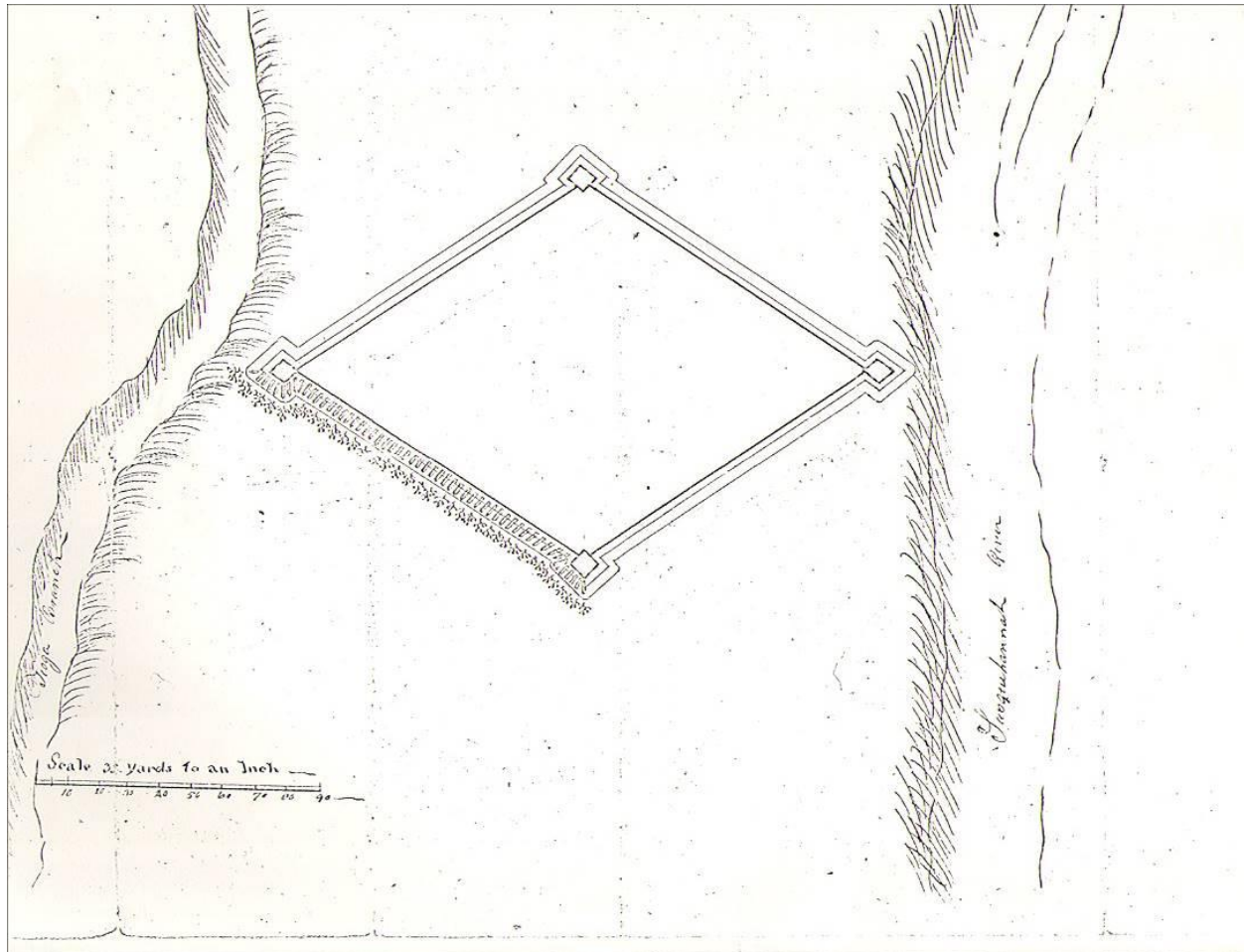


**“Map of Gen. John Sullivan’s march from Easton to the Seneca & Cayuga Countries’:  
 This untitled and anonymous manuscript map bears this pasted on title given by the  
 Library of Congress from where this image comes. It shows the topography along the  
 Delaware from Easton up into New York. Docktor #279A3, Guthorn #51-B2.”**

## VIEW OF TIOGA, (PENN).



“Aug. 11 [1779] ... At 7 o’clock this morning the army marched and crossed the Susquehanna ... after crossing we passed a swamp, a small distance through, and then entered a beautiful plane. This place is called Tioga, from the middle of which we crossed over the Tioga branch, to a point of land ... on this point the army incamped ... About a mile further up the two rivers approach each other, within a little more than a hundred yards, and, is the place which we expect will be fortified, to cover our boats until we return.” Capt. Charles Nukerck’s map showing Fort Sullivan and the camp on Tioga Point. *Journal of Dr. Jabez Campfield, Spencer’s Additional Regt., Journals of the Military Expedition of Major General John Sullivan Against the Six Nations of Indians in 1779* (Glendale, N.Y.: Benchmark Publishing Company, Inc., 1970), 54. Map of Tioga Point on endplate following page 329.



**“The fort was called Fort Sullivan; it was nearly four square, about 90 yards one way and a little under the other way, and was built by digging a trench 2 ½ feet deep, and placing upright logs in the trench about twelve feet high, leaving two or three gateways.” Hand-drawn map of Fort Sullivan at Tioga, ca. Aug.-Oct. 1779, Israel Shreve Revolutionary War Letters (Box 1, Folder 17), Courtesy of Special Collections, University of Houston libraries. "Personal Narrative of the Services of Lieut. John Shreve of the New Jersey Line of the Continental Army", *Magazine of American History*, vol. 3, part 2 (New York and Chicago: A.S. Barnes & Co., 1879), 569-570.**





**Aerial photo showing Tioga Point, looking towards the south. The town of Athens, Pa., is in the foreground, and the narrow neck where Fort Sullivan was built is just above that. At the top of the photo is the broad flat where Sullivan's troops camped. It is still, today, open farmland in private hands. Photo courtesy of Henry J. Retzer.**



**B. Additional Details on Women with the Pennsylvania Battalions in Virginia and South Carolina, 1781-1783 (plus articles providing contextual information on the 1781 Virginia Campaign)**

Brig. Gen. Anthony Wayne's three Pennsylvania Battalions head south to join Lafayette's forces in Virginia:

"York, [Pennsylvania] May 15th.[1781] – Provision for transporting baggage, etc., and other necessary preparation. prepare Commenced our march for Virginia; the weather pleasant and roads tolerably good. Passed through Frederick Town (Maryland), where were some British prisoners quartered; they turned out to see us. **Next day reached the Potomac; here we were detained for want of craft–boats few and in bad condition. The artillery passed over first (a battalion of artillery accompanied the brigade). The second flat–boat had left the shore about forty yards, when the whole sunk. Several women were on board; but as hundreds of men were on the bank, relief soon reached them; none were lost–got all over.** Proceeded a few miles and encamped. Struck our tents every morning before day. About eight or nine o'clock, as we found water, a short halt was made, the water–call beat; parties, six or eight from each company, conducted by a non–commissioned officer, with canteens, fetched water. Seldom allowed to eat until twelve o'clock, when the arms were stacked, knapsacks taken off, and water sent for by parties as before. Officers of a company generally messed together, sometimes more; one of their servants carried cooked provisions for the day; no cooking until night. Not acquainted with the country on our route, but understood that we were marching much about–very circuitous–keeping off the Blue Ridge close on our right. This to avoid the enemy and secure our junction with the Marquis Lafayette.

"Military Journal of Major Ebenezer Denny", *Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania*, vol. VII (1860), 2387–239.

16 July 1781: "**This day, about eight o'clock in the morning, Lieut. Crawford, of our regiment, left the place [i.e., Bottom's Bridge, Virginia], bound for Pennsylvania, with a number of soldiers' wives.**"

25 July 1781: "This day this Bridge [i.e., Good's Bridge, Appomattox River, Amelia County, Virginia] fell in about 2 o'clock; it was 30 feet high, of a very singular construction. **A number of soldiers were on or about it, as well as women under it washing, yet no one was hurt.**"

"Diary of the Pennsylvania Line. May 26, 1781 - April 25, 1782", *Pennsylvania in the War of the Revolution*, page 677. The foregoing "Diary" includes the journals of both Captain Joseph McClellan and Lieutenant William Feltman. Captain McClellan left the army on 13 June 1781.

Doctor Robert Wharry to Doctor Reading Beatty, then stationed at Lancaster, Penna.

"Cox's Mills Virginia, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1781

Dr. Beatty ... You, now, probably expect a Gazette, instead of which I only send you a supplement, I call it, for want of a better word. I make no doubt, but, you have heard of the Brush we had with the whole British Army; I was brought to bed with a Disappointment, another Blockhouse affair – *Madness* – Mad– A—y, by G— I never such a peice of work heard of – about eight hundred troops opposed to five or six thousand Veterans upon their own ground – you may gain more intelligence from the retiring Officers – we had six Captns. wounded, viz; Doyle, Finney, Montgomery, Stake, McClellan, and Van Lear; four Subalterns, Feltman, White, Herbert & another whose name I forget at present; and about one hundred Rank & file killed & wounded.

I dare say you will have a flaming account of it in the papers; our troops behaved with such firmness & resolution which it is impossible for my pen to describe, they only wanted an opportunity of

distinguishing themselves with an equal number – I was not in the action – therefore speak from hearsay & perhaps a little prejudiced in their behalf, [p. 161] but, be that as it will, it matters not. **I have reason to bless my lot & to curse it likewise, being left at this place with the sick, women, & Baggage & am now ordered to pursue them in their Route to S. Carolina – a Country as hot as the Antichambers of Hell – no pure water for to drink, but sand, mud & water; no bread, but Indian corn chopt fine with a broadax and worked into a sort of Bread** – this is only the beginning of Sorrows – when will there be an end. I think if I can stand the warmth of the climate, as it is described to me, I need not fear Pluto’s clime much. ... Now, for the Inhabitants and the part of Virginia I have been in, tho small. The Land is tolerable, the people generally genteel & hospitable, the Ladies handsome & witty & what is better they have fortunes – very great loadstones – I have a mind to pay me adresses to eight hundred acres of good Land and twenty or thirty *black* Negro’s – what would you think of that? Mr. Hovendon is our commander; he is enamoured with a handful of a woman, about an armful.”  
 “Letters from Continental Officers to Doctor Reading Beatty, 1781–1788,” *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 54 (1930), 160-161.

1<sup>st</sup> Pennsylvania Regiment, “Regimental Orders, Camp on James Island [South Carolina] February 25.<sup>th</sup> 1783 ... **The women are strictly forbidden throwing their slop and Dirty water in the streets, they are therefore not to wash among the huts but in the rear near the wells -**

Jos: Harmar Lt. Colo.  
commanding 1.<sup>st</sup> Pa. Regimt.”

"Lieutenant Colonel Harmar's Orders for the First Pennsylvania Regiment [Book] No. 1.," 6 November 1782 to 28 March 1783, Josiah Harmar Papers, William C. Clements Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

“Their presence Here ... Has Saved this State ...’: Continental Provisional Battalions with Lafayette in Virginia, 1781”

Part 1. “This Detachment is Extremely Good ...’: The Light Battalions Move South”

- A. “The Fire of the Light Infantry ... checked the Enemys Progress ...’: Light Battalion Composition and Service”
- B. “Ill founded jealousies, and groundless suspicions.” ‘: Unrest in the Light Battalions”
- C. “The Cloathing you ... long ago Sent to the light infantry is not Yet Arrived.’: Apparel and Equipment”

*The Brigade Dispatch*, vol. XXXVI, no. 2 (Autumn 2006), 2-23.

