

**THE HIGHLANDS WAR: CIVILIANS, SOLDIERS, AND ENVIRONMENT IN
NORTHERN NEW JERSEY, 1777-1781**

A Dissertation

Submitted to

The Temple University Graduate School Board

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

by

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December 2018

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation studies the problem of military shelter and its impact on the Continental Army's conduct during the War of American Independence. It examines ideas and practices about military housing during the eighteenth century; how Continental officers sought and obtained lodging for themselves and their men, refinements in military camp administration; how military decisions regarding shelter affected strategy, logistics, and social relationships within the army; as well as how quartering practices structured relations between civilians and the military. This dissertation maintains a geographic focus on Northwestern New Jersey, a region it defines as the Highlands, because this area witnessed a Continental Army presence of greater size and duration than anywhere else in the rebelling Thirteen Colonies. Using official military correspondence, orderly books, diaries, memoirs, civilian damage claims, and archaeological studies, this dissertation reveals that developments in military shelter formed a crucial yet overlooked component of Continental strategy. Patriot soldiers began the war with inadequate housing for operations in the field as well as winter quarters, and their health and morale suffered accordingly. In the second half of the war, Continental officers devised a new method of accommodating their men, the log-hut city. This complex of hastily-built timber huts provided cover for Patriot troops from the winter of 1777-1778 through the end of the war. This method, unknown in Europe, represented an innovation in the art of war. By providing accommodations secure from enemy attack for thousands of soldiers at little cost to the government and little inconvenience to civilians, the log-hut city made a decisive contribution to the success of the Continental Army's war effort.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of the dissertation would not have been possible without the support of a number individuals and institutions. First and foremost, Dr. Gregory J.W. Urwin championed my project from initial concept through the final draft of the dissertation. He challenged me to better myself as a writer and researcher, and to whatever extent this dissertation is clear and engaging to read is due in large part to his persistent critiques and revisions. My committee members Drs. Andrew C. Isenberg and Jessica Roney took time away from their own busy schedules to give ample suggestions to improve my work. My outside reader, Dr. Mark Edward Lender, likewise proved generous with his time in reading several chapter drafts and offered his enthusiastic support.

Completing this dissertation would have been impossible without the financial support of several institutions. The Temple University Graduate School awarded me with a four-year teaching fellowship that covered the costs of tuition and provided a stipend for living expenses. The David Library of the American Revolution awarded me a one-month fellowship that allowed me to conduct extensive and uninterrupted research in that institution's holdings. A one-week fellowship at the Society of the Cincinnati likewise permitted me to mine that organization's collection. The New Jersey Historical Commission and North Jersey Heritage Trail Association each provided awards that covered travel and research costs. Finally, a three-month residential fellowship at the Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington afforded me time to write and explore archival holdings in the Washington, DC area.

The support of friends, family, and colleagues made the entire process of writing this dissertation a pleasant one. The staff at Morristown National Historical Park made for wonderful companions during my summers working and researching at the park. Dr. Sarah Minegar and Dr. Jude Pfister in the curatorial department aided me with every research request. Park historian Eric Olsen deserves a very special thank you for the numerous insights and tips he generously provided from his own experiences studying Morristown's role in the revolution. Every conversation with him yielded new ideas that found their way into this dissertation. My partner, Rabeya Rahman, consistently offered to read drafts of various chapters and happily accompanied me on numerous research trips. Finally, my parents and brother supported my studies with hot meals, a roof over my head, and numerous fixes to computers and cars. I dedicate this dissertation to them.

To my parents

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Historians attribute the Patriot victory during the War of Independence to an attritional strategy which, especially after 1778, eschewed giving battle with the enemy except under favorable conditions. The Rebel commander-in-chief, General George Washington, maintained an aggressive outlook, but shortages in men, money, and supplies limited his opportunities for seeking battle. Raids, skirmishes, and prolonged periods of limited movement characterized the war in the Middle Colonies.¹

The Continental Army that waged the war represented a complex organization that included thousands of soldiers and officers, women camp followers, and animals that needed immense quantities of food, clothing, and camp equipment. Historians have described the army as a mobile city due to its immense concentration of men and materiel.² To pursue a positional strategy with a regular army, Continental commanders required bases where men could be sheltered, provisioned, and trained. Consequently, fortifications, magazines, and above all encampments underpinned the Continental Army's positional strategy, providing the infrastructure that facilitated a successful war effort. Mathew H. Spring, a leading historian of the British Army in the American Revolution, has succinctly summarized the importance encampments assumed in Continental strategy: "Prudent rebel commanders shunned major confrontations on any but the most advantageous terms by ensconcing their armies in inaccessible and/or virtually impregnable fortified camps in the interior (like Washington at Valley Forge in Pennsylvania or Morristown in New Jersey)."³

The renowned encampments at Valley Forge and Morristown effectively housed Patriot soldiers, equipment, and supplies. So too did lesser-known installations such as those at Redding, Connecticut, and Middlebrook, New Jersey. Beginning with Valley Forge in late 1777, General George Washington's army came to spend half the year in camp, typically retiring from the field in December and not returning to active operations until June. Timber-built cabins known as huts were the defining features of these Continental camps. Each housed about a dozen enlisted men or a smaller number of officers, and offered superior protection from the elements compared to the tents used during mobile campaigns. At Valley Forge and Morristown, as well as Middlebrook, the Hudson Highlands in New York, and Redding, the Continental Army built thousands of log huts interspersed with alleys, streets, and parade grounds arrayed in dense complexes. The army effectively created urban, military environments from what had been field and forest.

This dissertation studies these encampments, what it refers to "log-hut cities." These log-hut cities represented a distinct innovation in the art of war during the eighteenth century. European armies relied on different forms of shelter. Tents sufficed for active campaigns during warmer weather, but in wintertime commanders retired to billets in civilian homes or large, permanent barracks located in towns and fortresses. When European troops built timber shelters, they intended to use them only temporarily. Such structures garnered a reputation as "shanties."

The Continental Army attempted to imitate its contemporaries during the war's first years. An absence of barracks, civilian opposition to billeting, and the fact that there were frequently not enough houses or public buildings available nearby forced George

Washington and his generals to seek alternatives. The densely-built arrangements of log huts first implemented at Valley Forge proved itself a serviceable option for housing a regular army.

Historians and popular audiences have remembered the winter quarters at Valley Forge especially, but also Morristown, as crucial episodes in the birth of the United States. Valley Forge has received the majority of both professional and amateur historians' attention. Popular works have typically focused on similar themes: the endurance of soldiers in the face of poor weather conditions and logistical difficulties resulting in supply shortages, training, and reorganization. More recently, Wayne K. Bodle's *The Valley Forge Winter: Civilians and Soldiers in War* has shifted scholarly attention away from the sufferings of soldiers in camp and onto the complex interplay between the military and civilian social worlds brought into close proximity during the encampment. The Valley Forge encampment's significance for historians, Bodle has argued, was what happened when the Continental and British armies descended "on a diverse population in a divided community with complex and ambiguous historical experiences with war and peace." While Morristown has received less attention, studies of the 1779-1780 winter encampment have focused on the cold temperatures, snow, and supply shortages that afflicted the army. Other Continental camps, such as the 1778-1779 winter quarters at Middlebrook, New Jersey and Redding, Connecticut, have gone largely overlooked by both professional historians and popular writers.

These various interpretations miss the most basic function of encampments, to provide armies shelter from the elements, facilitate organization and training, and provide bases from which to operate. Within their huts, soldiers found protection from wind and

snow and bonded with their comrades. On the streets and parade grounds of the log-hut cities, regiments assembled, drilled, and paraded. To the log-hut cities came the supply wagons that sustained the army, not always adequately. From the log-hut cities, the Continental Army initiated its campaigns each spring. To refer to these installations as winter quarters obscures the fact that Washington's men typically spent from December through June stationary in their log-hut quarters.