<http://revwar75.com/library/rees/pdfs/light.pdf>

Appendices for Above

1. Diary of Soldier with Lafayette’s Light Infantry, 1781  
<http://revwar75.com/library/rees/pdfs/Atkins.pdf.pdf>
2. Asa Redington, Scammell’s Light Infantry Regiment, 1781  
<http://revwar75.com/library/rees/pdfs/Redington.pdf>
3. Barber’s Light Battalion, 1781 (New Jersey Light Company Personnel)  
<http://revwar75.com/library/rees/pdfs/Barber.pdf>

Parts 2-4. “‘Almost all old soldiers, and well disciplined ...’: Brigadier General Anthony Wayne’s 1781 Pennsylvania Provisional Battalions”

A. “I fear it is now too late ...”: The Pennsylvania Line Mutiny, January 1781

<http://revwar75.com/library/rees/pdfs/PA-A.pdf>

B. “Our Regiments are yet but very small ...”: Settling with the Troops and Rebuilding the Line

<http://revwar75.com/library/rees/pdfs/PA-B.pdf>

C. “The whole Line ... behaved in a most orderly manner.”: Reorganizing the Pennsylvania Provisional Battalions and Service in the 1781 Campaign

<http://revwar75.com/library/rees/pdfs/PA-C.pdf>

*The Brigade Dispatch*, vol. XXXVII, no. 2 (Summer 2007), 2-19; vol. XXXVII, no. 4 (Winter 2007), 2-15; vol. XXXVIII, no. 1 (Spring 2008), 2-21.

Appendices for Above

1. “A Smart firing commenc’d from from both parties ...’: Brig. Gen. Anthony Wayne’s Pennsylvania Battalions in Virginia, June to November 1781”

Contents:

A. “We will be much inferior to the enemy ...”: May 31 to July 5 1781

B. “A charge ... under a heavy fire of Grape shot ...”: Battle of Green Springs, 6 July 1781

C. “Cornwallis ... threatens every Devastation that fire & sword can produce ...”:

Marching and Countermarching, 9 July to 25 August

D. “The batteries were opened and fired with great success ...”: September to November 1781

E. “The Cloathing was drawn near twelve month ago ...”:

1780-1781 Pennsylvania Clothing, Letters and Returns

<http://revwar75.com/library/rees/pdfs/Virginia.pdf>

2. “The British army marched out and grounded their arms ...’: Pennsylvania Lt. William Feltman’s Diary, 26 May to 5 November 1781”

<http://revwar75.com/library/rees/pdfs/Feltman.pdf>

3. “Pennsylvania Battalion Troop Returns, 1781-1783’: (In Camp and on Campaign in Pennsylvania, Virginia, and South Carolina)”

<http://revwar75.com/library/rees/pdfs>Returns.pdf>

## *C. Miscellaneous References to Army Women*

### **1. 1775, 1776, and 1781: “Fire Ships,” “Veneral Disorder,” and Women in Hospital**

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) were a problem in the armies of the War for American Independence, though not a chronic one. As we know, they can be passed both ways, man to woman, woman to man, and is NOT evidence of prostitution

#### 1775

A very early reference when there were very few women with the New England army.

Massachusetts soldier’s diary, 11 June 1775: "the same day their **was two fire Ships drumed out of the rhodisland compy.**"

In a footnote the editor identifies appellation of "fire Ships" as meaning "Harlots."

The term does make sense, as fire ships mean trouble to everyone involved, friend and foe.

*The Military Journals of two Private Soldiers, 1758-1775, with numerous illustrative Notes to which is added a Supplement, containing official papers on the skirmishes at Lexington and Concord*

(Pouhkeepsie, 1855), 57.

#### 1776

2d Virginia Battalion

"Suffolk [Virginia] March the 6th. 1776 ...

**As there is numbers of women follow[ing] the Camp Suspected to have the Veneral Disorder, the Surgeons of each Regiment are Desired to Examine All such as shall be pointed to him & Report them to the Commanding Officer."**

Brent Tarter, ed., "The Orderly Book of the Second Virginia Regiment, September 27, 1775-April 15, 1776", *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. 85, no. 3 (July 1977), 327.

Virginia Forces

Spring Field, 8 July 1776.

**"Officers of Companies are to return a list of the names and number of women they have, and whether single or married, in order to have them examined."**

Charles Campbell, ed., *The Orderly Book of That Portion of the American Army Stationed At or Near Williamsburg, Va., Under the Command of General Andrew Lewis From March 18th, 1776 to August 28th, 1776.* (Richmond, Va., 1860), 59.



1781

(Courtesy of C. Leon Harris)

The following are on "A Genl. Return of the State of the Hospital in the So. [Southern] Department from the 9th May 1781 Till the 9th June" transcribed by Will Graves <http://revwarapps.org/b18.pdf>

(Note: This hospital appears to have been at the home of Col. Peter Perkins at Berry Hill in Pittsylvania County VA.)

Total, 125 men, 7 women, and 1 child.

**Susannah Ball, venereal disease, admitted May 15 1781, discharged 1 June 1 1781**

**May Lucas, venereal disease, admitted May 15 1781, discharged June 1**

**Wm Freshold Campbell's Regt.\*, venereal admitted, April 20, discharged May 5**

**Auguston Carson, Benson's company, Gunby's Regt.\*, venereal, admitted May 15, discharged June 5**

**William Plowman Jacquett's company, Ford's Regt.\*, venereal, admitted May 15, discharged June 5**

**Henry Lord Armstrong's company, Gunby's Regt.\*, venereal, admitted May 15**

**Jacob Blythe Anderson's company, Gunby's Regt.\*, venereal, admitted May 15**

**Linn Turner Armstrong's company, Gunby's Regt.\*, venereal, admitted June 7**

**Five women were admitted and still in hospital, but their illnesses were not given. They were:**

**Susannah Ball, admitted May 15, discharged June 1**

**May Lucas, admitted May 15, discharged June 1**

**Elizabeth Higgins, admitted May 15**

**Catharine Auber, admitted April 20**

**Deborah Jones, admitted May 15**

**Mary Brumett, admitted March 21**

**The last woman on the list was Nancy Karr, pregnant, admitted May 10.**

**Following her entry is her newborn, John Karr ("Child of Nancy"), admitted (i.e., born) May 21 1781**

**\* Col. William Campbell commanded a rifle corps at the Battle of Guilford Courthouse.**

**Lt. Col. John Gunby commanded the 1st Maryland Regiment at the Battle of Guilford Courthouse.**

**Lt. Col. Benjamin Ford, commander, 2d Maryland Regiment.**

## **2. A Woman with the Continental Army, 1777-1783**

Very rarely some mention concerning a female follower of the Continental Army is found in the pension applications. Sometimes the application is for the woman herself, such as in the cases of Sarah Osborn and Margaret Corbin. It is intriguing, however, to wonder how many brief biographies and accounts of the service of other women lie buried in the pension depositions of the soldiers themselves. One such account was discovered while researching the musicians of Washington's army.

Contained in the supplementary accounts for the pension application of Patrick Cronkite was the deposition of his wife Maria Cronkite (nee Humphrey). Maria's husband served as a fifer in Captain Wendell's Company of the 1st New York Regiment. In her account Maria stated that Patrick enlisted in 1777 (she was then 32 years old) and was discharged in 1783. She further stated that they were married on "the tenth day of September [1766]... That the marriage ceremony was performed by one Squire Vandyke a Justice of the peace of the then County of Albany (now Greene) in the now town of Athens the place where

she resided when her husband the said Patrick Cronkite enlisted in the army. That her maiden name before her marriage was Maria Humphry - That notice of intention of marriage was published in the Dutch Reformed church by Reverend John Schuneman... in said Conuty of Albany..."

Maria had "accompanied her husband... in the service as aforesaid and continued in said service in the capacity of washerwoman for the officers untill the close of the war where her husband was duly discharged. That she had while in said service several children..."

Another ex-soldier, Hendrick Plimley (1st New York, Ten Broeck's Company), stated "that he was also well acquainted with Maria Cronkite wife of the said Patrick who was also in said Company [Wendel's] and Regiment and was a washerwoman and continued in said Service untill her husband... was duly discharged that they had several children togeth[er] who were also in the army with their parents."

For pension and other accounts of army women see:

**"Spent the winter at Jockey Hollow, and ... washed together while there ...": American Revolution Army Women Names Project - Continental Army**  
<https://www.scribd.com/document/322026319/American-Revolution-Army-Women-Names-Project-Continental>

### **3. Hospitals, Nurses and a Female Spy, 1776 and 1777**

Dr. William Shippen was "Director of the Hospital in the flying camp" in 1776, and from 1777 to 1781 served as Director General of all army hospitals. Writing from Perth Amboy, New Jersey, on 19 September 1776 Shippen noted, "The department under my direction has been & continues to be very healthy, & our treatment of the sick very successful ... I have met with much difficulty in procuring Houses & Nurses, particularly the latter, & in order to engage any of them in ye Service have been obliged to deviate from the [illegible] & allow them 10/ p week instead of 3/9 - **the most ordinary woman here is able to earn much more, as there are so few women & so many men to wash for &C.**" William Shippen to unknown correspondent, 19 September 1776, The Papers of the Continental Congress 1774-1789, National Archives Microfilm Publications M247, (Washington, D.C., 1958), reel 102, p. 55.

**"Elizabeth Brewer** whose Deposition you have Inclosed, was taken coming out of Brunswick and brought before me ... [she] has an Inclination of entering the Hospital as a Nurse, in which employment she has been before employ'd at this place [i.e., Princeton, New Jersey], and the Surgeon giving her a good Character I have thot proper to detain her here for that purpose ..."

Israel Putnam to William Livingston, 25 April 1777, Sol Feinstone Collection of the David Library of the American Revolution, Mss, item 1175.

"Head Quarters Princeton 11th [June] 1777"

At a General Courtmartial **"Elizabeth Brewer [was] try'd ... & found guilty of acting as a Spy** in the Service of the Enemy, do Sentence her to be Confin'd During the War, the Genl Approves the Sentence & orders her to be Sent to Morrow ... to Philada with a Cobby of her Sentence & to be there Confin'd in Such place as the Commanding off[icer]. Shall direct during the War."

Joseph Brown Turner, ed., *The Journal and Order Book of Captain Robert Kirkwood of the Delaware Regiment of the Continental Line* (Port Washington, N.Y., 1970), 83.

#### 4. Orders Concerning Female Followers, Maj. Gen. John Sullivan's Division, 1777

pp. 86, 87. (*Some women being left with baggage*)

On the march from Princeton to the main army near Middlebrook.

"Flemington 18th June 1777 (*Provisions, and wastage by men*)

The Genl orders that all the troops be immedietly furnished with 3 days Provision to have it Cook'd Dirictly & that no Soldier make any plea after the 3 Days is expired, that he has no provisions As the Genl is Determined None Shall be Drawn till that time is Expired, the troops to hold themselves in Readiness to march at A Moments Warning with their Knapsacks, Blankets & provisions. **Proper guards to be left with tents & Baggage Composed of those persons who are least able to undergo a March the Weomen who are left at the other Side of Corrells ferry & the men who are left to guard the Baggage to be Brought forwards immedietly to this Camp ...**" The baggage was left at Flemington when the troops marched on the 19th.

p. 94. (*Examination of women by regimental surgeons*)

"Lincoln Mountain July 1st 1777

Regimental Orders

... That **the Weomen belonging to the Regt be paraded tomorrow morning & to undergo an Examination from the Serjeon [surgeon] of the Regt at his tent, except those that are married, & the husbands of those to undergo said examination in their Stead, all those that do not attent to be immedietly Drum'd out of the Regt.**"

pp. 124-125. (*Women to go with baggage, only sick women to ride wagons*)

"His Excellency Genl Washington has ordered, that a Sufficient number of Waggons be ordered to Carry the tents, no other Baggage to be put into them, and they must not be heavy loaded, that nothing might hinder us of Arriving in time where we are to go; the Commissary will Strive all means to get hard Bread for the use of the Division on the Road. The Waggon M.Genl to order two Waggons to be ready to march in the Rear of each Brigade, to take in the Sick & the lame. The remainder of the Baggage will Stay behind the Division ... **No Women to go out with the Division, they are to stay with the Baggage & none of them allowed to go on the Waggons except such Weomen, as the Capt may judge is realy Sick.**"

pp. 146-147. (*Women allotted tents*)

"Head Qrtrs Hannover 17th August 1777

Division Orders

... Those Regts which are yet of tents to make returns to the QrM.Genl to morrow morning by 8 OClock **The Brigade Major to Call on the QrMasters for A Return of all the tents & Marquees that are publick property & upon the Adjts for a Return of all the men & Weomen in their Respective Regts. from which they are to make A Genl Return of each Brigade in the following manner Viz.**

In one Collum the number of Feild officers 2ndly the Serjts 4thly Privates including Drums, Fifes as also Waggoners & Weomen, then they are to State the number of tents in their Respective Brigades, & Set forth the number wanting upon the following Calculations, Viz **A tent to each Feild officer, one to two Commissioned & Staff officers, one to 4 Serjts & one to 6 Privates including Corporals, as Well as Waggoners weomen &c"**

p. 171. (*Women directed to follow the baggage*)

"After Orders Sepr 13th 1777

The following proportion of tents is Allowed the Army upon its next march Viz. 1 Soldiers tent for the Field officers 1 Do. for 4 other Commissioned officers 1 Do. for 8 Serjeants, Drummer or fifers 1 Do. for every 8 Privates.