Despite the plethora of works on the American War of Independence, few historians have examined Continental encampments in their own right. Scholars have paid little attention to where and how encampments were constructed, how camp settings regulated social divides between officers and men, how encampments affected the lives of nearby civilians, or their direct impact on strategy. Indeed, studies of types of shelter, decisions regarding camp placement, and camp administration remain largely absent from the period's military historiography. Historians have produced voluminous work on how soldiers were recruited, supplied and led, as well as their weapons, uniforms, and training. Armies' housing has by contrast received little attention. Yet shelter stands among the most basic human needs.

Eighteenth-century military experts recognized the importance of camps and quartering to the overall art of war. They used the term "castrametation," to denote the study of military camps. While military theorists most often focused on the details of camp placement and tent arrangements, castrametation could also refer to broader aspects of military encampments including their administration and strategic role. This dissertation mostly uses the more familiar terms quartering, cantoning, lodging, shelter, and cover to refer to military housing.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Europe's armies honed their practice of castrametation. They developed a series of methods for sheltering soldiers, ranging from substantial barracks built on national soil to tents and shanties erected while on campaign. Billeting in public buildings and private homes remained prevalent in all armies of the mid eighteenth century. Treatises guided officers in how to maintain orderly and healthy camps, arrange billets for their men in civilian communities, and ensure their quarters' security from enemy attack.

This dissertation studies Patriot military housing during the War of Independence. It seeks to show that housing, far from representing a mundane aspect of military minutiae, instead comprised a crucial component of making war. It focuses on the Patriots' Main Army, the force of regulars under General George Washington's direct command that waged campaigns mostly in the Middle States during the Revolution. The Main Army's experiences reveal that decisions on where and how to shelter carried logistical, political, and social consequences. A lack of adequate quartering infrastructure undermined the Continental Army's ability to fight the British on equal terms in 1775 and 1776. Attempts to implement European housing methods, centering on barracks and billets, proved unsustainable given the material conditions and political attitudes prevailing in the Thirteen Colonies. These problems forced the Continental Army to develop new sheltering methods. The resulting form of housing, the log-hut city, represented an innovation in castrametation and one of the signal achievements of Washington's army during the war.

Developing the log-hut city into a viable quartering method proceeded slowly. The new Continental way of castrametation did not culminate with Valley Forge.

Shoddy construction, lax sanitary regulations, and poor logistical organization weakened Washington's ranks throughout the 1777-1778 winter. During subsequent years, Washington and his men refined their approach to making quarters. From late 1778 onwards, the Main Army took position in the hills of northern New Jersey. In these camps at Middlebrook and Morristown, Washington and his staff studied the most successful practices in hut-building from specific units and disseminated them throughout the army. A more experienced officer corps enforced sanitary regulations that made for healthier camp environments. Major General Nathanael Greene, quartermaster general for much of this period, strove to find camp sites that would prove healthy and easy to supply. Thus the Continentals implemented a widespread program of shelter-building during the 1778-1779 and 1779-1780 winters that provided the army with adequate housing for the first time.

While this dissertation covers the Main Army's shelter throughout the northern states, it focuses primarily on the army's experience in the Highlands region of northern New Jersey. This region, defined as the area west of the Watchung Mountains and north of the Raritan River centered on Morris and northern Somerset counties, experienced a sustained Continental presence of greater duration than anywhere else in the emergent United States. The army settled there in early 1777, and remained through much of 1778, 1779, and 1780. Attempts to house the army with the civilian population in 1777 revealed the political, administrative, and medical shortcomings of early-war quartering practices. Conversely, the encampments of Washington's Main Army at Middlebrook (1778-1779) and Morristown (1779-1780) demonstrated the viability of the log-hut city. Improvements made in building and administering camps in this region proved the most

important advances in Continental castrametation, and the quartering infrastructure built in northern New Jersey served as winter shelter for the Main Army's largest concentrations. These secure bases of operations and their surroundings consequently provide an ideal setting for a new examination of developments in the administrative development of the Continental Army.