**The Brigadiers to have Returns made out And the above proportion of tents taken for their Brigades & one Waggon for every 50 tents & no more, no weomen on any pretence whatsoever to go with the army but to follow the Baggage,** the Soldiers to carry their Camp kettles, which if the army Should Come to Action are to be put in the waggons with the tents ..."

Joseph Brown Turner, ed., *The Journal and Order Book of Captain Robert Kirkwood of the Delaware Regiment of the Continental Line* (Port Washington, N.Y., 1970)

## **5. Horses Belonging to Camp Followers**

General Orders, Right Wing, 1 July 1779.

**"It has Been observed that in many places The property of the Inhabitants has been wantingly Destroyed, Princeably by the Horses of the waggoners, Sutlers, and women."**

"Head-Quarters, Smith's Clove, July 13th, '79.

G.O., R[ight]. Wing. The Depredations Dayly and Nightly Committed on the Harvest of the Inhabitants By horses Belonging To the Army, are Crewel and Distressing. The Grater Part of these Distructions are Committed By the Horses of them that are not allowed By the Regulation of Congress to Keep any. **The Genl, Therefore, Calls upon the Commanding Officers of Regts., Immeditly, to order from the Camp all those Belonging To women, soldiers, and others not Inlisted, within thir Respective Comands."**

"The Orderly Book of the First Pennsylvania Regiment, Col. James Chambers. 23 May 1779 - 25 August 1779," John B. Linn and William H. Egle, ed., *Pennsylvania in the Revolution- Battalions and Line* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1880), 460, 465.

## **6. Women Riding Pack Horses on Maj. Gen. John Sullivan's 1779 Expedition**

General orders, 31 May 1779, Easton, Penna.

"The first Jersey regiment will march at six o'clock tomorrow morning, with two days provision, leaving their tents & such other baggage as requires waggons to transport; one company to remain for guard to the baggage left behind, which will follow the regiment in a day or two."

General orders, 2 June 1779, Easton.

"Officers are urged not to carry any baggage from this place which they can possibly spare; and the commanding officers of regiments are directed to examine particularly the baggage of their soldiers & women and prevent their carrying more than their circumstances absolutely demand. Should even the expedition last longer than is expected, there will be frequent opportunities of sending for, and being supplied with necessaries."

General orders, 8 June 1779, Easton.

"The remainder of the first Jersey regiment to march tomorrow morning at six with all the tents & other baggage of the regiment which will be carried on pack horses."



General orders, 19 June 1779. "Pokono-point."

"Officers commanding corps are requested to see that the men's packs be not placed upon the waggons as they are already so heavily loaded as to impede the advance of the troops."

General orders, 27 July 1779, Wyoming.

"The Comdg. officers of regiments & corps will forthwith draw axes & slings at the rate of two for each company. They are also to furnish their troops with knapsacks, haversacks and canteens complete.

Every article in every department that can possibly be loaded on Pack horses is to be fixed for that purpose and carried in that manner."

General orders, 29 July 1779, Wyoming.

"The Commissary & Qr.Master will attend to the loading of the necessary articles on the boats & pack horses. The Brigadier & field officers will give every necessary direction for having things in perfect readiness for the army to move early on Saturday morning."

General orders, 30 July 1779, Wyoming.

"The army will March at 8 o'Clock tomorrow morning ... The whole of Colo. Proctor's regiment will go in the boats."

After orders, 2 August 1779, "Quilutmiak."

**"Comg officers of regiments will please to order all the women belonging to their respective corps, who can ride, immediately to quit the boats & proceed by land, as there will be a sufficiency of pack horses & as the women going on horseback will diminish the number of drivers from the army."**

Order Book of Lt. Col. Francis Barber, 26 May 1779 to 6 September 1779, Louise Welles Murray, ed., *Notes from Craft Collection in Tioga Point Museum on the Sullivan Expedition of 1779*, (Athens, Pa., 1929), 45.

## **7. Women, 1778-1782: On the March, Doing Laundry, Selling Military Goods, and Sergeant's Responsibility For Followers**

"Head Quarters, Fredericksburgh, [New York] October 24th, '78. Information has been Given to the Comadent that **the wemon of the Breaged still Continues the vile practise of washing thire Dirty Clothing in the run upon which the soldiers thirst Depend upon for there water they Drink. It behoves both officers & Men to put a stop to so vile a practise. He orders that when any women is found washing in it, unless below the Breaged, she be Immedety put in to the Bregad guard.**

The Orderly Book of the First Pennsylvania Regiment. Col. James Chambers. July 26, 1778 – December 6, 1778, John B. Linn and William H. Egle, eds., *Pennsylvania Archives*, 2d series, XI (Harrisburg: Lane S. Hart, State Printer, 1880), 375-376.

"Regimental Orders, July 13th, 1779. The Camp to be Immeditly Swept and Cleaned of all filth, the front of the Regiment to be Cleaned as fare as the Reare of the Kitchens, and for the futur there is **no Cooking to Be Carried on in front of the Regiments, excepting in the Kitchens only; the women is strictly forbidden to wash in front of the tents or to through soap suds or any other Kind of filth on the Regimental Parade.**"

The Orderly Book of the First Pennsylvania Regiment, 23 May 1779 to 25 August 1779, *Pennsylvania Archives*, 2d series, XI (Harrisburg: Lane S. Hart, State Printer, 1880), 465.

Major General Greene's Orders. "At 7 o'clock, to-morrow morning, the Genl. will be [beat], and the assembly at 9, & the army will march at 10. Ye Baggage will preseed the army, and will begin to file off at 8, agreeable to the order of march... Ye Baggage that is not ready to file, agreeable to ye order, will be thrown out of ye line & left in ye rear of ye troops. It is expected, therefore, the officers will be Punctual in heaving ye Baggage to move at ye time appointed. The Genl. Desires ye march may be conducted agreeable to ye regulation, & with ye greatest regularity... Before ye march Commences, ye soldiers are to fill their canteens with watter, & the rolls is to be called a quarter of an hour before ye line of march is taken up. The officers who leave ye column will take care to regulate the motion of ye troops, so as not to injure them by two rapped [a] march, & will order proper halts at about every 5 miles distance, & if possible, at such places as to give the men an opportunity to replenish their canteens with water. The Invalids are to preseed the baggage. **Ye officer commanding the baggage ascort will take care and provide for those that shall fail on ye march. He is to allow no women to ride in ye waggons, unless their particular circumstances requires.**"

Orderly Book of the First Penn'a Regiment, 12 September 1780 to 18 November 1780, *Pennsylvania Archives*, 2d series, XI (Harrisburg: Lane S. Hart, State Printer, 1880), 593.

General Greene's orders, Headquarters, Lynch's Creek, S.C., 18 April 1781. The **"Invalids, Spare Arms and heavy baggage" are to go to Salisbury, N.C., under guard. Women with children and "those unable to March on foot, must also be sent off; as none will be admitted to ride on Waggon or horses, on any pretence whatever."**

Dennis M. Conrad, ed., *The Papers of General Nathanael Greene*, vol. VIII, 30 March-10 July 1781 (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1995), 111.

**"As there is many orders for checking irregularities with which the women, as followers of the army, ought to be acquainted, The serjeants of the companies to which any women belong, are to communicate all orders of that nature to them, and are to be responsible for neglecting so to do."**

General orders, 8 September 1782, Fitzpatrick, vol. 25 (1938), p. 139.

*(women and soldiers exchanging clothing for goods, 1782)*

General Orders, Verplanks Point, September 5, 1782. "The Genl learns from good Authority that many of the soldiers have fallen into a scandelous & pernicious [sic] Practice of disposing of their Clothing to Country People for Vegetables & other Articles... when Market Places are established a subaltern Officer with a small Guard is to be stationed at each who will see that no Violence is offered to the Country People coming to Market. **he must at the same time be very Carefull to prevent their receiving from the soldiers or Women of the Camp any article of Clothing in exchange for such Wares as they have to dispose of.**"

Numbered Record Books Concerning Military Operations and Service, Pay and Settlement Accounts, and Supplies in the War Department Collection of Revolutionary War Records, National Archives M853 (microfilm edition) [Washington, 1973] Order Books, Volume 64, Reel 10, Target 7, August 2, 1782 - November 14, 1782, page 97.

*(Sergeants and woman, 1782)*

page 103-104, General Orders, Verplanks Point, September 8, 1782. "The present Mode of Encampment tho extremely ornimental and convenient may without the utmost Care subject us to the Loss of our Tents by Fire... The Commander in Chief therefore recommends the greatest the greatest Circumspection to the Officers in their own Marques & Tents & directs the Officers of Police to see that the soldiers do not make

use of Fire or Candles carelessly in theirs - **as there are many Orders for Checking irregularities with which the Women as followers of the Army ought to be acquainted the Serjeants of the Companies to which any Woman belongs are to Communicate all Orders of that Nature to them & to be responsible for neglecting so to do...**"

## **8. Army Orders and George Washington Correspondence Concerning Female Followers**

Of five letters written by Gen. George Washington (for sources, see below) in which female followers are covered, one discusses rations and women serving as nurses, two solely concern rations for women, one asks for a proposal for setting the proportion of women to be allowed and the rations allotted to them, and two explain why the proposed proportion of one woman for fifteen men cannot be adhered to.

The nineteen general orders for the army which deal with women cover a variety of subjects. Since two topics were sometimes covered in tandem by a single order the following breakdown does not mirror the number of orders found:

Number of Orders

Dealing With the

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Subject of General Order</u>
1	Directs to sergeants to relay army orders to women in their units.
1	States a proposal for the set proportion of women allowed with the army in 1783.
2	Concern women serving as nurses.
2	Request returns of the number of women with the army.
2	Relate specific instances when women were not to accompany the troops during a movement.
4	Direct a reduction of the numbers of women with the army.
4	Deal with the allotment of rations to women.
7	Order women to march with the baggage or prohibit their riding on wagons.

George Washington's letters concerning female camp followers:

Washington to John Stark, 5 August 1778, John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources 1745-1799*, vol. 12 (Washington, DC, 1934), 283-284 (hereafter cited as Fitzpatrick, *GW*). Washington to Charles Stewart, 21 April 1779, *ibid.*, vol. 14 (1936), 423. Washington to Col. Van Schaik, 19 October 1779, *ibid.*, vol. 17 (1937), 489. Washington to a Board of General Officers, 12 June 1781, *ibid.*, vol. 22 (1937), 203. Washington to the Superintendent of Finance, 29 January 1783, Washington to Henry Knox, 8 March 1783, *ibid.*, vol. 26 (1938), 78-79, 199-200.

Female followers in Washington's general orders:

- 4 June, 17 June, 10 July 1777, *ibid.*, vol. 8 (1933), 181, 257, 375.
- 4 August, 27 August, 13 September 1777, *ibid.*, vol. 9 (1933), 17, 139, 213.
- 31 May 1778, *ibid.*, vol. 11 (1934), 497-498.
- 19 June 1778, *ibid.*, vol. 12 (1934), 94.
- 7 June 1779, *ibid.*, vol. 15 (1936), 240.
- 1 August 1780, *ibid.*, vol. 19 (1937), 300.
- 19 September 1780, *ibid.*, vol. 20 (1937), 73.
- 14 June, 19 June 1781, *ibid.*, vol. 22 (1937), 215, 233.
- 22 August 1781, *ibid.*, vol. 23 (1937), 37-38.
- 30 August, 8 September, 28 December, 31 December 1782, *ibid.*, vol. 25 (1938), 93-95, 139, 479-480, 496.
- 5 January 1783, *ibid.*, vol. 26 (1938), 12.

## Letters

Washington to John Stark, 5 August 1778, Fitzpatrick, *Writings of George Washington*, vol. 12 (1934), pp. 283-284.

"I cannot see why the soldiers Wives in Albany should be supported at public expence. They may get most extravagant Wages for any kind of Work in the Country and to feed them, when that is the case, would be robbing the public and encouraging idleness. If they would come down and attend as Nurses to the Hospitals they would find immediate employ." **RATIONS & NURSES**

Washington to Charles Stewart, 21 April 1779, Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 14 (1936), p. 423.

"As the daily issues of Provisions exceed, considerably, the total number of the Troops in this Camp, I wish to know on what days, in what manner, and by whose Orders the Provisions are drawn... You will be pleased to add the number of rations issued to the women in camp." **RATIONS**

Washington to Col. Van Schaik, 19 October 1779, Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 17 (1937), p. 489.

"I have your favr. of the 13th respecting the applications of a number of the Wives of the Officers and Soldiers, whose Husbands were upon the Western expedition, for Rations. This is a thing which I have never known to be allowed, and which, if admitted in one instance, might be claimed by the families of the whole Army. The New York troops will be at this post in a few days, when the Wives of as many of the Soldiers, as are generally allowed to follow the Army, may join and be subsisted as usual. If any remain, I cannot undertake to give an order for them to draw provisions." **RATIONS**

Washington to a Board of General Officers, 12 June 1781, Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 22 (1937), p. 203.

The board is asked to take into consideration "The proportion of Women which ought to be allowed to any given Number of Men, and to whom Rations shall be allowed." **QUERY FOR PROPOSED PROPORTION & RATIONS**

Washington to the Superintendent of Finance, 29 January 1783, Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 26 (1938), pp. 78-79.

In reference to "the proportion of Women to the Men" in the army. "The import of the regulation of the Secy at W; and yourself, by fair deduction is, that an abuse existed, which required correction; by limiting the number of Rations for Women to a fifteenth of the Issues to Non-Commissioned Officers and privates; when the fact is, that from calculation the new mode has added 52,560 Rations to the annual expence of the Army in this Quarter, as will appear by the inclosed Official return; and would if the strict letter had been adhered to, have involved particular Corps in great distress.

It will appear... that an Oeconomical attention to the public interest, in this case, has not been wanting; but that upon every return of the number of Women called for (at different periods) when compared with the totality of the Army, it has been found, that no general Rule consistent with American, or British Customs, could be established that would encrease the agregate amount of the Issues and therefore that it was better to submit to a surplusage in some Corps than to render the expence greater and the evil more extensive by adopting a limitation wh. would pervade the whole Army, especially too, as some of those Corps were, and still are, under particular circumstances, for instance the Regiments of York, which, in part, are composed of Long Islanders and others who fled with their families when the enemy obtained possession of those places and have no other means of Subsistence. The Cries of these Women; the sufferings of their Children, and the complaints of the Husbands would admit of no alternative. The latter with too much justice remarked 'If pay is with-held from us, and Provisions from our Wives and Children we must all starve together; or commit Acts which may involve us in ruin.' Our Wives add they 'could earn their Rations, but the Soldier,



may the Officer, for whom they Wash has naught to pay them.' In a word, I was obliged to give Provisions to the extra Women in these Regiments, or loose by Desertion, perhaps to the Enemy, some of the oldest and best Soldiers in the Service." ***INABILITY TO ADHERE TO PROPOSED PROPORTION***

Washington to Henry Knox, 8 March 1783 Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 26 (1938), pp. 199-200.

"The Women and Children in the New York Regiments of Infantry before the new System of Issues took place obliged me, either to depart from the that System and allow them provision or by driving them from the Army risk the loss of a number of Men, who very probably would have followed their Wives. I preferred the former and accordingly directed that the whole of the Women and Children then with the Troops, should be allowed to draw as usual. So far as the Artillery Regimt. was under the same circumstances they are entitled to the same indulgence; but as that indulgence was to remedy, and not to create, an evil, I would by no means extend it to the Women who on the prospect of it, have since been brought into the Camp; and would wish you to see that no such do draw Provisions." ***INABILITY TO ADHERE TO PROPOSED PROPORTION***

### **General Orders**

General orders, 4 June 1777, Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 8 (1933), p. 181.

"A return to be made to morrow, to the Adjutant General, of all the women belonging to the camp." ***REQUESTED RETURN OF NUMBERS***

General orders, 17 June 1777, Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 8 (1933), p. 257.

"A proportionate number of women to the sick of each regiment to be sent to the hospitals at Mendham and Black River, to attend the sick as nurses." ***NURSES***

General orders, 10 July 1777, Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 8 (1933), p. 375.

"Women are to march with the baggage." ***MARCH WITH BAGGAGE***

General orders, 4 August 1777, Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 9 (1933), p. 17.

"In the present marching state of the army, every incumbrance proves greatly prejudicial to the service; the multitude of women in particular, especially those who are pregnant, or have children, are a clog upon every movement. The Commander in Chief therefore earnestly recommends it to the officers commanding brigades and corps, to use every reasonable method in their power to get rid of all such as are not absolutely necessary; and the admission or continuance of any, who shall, or may have come to the army since its arrival in Pennsylvania, is positively forbidden, to which point the officers will give particular attention." ***REDUCE NUMBERS***

General orders, 27 August 1777, Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 9 (1933), p. 139.

"... the women are expressly forbid any longer, under any licence at all, to ride in the waggons, and the officers earnestly [are] called upon to permit no more than are absolutely necessary, and such as are actually useful, to follow the army." ***WAGGONS & REDUCE NUMBERS***

General orders, 13 September 1777, Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 9 (1933), p. 213.

"No woman under any pretence whatsoever to go with the army, but to follow the baggage." ***MARCH WITH BAGGAGE***

General orders, 31 May 1778, Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 11 (1934), pp. 497-498.

"Commanding Officers of Regiments will assist the Regimental Surgeons in procuring as many Women of the Army as can be prevailed on to serve as Nurses to them who will be paid the usual Price... Commanding Officers of Divisions and all others are to pay the strictest Attention that no Women be suffered on any Pretence to get into the Waggon of the Army on the march." ***NURSES & WAGGONS***

General orders, 19 June 1778, Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 12 (1934), p. 94.

"The indulgence of suffering Women to ride in Waggon having degenerated into a great abuse, and complaint having been made by the Officers of the day that the Plea of leave from Officers is constantly urged when the Waggon Masters order such Women down. It is expressly ordered that no Officer grant such leave for the future but the Commanding Officers of a Brigade or the Field Officers of the day who are to grant it only on account of Inability to march, and in writing." ***WAGGONS***

General orders, 7 June 1779, Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 15 (1936), p. 240.

"... the pernicious practice of suffering the women to incumber the Waggon still continues notwithstanding every former prohibition." ***WAGGONS***

General orders, 1 August 1780, Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 19 (1937), p. 300.

The division and brigade commanders are "to exert themselves to get in readiness as fast as possible... Convalescents and such men as are otherwise absolutely unfit to march yet capable of doing duty in a fixed post are to be left at Verplanks and Stoney points... All the Women and Children of the Army are also to be left at these Posts for a few days where the commanding officers will see that they are furnished with rations as usual." ***NONACCOMPANIMENT OF TROOPS & RATIONS***

General orders, 19 September 1780, Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 20 (1937), p. 73.

The officer commanding the baggage escort "is to allow no women to ride in the waggon unless their peculiar circumstances require it." ***NO RIDING ON WAGGONS***

General orders, 14 June 1781, Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 22 (1937), p. 215.

"An exact return of all the women with the army who draw provisions from the public is to be given in at the orderly office..." ***RATIONS***

General orders, 19 June 1781, Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 22 (1937), p. 233.

"No Women will be suffered to ride in waggon or walk in the ranks this Campaign unless there are very particular reasons for it,... a written permission only will avail; without this the officers of the day or police are not only authorized to turn them out, but requested to inflict instant punishment..." ***REDUCTION OF NUMBERS***

General orders, 22 August 1781, Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 23 (1937), pp. 37-38.

"... as the Detachment under... Major General Lincoln are to consider themselves as Light-troops who are always supposed to be fit for action and free from every incumbrance [the Commander in Chief] cannot help advising them to take the present opportunity of depositing at West Point such of their Women as are not able to undergo the fatigue of frequent marches and also every article of Baggage which they can in any wise dispense with..." ***REDUCTION OF NUMBERS***

General orders, 30 August 1782, Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 25 (1938), pp. 93-95.

"Precisely at five o'clock tomorrow morning the general is to beat, on which the tents and baggage of the two Connecticut, and three Massachusetts Brigades are to be put into the batteaux; at seven o'clock the assemble [sic] will beat, when these brigades are immediately to march and embark by the right, proceeding in one Collum to Verplanks point in the following order: First Connecticut, Second Connecticut, Third Massachusetts, Second Massachusetts, First Massachusetts ... No women to be allowed into the boats with the troops on any pretence whatsoever." ***NONACCOMPANIMENT OF TROOPS***

General orders, 8 September 1782, Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 25 (1938), p. 139.

"As there is many orders for checking irregularities with which the women, as followers of the army, ought to be acquainted, The serjeants of the companies to which any women belong, are to communicate all orders of that nature to them, and are to be responsible for neglecting so to do." ***FOLLOWING ARMY ORDERS***

General orders, 28 December 1782, Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 25 (1938), pp. 479-480.

In a plan to regulate the provisioning of the army "it is further provided that, on every fifteen men actually in a regiment or corps, there shall be allowed a draught for sixteen rations, so as to supply the women of the regiment or corps, that is to say the rations drawn may exceed the number of Noncommissioned and privates one fifteenth. The Commanding officer of the regiment will apportion this excess as circumstances shall require." In other words the maximum ratio of women in the army was to be one for every fifteen men. ***PROPOSED PROPORTION & RATIONS***

General orders, 31 December 1782, Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 25 (1938), p. 496.

"A return of the number of women in the several regiments which compose this army... is to be given in at the Orderly office on thursday the second of January next." ***REQUESTED RETURN OF NUMBERS***

General orders, 5 January 1783, Fitzpatrick, *WGW*, vol. 26 (1938), p. 12.

"A Return shewing the number of women and children that would have drawn rations in the several corps under the late regulation, shewing at the same time the number of extra Rations daily drawn in the corps agreably to the present regulation to be given in at the Orderly office on tuesday next..." ***RATIONS***

## **9. Link to Second Study Examining Numbers of Continental Army Female Followers**

This (my first) study of the number of women with the Continental army is based on information garnered from a number of returns covering the years 1776 to 1783. Of those returns studied all gave numbers of women in conjunction with some other factor relating to their presence with the army.

6 individual returns or series of returns list the number of women in relation to the rations they consumed.

1 1779 return listed the women who remained as "Washer women" after the surplus followers had been sent away.

1 1776 return for a single company had the number of Washer-Women" appended. An interesting point is that although the number of needed tents is given no tentage was allowed for the three women.

1 1777 listing of mess squads included women with two of the groupings. A mess squad was a unit which related to both shelter and rations.

Although not a return of numbers, a 1777 order for Sullivan's Brigade stipulated the number of women allotted to a tent.