The army's success in crafting a new method of castrametation developed as a response to the environmental conditions encountered in the region. While Revolutionary War scholars have made passing references to the landscapes in which armies campaigned, the natural resources on which they subsisted, and the climatic conditions they endured, few have included natural forces within the main themes of their works. Northern New Jersey's topography provided defensive protection, but it also constrained where the army could and could not camp. New Jersey's readily available fodder for animal teams attracted Continental officers' attention as they shifted the army's position during the fall of 1778, while access to food, fuel, building materials, and fresh water determined where Patriot soldiers cantoned for the winter. Landscapes also proved central to civil-military relations. Continental officers grappled with civilian complaints brought on by the intentional and inadvertent destruction soldiers' wrought on agricultural improvements wherever the army marched and camped.

In addition, disease influenced Continental operations in New Jersey. Improving health and cleanliness within encampments lay at the heart of the army's successful adoption of the log-hut city as its preferred form for winter quarters. Disease also affected relations with civilians. The smallpox outbreak that accompanied the army's first stay in Morristown in early 1777 colored civilians' views of a Continental presence in the

region. Contending with these difficulties of terrain, resources, and health formed a crucial component to a successful Patriot strategy. In short, the environment is crucial to understanding the army's conduct in providing shelter, and its effects.

Beyond the environment, political and social concerns also influenced Continental decisions regarding shelter. Attempts to emulate European methods early in the war derived from Continental leaders' desire for a respectable army equivalent to that of its opponents. In addition, civilian opposition to billeting made the log-hut city an attractive alternative. The adoption of this method led to a decline in civilian complaints about the army's conduct upon the Continentals' return to New Jersey in late 1778. Thus the army's method of shelter reflected not only local environmental constraints, but also the republican political climate of the rebellious colonies. Late-war strategy with the log-hut city at its center served both political and military ends.

Winter encampments themselves reflected the social hierarchy present in Washington's army. Housing conditions differed for officers and enlisted men, reinforcing the privileges enjoyed by the former and exacerbating the discontent felt by the latter. Not coincidentally, log-hut cities hosted several significant mutinies amongst the rank-and-file during the war's closing years. Therefore the social history of the Continental Army cannot be fully understood without studying how it sheltered.

Historiography

Works of synthesis have generally downplayed the importance of winter encampments beyond the well-trod accounts of soldiers' suffering at Valley Forge and Morristown. Because of military historians' traditional predilection for battles and sieges,

most general works on the war in New England and the Middle States focus on the fighting around New York City in 1776, the Trenton and Princeton campaign of 1776-77, and the fighting around Philadelphia in 1777 and 1778. The Continental Army's struggles to find adequate housing outside of Boston in 1775, New York in 1776, and northern New Jersey in early 1777 have been overshadowed by accounts of battles at Bunker Hill, Long Island, and the crossing of the Delaware. Narratives of the War of Independence generally turn their attention southwards after 1778, following the shift in British strategy that initiated fighting in Georgia, the Carolinas, and ultimately Virginia. This has led most broad works to overlook the War of Independence in the North after 1778, the period when the Continental Army relied extensively on log-hut cities for shelter northern New Jersey and the Hudson Valley. Despite the Continentals' long-term presence outside of New York, historians have long relegated this phase of the conflict to secondary status. The eminent military historian of the War of Independence, Don Higginbotham referred to these years in the North as "the Dull Period."⁴

This characterization seems apt when viewed solely through the narrow prism of dramatic military campaigns. Yet in recent decades, historians have moved away from operational topics to focus instead on institutional, social, and cultural perspectives. Under the influence of the "New Military History," academic scholarship on the War of Independence has embraced studies of war and society rather than battles and campaigns. One subfield has emerged that places the Continental Army within the context of the new nation's emerging republican ideology. Scholars such as Mark Edward Lender, James Kirby Martin, Richard Kohn, Charles Royster, and Robin K. Wright have highlighted political culture within the Continental Army, emphasizing the officer corps' deference to

civilian leadership even as the former's preference for a respectable, regular army clashed with the latter's belief in the primacy of the militia system and fear of standing armies. Encampments, which often witnessed the confiscation of civilian property for military purposes and brought the new standing army into prolonged contact with specific civilian communities, highlight how military practice often differed from republican ideals.⁵

Other scholars have focused on the composition of the Continental Army. These historians have argued against popularly-held notions of the army representing the patriotic fervor of a broad cross-section of American society. Instead, scholars such as Charles Neimeyer, Mark Edward Lender, James Kirby Martin, and Caroline Cox have argued that as the war dragged on, men from the lower orders of society, many of them immigrants and overwhelmingly landless, filled out the Continental ranks. Neimeyer and Cox have emphasized the social divisions between officers and enlisted men, contrasting the poverty of the rank-and-file with the generally middling or well-to-do officers. These scholars have not directly examined the army's encampments, even though these sites most clearly exhibited the social cleavages within the army.⁶

Supply shortages frequently exacerbated both social tensions within the army and sewed discord between Continental leaders and civilian political authorities. Historians including Erna Risch, E. Wayne Carp, and Holly Mayer have studied how the rebellious colonies supplied the Continental Army, looking at the institutional, political, and social forces that sustained Patriot forces, often insufficiently, through eight years of warfare. Carp's study has emphasized the flaws in the army's supply system, tying these failures to national political culture's suspicion of strong national authority and standing armies. Mayer's work has complicated this interpretation, arguing that the military and civilians

forged what she has termed a “Continental Community” that sustained the army even as national institutions failed. Both Carp and Mayer’s work intersect with Continental encampments, highlighting the logistical difficulties faced therein, as well as relationships forged with local civilian populations. Neither focused specifically on the New Jersey encampments.⁷

Looking beyond the Continental Army’s institutional, political, and social contexts, another group of historians has shifted their attention from armies to the civilian world in which those forces operated. Prominent within this subfield have been studies of the war’s impact on regional populations. Historians of the southern theater, including James Piecuch, Michael McConnell, and Wayne E. Lee, studied southern Loyalists, Virginia, and North Carolina, respectively, while Judith van Buskirk, Wayne Bodle, Steven Rosswurm, and Richard Buel covered New York, Valley Forge, Philadelphia, and Connecticut, respectively. Together, this school has traced the impact of armed forces’ presence on civilian society through political polarization, property damage, geographic dislocation, and financial distress. These works have added to the understanding how the experience of conflict varied from region to region.⁸

Despite the turn away from operational studies, historians have continued to examine the Continental Army’s development as a fighting force. Robert K. Wright has articulated a narrative of institutional development that culminated with the reforms Major General Freidrich Wilhelm von Steuben implemented in drill and administration enacted at Valley Forge. According to this interpretation, the Continentals had by 1778 matured into a competent standing army capable of operating on par with their British opponents. Despite this purported maturity, the Continental Main Army fought in few

major engagements following the 1778 Battle of Monmouth. Therefore there are few cases available to evaluate the army's operational, tactical, and logistical maturation. Joseph R. Fischer's study of the 1779 campaign against the Iroquois argues the army's competent execution of operations in western New York indicated administrative and tactical progress from the war's early years, although logistical and coordination problems persisted.⁹