My second study of the same subject examined two additional series of ration returns, both dating to 1779. The first series is titled "Returns of the daily Issues of Provisions to the Troops at the Post of Wyoming, from May 9th. to the [27th]" 1779 and gives numbers of women with five military units, ranging from a full regiment to four company size units. The second set is a series of five returns for the period of one month, 21 April to 28 May 1779, showing the number of women with eight brigades of the main army under Washington at Middlebrook. That study may be accessed at:

"The number of rations issued to the women in camp.": New Material Concerning Female Followers with Continental Regiments":

Female Followers with the Troops at Wyoming: Prelude to Sullivan's Campaign, 1779

"Provisions and Stores Issued to the Grand Army": Female Followers at Middlebrook, 1779

"The women belonging to their respective corps": Further Analysis and Comparison of the Returns of Women

*The Brigade Dispatch*, vol. XXVIII, no. 1 (Spring 1998), 2-10; vol. XXVIII, no. 2 (Summer 1998), 2-12, 13. <http://revwar75.com/library/rees/wnumb2.htm>



## Endnotes

1. General Orders, 4 June 1777, John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources 1745-1799*, vol. 8 (Washington, DC, 1933), p. 181.
2. "Revolutionary Services of Captain John Markland", *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. 9 (1885), p. 105.
3. "Account of Rations drawn by the Infantry of ye Standing Army" December 1777, The Papers of the Continental Congress 1774-1789, National Archives Microfilm Publications M247, (Washington, D.C., 1958), Reel 38, p. 459. Though undated the numbers of the "Privates fit for Duty" in this account agree with "A General Return of the Army under the command of his Excellency General Washington ... December 3, 1777", Charles H. Lesser, Ed., *The Sinews of Independence: Monthly Strength Reports of the Continental Army* (Chicago, Il., 1976), p. 53.

### Women's Rations in the Continental Army:

It has generally been assumed that British General William Howe's orders of 1776 allowing a half ration per women and a quarter ration per child was the system followed by the Continental Army during the war. Contrary to this belief there is no concrete evidence that the Continental Army ever made use of this system of rationing for soldier's dependents. There is quite a bit of evidence, however, that Washington's forces took as their precedent the ration issues for women in the British and Provincial forces during the French and Indian War. In 1781 the returns for Colonel Joseph Vose's Light Battalion show two rations for each officer and one ration for each common soldier and woman. A "Return of the number of Women and Children ... that drew Rations under the late Regulations ..." lists the specific number of rations that were allowed prior to January of 1783. Under the "late Regulations" each women was given one full ration and each child a half ration. This is similar to the women's allowance during the period of the French and Indian war which consisted of either a full ration or two thirds of a ration of food.

The food ration issued to the troops and their followers was based on a standard originally set in 1776 as follows: "One pound of beef, or 3/4 of a pound of pork or one pound of fish, per day. One pound of bread or flour per day. Three pints of peas or beans per week, or vegetables equivalent, at one dollar per bushel for peas or beans. One pint of milk per man per day. One half-pint of rice, or one pint of Indian meal per man per week. One quart of spruce beer, or cider, per man per day, or nine gallons of mollasses per company of one hundred men per week. Three pounds of candles to one hundred men per week, for guards. Twenty pounds of soft, or eight pounds of hard, soap for one hundred men per week."

Necessity and nutrition required that some method be found by which this basic ration could be supplemented. This was especially important since items such as milk, cider, vegetables and soap proved to be difficult, and often impossible, to obtain. In July of 1777 it was stipulated that "As nothing can be more comfortable and wholesome to the army than vegetables, every encouragement is to be given to the Country people, to bring them in [to market] ... The General recommends temporary ovens to each brigade, which, by men who understand it, can be erected in a few hours. Bread baked in these, will be much wholesomer than the sodden cakes [firecakes] which are but too commonly used."

To add to the problem of feeding the army the system of supplying the troops sometimes failed due to bad weather, crop failure, economic conditions or ineptitude in the quartermaster department. At Valley Forge in the winter of 1778 it was necessary to temporarily adjust the daily

rations for the army. In the General Orders of February 8th it was noted "that instead of the ration heretofore Issued there should be Issued a pound and a half of flour, one lb of Beef or 3/4 Salt pork and a certain Quantity of Spirits ..." In addition to this it had been previously ordered on January 29th that "The Commissaries in future to Issue [a] quart of Salt to every 100 lb fresh Beef." This was to prove more or less the common ration for the army during their winter cantonments.

Finally it must be noted that the 1776 British system of a half ration for female followers was stipulated to be issued to those women left behind at Halifax after the army sailed on to New York. It is entirely possible, and even probable, that women with the British army when on campaign were given a larger amount of food.

"Return of the number of Women and Children in the several regiments and Corps stationed at, and in the vicinity of West Point and New Windsor, that drew Rations under the late Regulation, shewing also the Number of Rations allowed for Women and Children by the present system", 24 January 1783, *Revolutionary War Rolls, 1775-1783*, National Archives Microfilm Publication M246, Record Group 93, reel 136, pp. 259-260. "Nathaniel Nason's Book" (Continental Army 1781-1782 / Massachusetts Line, First Regiment / Returns of Clothing Camp Equipage and Provisions ... kept by Nathaniel Nason ...", (for full citation see endnote no. 23). Walter Hart Blumenthal, *Women Camp Followers of the American Revolution* (New York, 1974), pp. 41, 51. Paul E. Kopperman, "The British High Command and Soldiers' Wives in America, 1755-1783", *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, no. 60 (1982), pp. 22-23. "In Convention for the State of Pennsylvania Friday August 9, 1776 The Ration for each man, as copied from the Minutes of the Honourable the Continental Congress ...", Peter Force, *American Archives*, series 5, vol. I (Washington, D.C., 1837-1853), p. 865. General Orders, 5 July 1777, *WGW*, vol. 8 (1933), pp. 350-351. General Orders, 8 February 1778, 29 January 1778, George Weedon, *Valley Forge Orderly Book of General George Weedon of the Continental Army under Command of Genl. George Washington, in the Campaign of 1777-8* (New York, N.Y., 1971), pp. 224-225, 216-217. For a detailed examination of provisions in the Continental Army (including cooks and mess squads) see: John U. Rees, "It was my turn to cook for the mess': Provisions of the Common Soldier in the Continental Army 1775-1783", Addendum to "I Expect to be stationed in Jersey sometime ...': An Account of the Services of the Second New Jersey Regiment, December 1777 to June 1779", TMs, The David Library of the American Revolution, Washington Crossing, Pa..

4. "An Estimate of the daily Issues to an Army Consisting of 40,000 Rank & File exclusive of Serjeants", 2 June 1780, *The Papers of the Continental Congress 1774-1789*, National Archives Microfilm Publications M247, (Washington, DC, 1958), reel 46, p. 311.

5. Fort Sullivan, garrisoned by Colonel Israel Shreve and a detachment of miscellaneous troops from August to October 1779, was located on the site of present day Athens, Pennsylvania, for which see: Douglas Marshall and Howard Peckham, *Campaigns of the American Revolution - An Atlas of Manuscript Maps* (Ann Arbor, Mi., 1976), p. 96. Map of the Indian villages in Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York, 1760-1794, Lester J. Cappon, ed., *Atlas of Early American History - The Revolutionary Era 1760-1790* (Princeton, N.J., 1976), p. 21.

6. General orders, 23 August 1779, Orderly book of Col. Oliver Spencer's Regt., 27 July 1779 - 28 September 1779, *Early American Orderly Books, 1748-1817*, Collections of the New York Historical Society, microfilm edition, (Woodbridge, N.J., 1977), Reel 9, item 93, pp. 86-87.

7. John Sullivan to Israel Shreve, 24 August 1779, Otis G. Hammond, ed., *Letters and Papers of Major-General John Sullivan Continental Army*, vol. III (Concord, N.H., 1939), pp. 101-103.

8. "A Return of the Women & Children Left in Charge of Baggage, Necessary to wash for Genl Clintons Brigade", probably August 1779, *Israel Shreve Papers*, Rutgers University, Alexander Library, manuscript no. 287.

9. New York muster rolls, Continental regiments, 1779, *Revolutionary War Rolls*, reels 68-72.

10. Strength returns of the Continental Army, July and October 1779, Lesser, *Sinews*, pp. 124-125, 136-137. For an approximation of the total number of troops on the expedition see Mark M. Boatner III, *Encyclopedia of the American Revolution* (New York, 1966), p. 1072. Journal of Rev. William Rogers, 28 August 1779, Journal of Lt. Rudolphus Van Hovenburgh, 23 August 1779, Frederick Cook, ed., *Journals of the Military Expedition of Major General John Sullivan Against the Six Nations of Indians in 1779* (Auburn, N.Y., 1887), pp. 265, 278. Rogers gives an account of the number of people residing at the camp at Fort Sullivan after the army left and prior to the departure of the extraneous personnel downriver. It is important to note that the primary garrison itself consisted of "two hundred and fifty men properly officered" while the other persons left behind by the army consisted of "the Invelade[s] & the weomen." Roger's account of August 28, 1779 stated that "there are in the garrison about twelve hundred souls, men, women and children included ..."

There is no known account of the exact number of sick left behind at the fort. A vague determination may be made, however, by examining the number of sick in the involved regiments in July and October of 1779, just prior to and immediately following the expedition. The total of the sick, both present and absent, for the October return has been used, with some minor additions from the July return where information is lacking. Only the number of sick in the following regiments were available for the total: 1st, 2nd and 3rd New Jersey; Spencer's Additional; 1st, 2nd and 3rd New Hampshire; 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th New York; 4th and 11th Pennsylvania; the 6th Massachusetts and the July return for the German Battalion.

The total number of sick for October 1779 was 661. This total was increased by another 100 for an adjusted total of 761. This adjustment roughly allows for the numbers of sick in the artillery and other miscellaneous detachments for which returns are not available. Hopefully this will also allow for the increased occurrence of sickness and accidental injury due to the arduous nature of the campaign.

A rough estimate of the numbers of women and children would be as follows:

1200 men, women and children (Roger's estimate)

- 300 soldiers of the fort's garrison  
(including officers)

- 761 sick

139 total women and children with the troops

This final number is not much more than an educated guess but it gives some idea of the numbers of distaff and their offspring which accompanied the troops on Sullivan's expedition. It is interesting to note that the figure of 139 women and children amounts to 3.5 percent of the 4,000 soldiers under Sullivan's command at Tioga. This percentage agrees with the percentages calculated for the 1781 and 1783 main army returns which can be found in the body of this article under the sections entitled 1781 "... the women with the army who draw provisions" and 1783 "The proportion of Women which ought to be allowed ..."

11. Strength return of the Continental Army, July 1779, Lesser, *Sinews*, pp. 124-125. Cook, *Journals*, p. 134. Mark E. Lender and James Kirby Martin, eds., *Citizen-Soldier; The Revolutionary War Journal of Joseph Bloomfield* (Newark, N.J. 1982) p. 87. H.A. Mayer, *Belonging to the Army: Camp followers and the Military Community during the American Revolution*, PH.D. dissertation, College of William and Mary, 1990, pp. 193-194. Provision and regimental strength returns of Jackson's 9th Massachusetts Regiment, *Henry Jackson Papers, 1772-1782*, Library of Congress, microfilm edition, no. 17,359, vol. 4, pp. 379-443.
12. "A Mess Roll of Captn. Ross's Compy", 1777, *Revolutionary War Rolls*, reel 62, section 44-2. Muster rolls for Captain John Ross's company, 3rd New Jersey Regiment, May and October 1777, *ibid.*, section 44-1. A comparison of these two rolls indicates that the date of the mess squad listing is June of 1777. During this month the 3rd New Jersey was attached to the main army and posted near the Short Hills in northern New Jersey. Muster rolls of the 3rd New Jersey Regiment, *ibid.*, reels 62, 63 and 63. One instance of the varying numbers of men per company within an individual regiment comes from the 3rd New Jersey for June of 1777. The numbers are as follows: Ross's Company, 49 enlisted men; Dickerson's Co., 65; Flanigan's Co., 42; Gifford's Co., 32; Hagan's Co., 20; and Patterson's Co., 33. The full strength of a company of foot in 1777 was eighty-six enlisted men. Robert K. Wright, Jr., *The Continental Army* (Washington, D.C., 1984), p. 47.
13. Charles Knowles Bolton, *The Private Soldier Under Washington* (Williamstown, Ma., 1976), discussion of rations and mess squads, pp. 77-78. Harold L. Peterson, *The Book of the Continental Soldier* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1968), number of men in mess squads, p. 147. Joseph Plumb Martin, *Private Yankee Doodle: A Narrative of Some of the Adventures, Dangers and Sufferings of a Revolutionary Soldier* (New York, N.Y., 1962), p. 51. After the Battle of White Plains in the autumn of 1776 Martin gave the number of men in his mess squad as only three. Lender and Martin, *Citizen-Soldier*, p. 87. At the time of the return Bloomfield's company was stationed at German Flats in the Mohawk Valley of New York state. Division Orders, 17 August 1777, Joseph Brown Turner, ed., *The Journal and Order Book of Captain Robert Kirkwood of the Delaware Regiment of the Continental Line* (New York, 1970), p. 147. The number of men assigned to a tent was usually set at six though at times there were exceptions to this rule. "The Brigadier Genls. are requested to get a Return of the actual Strength of each Regt. in their Respective Brigades & also the Number of Tents drawn for the use of the Regts. ... The Quarter Master Genl. is to proportion the Tents to the Strength of Regts. One Tent to each five Privates ...", General Orders, 24 May 1777, Order Book of Col. Daniel Morgan's 11th Virginia Regiment, New Jersey, May 15 - June 9, 1777, *Early American Orderly Books*, reel 4, no. 45. In order to lessen the baggage of the army in the autumn of 1777 one tent was allotted to every eight non-commissioned officers, musicians or privates, General Orders, 13 September 1777, *WGW*, vol. 9 (1933), p. 213. The proportion of tents was standardized for the army in 1779 allowing one tent for every six non-commissioned officers, musicians or privates, General Orders, 27 May 1779, *ibid.*, vol. 15 (1936), pp. 162-163.
14. George Washington to the Marquis De Lafayette, 20 February 1781, *ibid.*, vol. 21 (1937), pp. 253-256. Washington to William Heath, 17 February 1781, *ibid.*, p. 234. This letter describes the makeup of the provisional light battalions which were to make up Lafayette's detachment: "... Eight Companies from the oldest Regiments of the Massachusetts line to form one Battalion. The 2 remaining Companies from [Massachusetts], and those of Connecticut and Rhode Island to form another. Those of New Hampshire and Hazen (with such others, as shall hereafter join them) will



form another Battalion ... Colo. Jackson or Vose, and Majr. Galvan, are to be appointed to the Battn. composed altogether of Massachusetts Troops ..." See also Charles E. Hatch, Jr., "The 'Affair Near James Island' (or, 'The Battle of Green Spring') July 6, 1781", *Virginia Historical Magazine*, vol. 53 (July 1945), p. 179. According to this article the light troops consisted of eight companies from Massachusetts, five companies from Connecticut, 1 from Rhode Island, five from New Jersey, two from New Hampshire and one company from Hazen's Regiment. General Orders, 16 February 1781, *WGW*, vol 21 (1937), p. 232. The companies assigned to Lafayette were "to be augmented to fifty rank and file each with an additional serjeant and are to rendezvous the 19th. at Peekskill prepared for a march."

15. Lafayette to the Chevalier de La Luzerne, 19 February 1781, Stanley J. Idzerda, ed., *Lafayette in the Age of the American Revolution - Selected Letters and Papers, 1776-1790*, vol. III (Ithaca, N.Y., 1980), pp. 330-333.

16. Washington to Elias Dayton, 16 February 1781, *WGW*, vol 21 (1937), p. 233. Lafayette to the Chevalier de La Luzerne, 19 February 1781, Idzerda, *Lafayette*, vol. III, pp. 330-333. Benjamin Gilbert to his father, 15 March 1781, from Annapolis, Maryland, John Shy, ed., *Winding Down - The Revolutionary War Letters of Lieutenant Benjamin Gilbert of Massachusetts, 1780-1783* (Ann Arbor, Mi., 1989), pp. 39-40. Lafayette to Nathanael Greene, 17 April 1781, Idzerda, *Lafayette*, vol. IV (1981), leaving behind the wives of the soldiers, pp. 37-40.

17. Washington to William Livingston, 1 August 1780, *WGW*, vol. 19 (1937), p. 292.

18. General Orders, 1 August 1780, *ibid.*, p. 300.

19. General Orders, 22 August 1781, *ibid.*, vol. 23 (1937), p. 37-38.

20. "Journal of Ebenezer Wild", *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 2nd series, vol. VI (Boston, Ma., 1891), p. 131. Wild was a lieutenant in Captain Bradford's company of Vose's Regiment during the Virginia campaign. Henry P. Johnston, *The Yorktown Campaign and the Surrender of Cornwallis 1781* (New York, 1881), pp. 32-33. Washington to Lafayette, 21 April 1781, *WGW*, vol. 21 (1937), p. 421.

21. Lafayette to Nathanael Greene, from Baltimore, 17 April 1781, Idzerda, *Lafayette*, vol. IV, pp. 37-38.

22. Johnston, *Yorktown Campaign*, pp. 33-35.

23. "Nathaniel Nason's Book" (Continental Army 1781-1782 / Massachusetts Line, First Regiment / Returns of Clothing Camp Equipage and Provisions ... kept by Nathaniel Nason, Lieutenant and Quartermaster / Col. Joseph Vose's Regiment) (Manuscript), donated in 1930 to the Sons of the American Revolution, Washington, D.C., present location of document unknown, photocopy courtesy of Henry M. Cooke IV of Randolph, Massachusetts. Forty-three provision returns for "Col. Voses Regiment L[igh]t Infantry" cover the period from February 22, 1781 to July 3, 1781 (women are listed on eighteen of the returns). During this period Vose's Light Infantry Regiment consisted of eight companies and went from a high of 433 enlisted men to a low, at one point, of 314. Some of the names mentioned in the return, as well as the several journals are as follows:

Joseph Vose, colonel, 1st Massachusetts Regiment

Nathaniel Nason, 1st lieutenant, 1st Massachusetts Regiment

Benjamin Gilbert, ensign, 5th Massachusetts Regiment

George Webb, captain, 4th Massachusetts Regiment

Peter Clayes, captain, 6th Massachusetts Regiment

Robert Bradford, captain 2nd Massachusetts Regiment

24. Lafayette to Nathanael Greene, 17 April 1781, Idzerda, *Lafayette*, vol. IV, p. 39. Johnston, *Yorktown Campaign*, pp. 34-37. Boatner, *Encyclopedia*, p. 1153.
25. Johnston, *Yorktown Campaign*, pp. 46-47.
26. *Ibid.*, pp. 47.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 46-48, 51-53.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 53-59.
29. Gilbert to his father, from Newcastle, Virginia, on the Pamunkey River, near the head of the York River, 3 July 1781, Shy, *Winding Down*, p. 45.
30. Johnston, *Yorktown Campaign*, pp. 60-70. "Following the action [at Spencer's Ordinary] Cornwallis withdrew into Williamsburg ... Lafayette took up a position with headquarters at Tyree's Plantation about 20 miles from the British camp. In the interval from June 26 to July 4 Cornwallis remained camped and resting in Williamsburg...", Hatch, *The Affair Near James Island*, p. 177. , Gilbert to Park Holland, August 1781, Shy, *Winding Down*, p. 47. Burke Davis, *The Campaign That Won America - The Story of Yorktown* (New York, 1970), pp. 124-127.
31. "Journal of Captain John Davis of the Pennsylvania Line", *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. 5 (1881), p. 292. "... The Baggage Being arrived ... I intend to allow plentifully what is Commonly Called light Baggage. Tents Shall also Remain ...", Lafayette to Anthony Wayne, 30 June 1781, Idzerda, *Lafayette*, vol. IV, pp. 222-223.

Number of Days the Baggage was Present  
With Vose's Battalion

(Compiled from the Ebenezer Wild, *PMHS*, pp. 137-140, 142, 143, 146, 149, 150, and Captain John Davis, *PMHB*, p. 292.

A. May 6 to September 10, 1781 (entire four month period)

(The time of the arrival of the baggage from Baltimore until Lafayette's detachment joined the French troops at Williamsburg)

Days Present	Days Not Present (Sent to the Rear, etc.)	Total Days
84	44	128

(Baggage present with the troops 66% of the time)

B. May 6 to July 7, 1781 (first two months)

(The time of the arrival of the baggage from Baltimore until Cornwallis' forces crossed over the James River towards Portsmouth)

Days Present	Days Not Present (Sent to the Rear, etc.)	Total Days
30	33	63

(Baggage present with the troops 49% of the time)

C. July 8 to September 10, 1781 (final two months)

Days Present	Days Not Present (Sent to the Rear, etc.)	Total Days
54	11	65

(Baggage present with the troops 83% of the time)

32. Captain John Markland, *PMHB*, p. 105. Jacob Nagle served with Proctor's Artillery at the Battle of Brandywine. He described his situation prior to the action: "The provision waggons being sent a way, we ware three day without provisions excepting what the farmers brought in to sell in their waggons and what the soldiers could plunder from the farmers. I went to my father [the lieutenant colonel of the 9th Pennsylvania Regiment], his rigment being on our right, and received a neats tounge from him, and Mr. Hosner bought some potatoes and butter the evening before the British arrived, and we concluded to have a glorious mess for breakfast. Mr. Hosner gave it to one of the soldiers wives that remained with the army to cook for us in the morning. Early in the morning, she had the camp kittle on a small fier about 100 yards in the rear of the Grand Artilery, with all our delicious meal, which we expected to enjoy (on the 11 of September 1777). The Brittish at this time hoisted the red flag on the top of the farm house on the rige of the hill a breast of us, and their artilery advancing towards us down the ploughed field, we then begin a cannonading ... Unfortunately one of the enemies shot dismounted the poor camp kettle with the fier and all its contents away with it. The woman informed Mr. Folkner. He replied, 'Never mind, we have no time to eat now.' Therefore we made another fast day." John C. Dann, ed., *The Nagle Journal - A Diary of the Life of Jacob Nagle, Sailor, from the Year 1775 to 1841* (New York, 1988) pp. 6-7. General Orders, 10 September 1777, *WGW*, vol. 9 (1933), p. 200. Washington to the President of Congress, *ibid.*, 11 September 1777, p. 208. General Orders, 13 September 1777, *ibid.*, p. 213; General Orders, 10 July 1777, *ibid.*, vol 8 (1933), p. 375. Kenneth Roberts, *March to Quebec - Journals of the Members of Arnold's Expedition* (Portland, Me., 1980), pp. 337, 338, 483, 495, 556, 683. Mayer, *Belonging to the Army*, p. 199.

33. Gilbert to John Soule, 5 May 1781, from Bottom Bridge, Virginia (a crossing on the Chickahominy River, east of Richmond), May 5, 1781, Shy, *Winding Down*, pp. 41-42. Captain John Davis, *PMHB*, p. 292. "Itinerary of the Pennsylvania Line From Pennsylvania to South Carolina, 1781-1782.", *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. 36 (1912), p. 275. Ebenezer Wild, *PMHS*, p. 146. Repeated references to brush "bowries", huts and booths were made by Wild during the summer of 1781, see pp. 143-149. Other references to temporary shelters may be found for other dates, most notably the journal of Captain John Davis, *PMHB* and the Feltman journal cited below.

The Use of Brush Huts in the Continental Army: When caught without tents the soldiers of the Continental Army sometimes constructed temporary shelters for themselves. Jeremiah Greenman, a sergeant in the 2nd Rhode Island regiment, wrote on November 26, 1777 that the troops were "Continuing in ye woods near haddonfield ... we built both [booth] to lay in very cold." Four days later Greenman "... at night came to wite ma[r]sh ware we built up housan of branchis & leavs to keep ye rain off but not much good." These booths or "housan" have been described as "a temporary dwelling covered with boughs, canvas, or other slight material" and were built in a number of forms. Variousy referred to as booths, bowers, bowries, brush huts, bush houses, "sheds [of] ... Pailing & Bords" and, a term used predominantly by British troops, wigwams, some of these

appellations denoted a shelter of a particular type of construction.