This accumulated scholarship on the Continental Army's political attitudes, social composition, and logistics all intersect with the period of the New Jersey Highlands winter encampments. During the 1778-1781 period, Continental officers handled the severe disagreements with national and state governments over quartering, finance, and recruitment, and the army's logistical shortcomings were displayed most glaringly during the 1779-1780 winter at Morristown. Social divisions between officers and men also erupted in the form of indiscipline and mutiny, the most serious of which occurred outside of Morristown in early 1781. Additionally, the prolonged contact between civilians and soldiers in the New Jersey Highlands makes that region an appropriate laboratory for testing the war's social impact, an approach that has hitherto confined itself to other theaters. Finally, this dissertation, focusing on the Continental Main Army's presence in New Jersey after 1778, demonstrates that force's strategic, logistical, and administrative maturation. The Highlands encampments thereby serve as a setting for reexamining the most important topics in recent War of Independence scholarship.

Few historians have approached the War of Independence from an environmental standpoint. Military environmental history is an emerging subfield in which a small number of historians have examined American wars. Lisa Brady's *War Upon the Land*

has analyzed Union campaigns in the South during the Civil War through an environmental lens, uncovering how southern terrain constrained Union operations, as well as the impact of the Union's destruction of landscapes on Confederate morale. The War of Independence has not received a similar treatment. Scholars including Elizabeth A. Fenn and John R. McNeil have looked at the role of disease during the war, but none have treated landscapes and natural resources. Historian David C. Hsuing has studied the New England environment during the 1775-1776 Boston campaign, arguing that the fight over natural resources, specifically for food, fuel, and water supplies, shaped combat during the winter and spring. Hsuing's model, placing natural resources as a central point of contention between closely positioned opponents, as well as between military and civilian interests, is a useful approach to analyzing the military situation in New Jersey, as is Brady's emphasis on geographical constraints on operations and the connection between landscapes and civilian morale. Health, sanitation, and disease remain an understudied topic in the Continental Army's history, despite the importance of these topics to successful military operations.¹⁰

Winter encampments have received scant scholarly attention, mostly monopolized by Valley Forge. John Buchanan's *The Road to Valley Forge*, Paul Lockheart's *The Drillmaster of Valley Forge*, and John Trussell's *Valley Forge: Birthplace of an Army* reiterate traditional interpretations of the encampment emphasizing harsh weather, supply shortages, and reforms to drill and administration. Wayne Bodle's aforementioned study revises these and provides a scholarly model for understanding the military, social, and political forces in play at winter encampments. Bodle has contested several assumptions associated with Valley Forge, including the notion that the encampment witnessed the

transformation of the army into a competent battlefield force under the tutelage of von Steuben. Instead, Bodle discerned a Continental strategy for winter fighting, focusing on rebel forces' arc of posts stretching from Trenton to Valley Forge to Wilmington, which denied British access to the region's supplies and protected local Whig populations. By securing supplies and civilian support while denying the same to British forces, the Continental Army safeguarded Pennsylvania's revolutionary government and confined Crown gains to the immediate Philadelphia region. Under Bodle's treatment, Valley Forge is best understood as a nexus of civil-military interaction and a headquarters directing small-scale military operations, rather than simply ground for training and rest during the winter. Bodle's work has uncovered how log-hut cities formed an integral component to Continental strategy. Scholars have yet to show how the Patriots applied the lessons learned at Valley Forge during subsequent winters.¹¹

Given the recent turn towards institutional studies of the Continental Army and studies of the conflict's impact on civilian populations, it is surprising that so few historians have looked at the war in New Jersey, aside from those who covered the notable engagements that occurred within the state's boundaries.¹² The Continentals' extended presence in New Jersey makes it an ideal setting for studying that army's development, and also the war's impact on civilians. Leonard Lundin's *The Cockpit of Revolution*, published in 1940, remains the only monograph to cover the state's wartime experience, and it focuses mostly on the period before 1777. Several local-history works have highlighted the war's impact on specific areas, some of which have proven quite informative. Adrian C. Leiby's *The Revolutionary War in the Hackensack Valley* interprets Whig-Tory partisan conflict in northern New Jersey in the context of the

colony's Dutch population, while Michael S. Adelberg's *the American Revolution in Monmouth County* covers partisan conflict in central New Jersey. Volumes edited by James Gigantino and Barbara Mitnick feature recent work by a number of scholars, though few have engaged with questions of war and society, and none with the Highlands encampments.¹³