As before noted, temporary shelters were used intermittently throughout the war. They first saw widespread use by both armies in 1777 and during the 1778 Monmouth Campaign both British and German troops used wigwams and huts for shelter on their march from Philadelphia to Sandy Hook. In addition to the latter part of 1777, in 1780 a large portion of the Continental Army made use of temporary shelters for an extended period. General Washington wrote on August 24, 1780 that "Our Army before now has been almost a whole Campaign without Tents. And this spring were from the 6th. of June till sometime in July, without a single one for either Officers or men (making use of bush Bowers) as a substitute." One illustration of makeshift shelters can be seen in Xavier Della Gatta's painting of the "Battle of Paoli." This painting shows clearly a representation of brush huts or booths in the American camp. Robert C. Bray and Paul E. Bushnell, eds., *Diary of a Common Soldier in the American Revolution: An Annotated Edition of the Military Journal of Jeremiah Greenman* (DeKalb, IL, 1978), p. 87, entries for 26 and 30 November 1777, and page 98, note 131. Washington to Thomas Blanch, 24 August 1780, *GWJ*, vol. 19 (1937), pp. 433-434. Richard M. Ketchum, ed., *The American Heritage Book of the American Revolution* (New York, 1958), p. 225. "Battle of Paoli" by Xavier Della Gatta (1782) painting owned by the Valley Forge Historical Society. For a detailed study of temporary shelters see:

**"We ... got ourselves cleverly settled for the night': Soldiers' Shelter on Campaign During the War for Independence,"**

**part III, "'The camps ... are as different in their form as the owners are in their dress ...': Shades, Sheds, and Wooden Tents, 1775-1782":**

1. "Not a bush to make a shade near [at] hand ...":  
Bush Bowers, "Arbours," and "Shades," 1776-1782
2. "An elegant shade ...": Officers' Bowers
3. "The Men employed in making Bowers before their Tents ..." Shades for Common Soldiers
  - a. Pennsylvania and New Jersey, 1777 to 1780
  - b. Virginia Peninsula, 1781
  - c. New York, 1782
  - d. Bowers and British Troops, 1776 and 1781
4. "The troops hutted with Rails and Indian Corn Stocks ..."  
Sheds, Planked Huts, and Straw Tents, 1775-1777

*Addendum*

**"The ... roof consists of boughs, or branches ... curiously interwoven ...": The "curious edifice" Built at West Point to Celebrate French Dauphin's Birth, 1782**

<https://www.scribd.com/document/351091933/The-camps-are-as-different-in-their-form-as-the-owners-are-in-their-dress-Shades-Sheds-and-Wooden-Tents-1775-1782>, *Military Collector & Historian*, vol. 53, no. 4 (Winter 2001-2002), 161-169.

**part V, "'We built up housan of branchis and leavs ...': Continental Army Brush Shelters, 1775-1777"**

- A. "This night we lay out without shelter ...": Overview of American Soldiers' Campaign Lodging
- B. "We maid us some Bush huts ...": Brush Shelters, 1775 and 1776.
- C. "Huts of sticks & leaves": Washington's Army in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, 1777.

*Military Collector & Historian*, vol. 55, no. 4 (Winter 2003-2004), 213-223.

<https://www.scribd.com/document/134028900/Part-V-We-built-up-housan-of-branchis-leavs-Continental-Army-Brush-Shelters-1775-1777-Series-We-got-ourselves-cleverly-settled-f>



**part VI, "'We built up housan of branchis & leavs ...': Continental Army Brush Shelters, 1778-1782**

A. "Found the regiment lying in bush huts ...": Continental Troops on Campaign and on the March, 1778-1780.

B. "Pine huts," "Huts of rails," and "Bush Tents": Virginia and the Carolinas, 1781-1782.

C. "Return of Camp Equipage": More on Tents.

*Military Collector & Historian*, vol. 56, no. 2 (2004), 98-106.

<https://www.scribd.com/document/133993824/Part-VI-We-built-up-housan-of-branchis-leavs-Continental-Army-Brush-Shelters-1778-1782-Series-We-got-ourselves-cleverly-settled>

34. General Orders, 27 August 1777, *WGW*, vol. 9 (1933), p. 139. General Orders, 19 September 1780, *ibid.*, vol. 20 (1937), page 73. John C. Dann, *The Revolution Remembered - Eyewitness Accounts of the War for Independence* (Chicago, IL, 1980), pp. 243-246.

35. *Ibid.*, pp. 243-246. Richard Howell to William Maxwell, 24 June 1778, *George Washington Papers*, Presidential Papers Microfilm, (Washington, DC, 1961), series 4, reel 50.

36. Lafayette to Nathanael Greene, 17 April 1781, Idzerda, *Lafayette*, vol. IV, p. 39. Washington to Lafayette, 11 April 1781, *ibid.*, p. 25. Ebenezer Wild, *PMHS*, pp. 137, 141. "... The Baggage Being arrived ...", Lafayette to Anthony Wayne, 30 June 1781, Idzerda, *Lafayette*, p. 222.

37. "Military Journal of Major Ebenezer Denny", *Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania*, vol. VII (1860), p. 238.

38. Captain John Davis, *PMHB*, p. 291. "Journal of Lieut. William McDowell of the First Penn'a. Regiment, in the Southern Campaign. 1781-1782", John Blair Linn and William H. Egle, *Pennsylvania in the War of the Revolution, Battalions and Line 1775-1783*, vol. II (Harrisburg, Pa., 1880), pp. 297. "Diary of the Pennsylvania Line. May 26, 1781 - April 25, 1782", *Pennsylvania in the War of the Revolution*, page 677. The foregoing "Diary" includes the journals of both Captain Joseph McClellan and Lieutenant William Feltman.

39. General Orders, 14 June 1781, *WGW*, vol. 22 (1937), p. 215. "Return of Women that draw provisions in several Brigades and Corps of the Army. New Windsor", 1781, *Revolutionary War Rolls*, reel 136, p. 251.

40. Lesser, *Sinews*, p. 202, The strength report used for comparison with the preceding document is the May 1781 return of Washington's army. This return agrees with the June 1781 provision return except for the instance of the 1st New York as noted in the narrative. The June 1781 strength return is not used due to the fact that it had not been compiled yet and, when it was compiled, the composition of the brigades had been altered. T.W. Egly, Jr., *History of the First New York Regiment 1775-1783* (Hampton, N.Y., 1981), pp. 186-188. Muster roll of the Commander in Chief's Guard, July to December 1781, *Revolutionary War Rolls*, reel 129.

41. Robert Middlekauff, *The Glorious Cause - The American Revolution, 1763-1789* (New York, 1982), pp. 571-575.

42. Provision and regimental strength returns of the 9th Massachusetts Regiment, *Henry Jackson Papers*, vol. 4, pp. 379-443. Henry Jackson's 9th Massachusetts Regiment belonged to the 3rd Massachusetts Brigade, this brigade consisted of: 3rd Massachusetts, Col. John Greaton; 6th Massachusetts, Lt. Col. Calvin Smith; and the 9th Massachusetts, Lesser, *Sinews*, p. 224. 43. For a discussion of camp women serving in the hospitals see, Mayer, *Belonging to the Army*, pp. 39, 195-96. One return has been found which shows a concern over the health of the women and children with the 9th Massachusetts Regiment. In December of 1781 the following list was made:

Return of the Men Women and Children in Colo. H.  
Jackson's Regiment who have not had the Small Pox

Men 154  
Women 9  
Total 169

The discrepancy in the totals may indicate that there were six children included in the total. It is probable that camp followers were inoculated against smallpox along with the soldiers of the regiment, *Henry Jackson Papers*, vol. 4, p. 329.

During the period of the returns for the 9th Massachusetts Regiment there were varying numbers of men who were sick and absent who may have been nursed by some of the women of the unit. The following numbers were abstracted from the regimental returns found in the *Henry Jackson Papers*:

<u>1782</u>	<u>Sick Absent, etc.</u>
May 24	5 at New Windsor
June 7	5 at "
June 21	7 at "
June 29	4 at "
July 5	5 at "
	8 "At the Hutts New Boston"
July 12	5 at New Windsor (9 "At the Hutts on Guard")
July 17	5 at New Windsor
July 19	5 at New Windsor 9 "At the Hutts"
July 28	24 at Dobb's Ferry 5 at New Windsor 7 at "Hutts NB" 3 at Verplank's Point
August 16	5 at New Windsor 4 at the "New Hospital"
August 19	4 at New Windsor 4 "New Boston"
August 23	3 at New Windsor 5 "New Boston"
August 31	4 at New Windsor 4 "New Boston"
September 6	2 at New Windsor 6 "New Boston"

**Historian Bob McDonald makes clear the location of "New Boston" hut site:  
"Without question, the site is 1/4 mile north of Forsonville, in rear of Garrison, indeed on the**

eastern shore. This is the hutment named 'Camp Robinson's Farm' by Calver & Bolton, that name actually being correct for the summer cantonments which the C[onnecticut] Line repeatedly used immediately surrounding the Robinson House. From the L[ibrary]O[f]C[ongress] Henry Jackson Papers, there's a great 9th MA[ssachusetts] O[rder]B[ook] which beautifully tracks the 3rd Brigade, establishing that, contrary to Thacher's belief, the huts were not reoccupied, but were built new beginning in Dec. 1781."

Bob goes on to relate, "The New Boston site is located along the road that runs northwest from Continental Village, ending just north of the Robinson House. Starting from the latter, it is located about one-third of the way to the Albany Post Road, perhaps just past the "hump" in the cross road, known as the Old West Point Road."

44. General Orders, 4 June 1782, *ibid.*, vol. 24, (1938), p. 309.

45. General Orders, 4 June 1782, *ibid.*, p. 309.

46. Henry Jackson to Washington, from "Camp Nelsons point", 12 August 1782, *GW Papers*, series 4, reel 86.

47. For the reasons and methods by which the various posts were garrisoned see the following: "With your Regt. you are to relieve the Garrison's of the Posts at Dobb's and King's Ferries; those at the latter, viz. Stony and Verplanks points, are to be relieved by whole Companies, consisting, as nearly as may be, of the same number of Men which are now stationed there; with these you will leave a Field Officer; and proceed yourself with the remainder of the Regt. to the Post of Dobb's ferry, where you will relieve the Garrison of the Block House in such manner as you shall judge proper, and encamp the rest of your Regt immediately under the cover of the Block House ... the post of Dobbs ferry is now the only avenue of intercourse with the Enemy, by Flags ... Upon your being relieved, you will deliver over these Instructions to the relieving Officer, as a standing Regulation for the direction of the Commandant of the beforementioned posts ...", Washington to John Greaton, colonel 3rd Massachusetts Regt., commanding officer of the 3rd Massachusetts Brigade, 14 June 1782, *WGW*, vol. 24 (1938), pp. 339-341. "Agreeable to your Excellency's orders of the 14th Ulto. I marched with the eight Battallion Companies of the Regiment under my Command from this place to Kings Ferry - I releived the Posts of Verplanks and Stoney Point with three Companies under the Command of Lieut. Colo. Hull and proceeded with the other Five to Dobbs Ferry releived that Post also

On the 28th was releived by the 2d. Connecticut regiment ...", John Greaton to Washington, from "Hutts New Boston", 1 July 1782, *GW Papers*, series 4, reel 86. "The 1st. Connecticut regiment will march the same day [Thursday the 8th] to releive the 9th Massachusetts regiment at Dobb's ferry, Stoney and Verplanks point.", General Orders, 5 August 1782, *WGW*, vol. 24 (1938), p. 466.

48. "The Light Infantry of this army is to be organized and commanded in the following manner: The four flank companies of Massachusetts from the 1st. to the 4th. regiment inclusive to compose a battalion under the orders of Major Oliver, four others from the 5th. to the 8th. to compose another battalion under the orders of Major Ashley; these two battalions to form a regiment and to be commanded by Colonel Henry Jackson.

The two remaining flank companies of Massachusetts [the 9th. and 10th.], the flank company of the 5th. Connecticut and that of Rhode Island is to form a Battalion under the command of Major Dexter ... [this and another battalion] to form a battalion under the command of Colonel Webb ...", General Orders, 21 August 1782, *ibid.*, vol. 25 (1938), pp. 46-47. Vol. 25, General Orders, 31 August 1782, *ibid.*, pp. 97-98.

49. "... the whole Army, the Garrison of West Point excepted, will move down and take a position upon Verplank's Point in the course of the present Week.", Washington to the Contractors for the Moving Army, 25 August 1782, *ibid.*, p. 65. General Orders, 30 August 1782, *ibid.*, pp. 93-95.
50. Washington to a Board of Officers, 12 June 1781, *ibid.*, vol. 22 (1937), p. 203. "Return of the number of Women and Children in the several regiments and Corps stationed at, and in the vicinity of West Point and New Windsor, that drew Rations under the late Regulation, shewing also the Number of Rations allowed for Women and Children by the present system", 24 January 1783, *Revolutionary War Rolls*, reel 136, pp. 259-260.
51. Strength returns of the Continental Army, May 1781 and January 1782, Lesser, *Sinews*, pp. 202, 242. In May of 1781 the composition of the listed brigades was as follows:

#### 1781 Brigade Composition

- New Hampshire - 1st New Hampshire Regt.
- 2nd New Hampshire Regt.
- Rhode Island Regt.
- 1st Massachusetts - 3rd Mass. Regt.
- 6th Mass. Regt.
- 8th Mass. Regt.
- 10th Mass. Regt.
- 2nd Massachusetts - 2nd Mass. Regt.
- 4th Mass. Regt.
- 9th Mass. Regt.
- 3rd Massachusetts - 1st Mass. Regt.
- 5th Mass. Regt.
- 7th Mass. Regt.

By January 1783 the brigades were altered:

- New Hampshire - 1st New Hampshire Regt.
- 2nd New Hampshire Regt.
- 1st Massachusetts - 1st Mass. Regt.
- 4th Mass. Regt.
- 7th Mass. Regt.
- 2nd Massachusetts - 2nd Mass. Regt.
- 5th Mass. Regt.
- 8th Mass. Regt.
- 3rd Massachusetts - 3rd Mass. Regt.
- 6th Mass. Regt.

52. General Orders, 28 December 1782, *WGW*, vol. 25 (1938), pp. 479-480. Washington to the Superintendent of Finance, 29 January 1783, *ibid.*, vol. 26 (1938), pp. 78-79. Washington to Henry Knox, 8 March 1783, *ibid.*, pp. 199-200.
53. Linda Grant De Pauw, "Women in Combat - The Revolutionary War Experience", *Armed Forces and Society*, vol. 7, no. 2 (Winter 1981), pp. 209-226.
54. These company ratios are based on a comparison of the 1781 and 1783 main army returns of

women. In 1781 there was 92 women in 117 companies of foot (infantry); for 1783 there were 382 women in 162 companies of foot. It is assumed that each regiment carried the full nine companies which were called for in the army organization. Wright, *Continental Army*, pp. 127, 158.

55. Robert Morris to Washington, 5 February 1783, *G.W. Papers*, series 4, reel 90. Blumenthal, *Women Camp Followers*, pp. 15-21, 19, 24-26, 28-29, 32, 33-34, 38-39. Kopperman, *British High Command and Soldiers' Wives*, pp. 19-20, 26-28. Washington to the Superintendent of Finance, 29 January 1783, *WGW*, vol. 26 (1938), pp. 78-79.

56. Journal of Dr. Jabez Campfield, 4 August 1779, Cook, *Journals of Sullivan's Expedition*, page 53. The good doctor wrote concerning the life of a soldier: "How hard is the soldier's lott who's least danger is in the field of action. Fighting happens seldom, but fatigue, hunger, cold & heat are constantly varying his distress." Considering these living conditions the presence of women would have been a great help, even if only psychological, in easing the day to day existence of the troops. Washington to the Superintendent of Finance, 29 January 1783, *WGW*, vol. 26 (1938), pp. 78-79.

### General Bibliography

Walter Hart Blumenthal, *Women Camp Followers of the American Revolution* (New York, 1974), "British Camp Women on the Ration", pp. 15-54. "American Camp Women Under Washington", pp. 57-90.

Mark M. Boatner III *Encyclopedia of the American Revolution*, (New York, 1966)

Peter F. Copeland, *Working Dress in Colonial and Revolutionary America* (Westport, Ct., 1977)

Linda Grant De Pauw, "Women in Combat - The Revolutionary War Experience", *Armed Forces and Society*, vol. 7, no. 2 (Winter 1981), pp. 209-226. An interesting though flawed article which contends, without sufficient evidence that "tens of thousands of women were involved in active combat." For a rebuttal see McKenney's "Comment."

Paul E. Kopperman, "The British High Command and Soldiers' Wives in America, 1755-1783", *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, no. 60 (1982), pp. 14-34.

Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army During the War of the Revolution - April 1775 to December 1783* (Baltimore, Md., 1982)

H.A. Mayer, *Belonging to the Army: Camp followers and the Military Community during the American Revolution*, PH.D. dissertation, College of William and Mary, 1990. An excellent work which covers both male and female followers serving in many capacities.

Janice E. McKenney, "'Women in Combat': Comment", *Armed Forces in Society*, vol. 8, no. 4 (Summer 1982), pp. 686-692. A well reasoned rebuttal to De Pauw's article which refutes most of the claims made concerning women in the ranks.



## D. Additional Articles on Continental Army Female Followers by the Author

### "The multitude of women': An Examination of the Numbers of Female Camp Followers with the Continental Army":

1777 and 1780: A Common Thread?

1776 to 1782: "Necessary to keep the Soldier's clean"

1781: "Their Wives all of whom ... Remained" - Women on Campaign With the Army

1781: "The women with the army who draw provisions"

1782: "Rations ... Without Whiskey" - Colonel Henry Jackson's Regimental Provision Returns

1783: "The proportion of Women which ought to be allowed ..."

*The Brigade Dispatch* (Journal of the Brigade of the American Revolution)

Three parts: vol. XXIII, no. 4 (Autumn 1992), 5-17; vol. XXIV, no. 1 (Winter 1993),

6-16; vol. XXIV, no. 2 (Spring 1993), 2-6 (Reprinted in *Minerva: Quarterly Report*

on Women and the Military, vol. XIV, no. 2 (Summer 1996)).

<http://revwar75.com/library/rees/wnumb1.htm>

### "The number of rations issued to the women in camp.': New Material Concerning Female Followers With Continental Regiments":

Female Followers with the Troops at Wyoming: Prelude to Sullivan's Campaign, 1779

"Provisions and Stores Issued to the Grand Army": Female Followers at Middlebrook, 1779

"The women belonging to their respective corps": Further Analysis and Comparison of the Returns of Women

*The Brigade Dispatch*, vol. XXVIII, no. 1 (Spring 1998), 2-10; vol. XXVIII, no. 2

(Summer 1998), 2-12, 13. <http://revwar75.com/library/rees/wnumb2.htm>

### "The proportion of Women which ought to be allowed...': An Overview of Continental Army Female Followers"

1. "A clog upon every movement. ": Numbers

2. "Rations... Without Whiskey": Women's Food Allowance

3. "Some men washed their own clothing.": Women's Duties and Shelter

4. Orders Concerning Women in the Summer of 1777 (Delaware Regiment of Maj. Gen. John Sullivan's Division)

5. "Coming into the line of fire.": Women on the March or on Campaign

#### Appendices

A. An Estimate of Females with Continental Army Units on the March to Yorktown, 1781

B. Mess Roll of Capt. John Ross's Company, 3d New Jersey Regiment

C. Tent Assignments in Lt. Col. John Wrottesley's (3d) Company, 1st Battalion, Brigade of (British) Guards (Including "British Army orders regarding female followers, summer 1777")

D. Period Images of Army Followers or Poor to Middling Female Civilians

E. Photographs of Army Women at Living History Events

F. Online Articles Pertaining to Female Camp Followers and Related Subjects During the War for American Independence

G. Other Authors' Monographs (Women Following the Army)

*The Continental Soldier*, vol. VIII, no. 3 (Spring 1995), 51-58. *ALHFAM Bulletin* (Association of Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums), vol. XXVIII, no. 4 (Winter 1999), 18-21.

<https://www.scribd.com/doc/255868431/The-proportion-of-Women-which-ought-to-be-allowed-An-Overview-of-Continental-Army-Female-Camp-Followers>

“Remember[ing] the Ladies’: Margaret Johnson and Elizabeth Evans, Women of the New Jersey Brigade” <http://www.scribd.com/doc/235418684/Remember-ing-the-Ladies-Margaret-Johnson-and-Elizabeth-Evans-Women-of-the-New-Jersey-Brigade>

“Reading List: Women and the Military During the War for Independence,” *The Continental Soldier*, vol. IX, no. 1 (Winter/Spring 1997), 52.  
<http://revwar75.com/library/rees/wread.htm>

“To Cash paid the Revrd. John Mason for Servant Hannah’s wages ...’: Hannah Till, General Washington’s Wartime Cook”  
<https://www.scribd.com/document/330715949/To-Cash-paid-the-Revrd-John-Mason-for-Servant-Hannah-s-wages-Hannah-Till-General-Washington-s-Wartime-Cook>

“Suspecting the prisner to be a tory ...’: A Continental Army Court Martial, July 1777,”  
*The Continental Soldier*, vol. IX, no. 1 (Winter/Spring 1997), 45-46, and,  
*Military Collector & Historian*, vol. 60, no. 3 (Fall 2008), 167. This court martial of a civilian took place in Brigadier General Prudhomme de Borre’s 2nd Maryland Brigade, Major General John Sullivan’s Division. De Borre’s brigade contained the 2nd, 4th, and 7th Maryland Regiments, along with the German Regiment and Hazen’s 2nd Canadian Regiment. Of particular interest in these proceedings are the arguments used to entice the soldiers to desert, reasons for their dissatisfaction, and the testimony of Alice Wood, attached to Hazen’s Regiment, who had left her children behind when she followed her husband into the army.  
<https://www.scribd.com/document/364103303/Suspecting-the-prisner-to-be-a-tory-A-Continental-Army-Court-Martial-July-1777>

Some in rags and some in jags,’ but none ‘in velvet gowns.’ Insights on Clothing Worn by Female Followers of the Armies During the American War for Independence,” *ALHFAM Bulletin* (Association of Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums), vol. XXVIII, no. 4 (Winter 1999), 18-21. <http://www.scribd.com/doc/122521121/Some-in-rags-and-some-in-jags-%E2%80%99-but-none-%E2%80%99in-velvet-gowns-%E2%80%99-Insights-on-Clothing-Worn-by-Female-Followers-of-the-Armies-During-the-American-War-for>

## American Revolution Army Women Names Project

“Spent the winter at Jockey Hollow, and ... washed together while there ...”: American Revolution Army Women Names Project - Continental Army

<https://www.scribd.com/document/322026319/American-Revolution-Army-Women-Names-Project-Continental>

The aim of this project is to compile names and biographies of women attached to the military forces of the War for American Independence, 1775 to 1783; Whig (Continental), French, Spanish, British, German, and Loyalists. This includes females (and their offspring) who followed the troops on campaign, or served in a camp, garrison, or other settled military post (including artificers and other military support groups). Spouses and retainers of both enlisted men and officers are eligible. The project will begin with Continental army and Whig militia female followers. Eventually, we hope to convince people with special knowledge of the other nations' armies involved to participate.

Material may be sent to the editor at [ju\\_rees@msn.com](mailto:ju_rees@msn.com) or via Facebook messaging (John U. Rees). Names must be accompanied by supporting source material and a transcription of the same. Please include available pension narratives and as much detail from other sources as is available. Contributors will be listed with their submissions. Appended is the recommended structure for entries (courtesy of Eliza West, revised by John Rees):

### BASIC FACTS

Date of birth/age at time of first service with the army:

Date of death:

Names of spouse(s) and date of marriage(s):

Names and birthdates of children:

### MILITARY FACTS

Unit (army, regiment, company, etc.):

Campaigns:

Garrison locations:

Battles participated in/observed:

Active dates, during which she was part of the military establishment:

### DOCUMENTATION

(Personal account, pension record, company or other returns, etc.)

NARRATIVE(S) and/or WEBLINK(S)