A handful of historians have examined the 1780 Morristown encampment, including Samuel Stelle Smith's *Winter at Morristown, 1779-1780: The Darkest Hour*, and Thomas Fleming's *Forgotten Victory: The Battle for New Jersey, 1780*. These works augment a small body of academic journal literature. John Lewis Seidel's unpublished dissertation on the Pluckemin artillery park covers the 1778-1779 encampment, as does *Middlebrook: The American Eagle's Nest*, by Carl Prince. The only work to comprehensively examine the Continental Army's experience in the New Jersey Highlands is John Cunningham's *Uncertain Victory*, a local history intended for popular audiences and rife with factual errors. No work on Morristown or New Jersey has yet achieved Bodle's sophisticated synthesis of military, political, and social history, and a true academic work on the conflict in New Jersey, emphasizing the crucial northwestern region, remains to be written.¹⁴

This dissertation aims to fill the aforementioned historiographical gap by studying the Continental Army's evolving shelter policy, with a particular emphasis on its encampments in the New Jersey Highlands. Based on the correspondence of Continental Army officers, diaries, New Jersey civilians' damage claims, pension claims, orderly books, archaeological research, and official records, it highlights the army's experience in the New Jersey Highlands and adds to the literature on winter encampments, war and

society, and army administration. It reveals the importance of encampments during the war, extending and complicating a narrative that scholars have confined to the winter of 1777-1778. It explores the impact of the war on New Jersey, adding the perspective of that understudied region to our understanding of the conflict's impact on civilians. By maintaining positive relations with civilians, enforcing order and discipline amongst the rank-and-file, crafting a respectable image, and refining its methods for building encampments, the Continental Army survived intact its winters in the New Jersey Highlands and pursued an effective positional strategy, which thereby resulted in a victorious war effort.

Part I of this dissertation establishes shelter as a crucial military problem facing the Continental Army during the war's first years. Chapter One traces the development of quartering practices in early modern Europe, their codification and dissemination in the printed works of the military enlightenment, and armies' experiences building shelter in North America before 1775. Chapter Two examines the shelter crisis of the war's first years, revealing how a lack of adequate shelter afflicted Washington's army in 1775 outside Boston and in 1776 in New York and New Jersey.

Part II explicates the resolution to the Continental Army's housing crisis through its development of the log-hut city, with many of its key adaptations pioneered in the camps of the New Jersey Highlands. Chapter Three studies the beginnings of the transformation in Continental castrametation in 1777 and 1778, tracing improvements in disease prevention and camp administration made in northern New Jersey in early 1777 through the first attempt to build a log-hut city for winter quarters at Valley Forge at the end of that year. Chapter Four focuses on the 1778-1779 winter encampment at

Middlebrook, New Jersey. Here, the army addressed many of the failings of the Valley Forge encampment, thereby establishing the log-hut city as the Patriots' preferred form of quarters. Chapter Five studies the difficult 1779-1780 winter at Morristown, where the log-hut city proved successful in the face of poor weather and the collapse of the nation's finances.

Part III looks at the social and political implications of the army's quartering choices in New Jersey. Chapter Six studies the relationship between the Continental Army and northern New Jersey's civilian population. Despite the disruption caused by a prolonged military presence, the transition from billets to log huts and improved discipline that reduced the damage soldiers inflicted to civilian landscapes helped to mitigate antagonisms between the army and the local population. Conversely, Chapter Seven argues that differences in accommodation, discipline, and privilege present in the log-hut city exacerbated social alienation between officers and men. Camp spaces thereby facilitated the widespread mutinies that swept Continental quarters in the New Jersey Highlands in 1780 and 1781.

The log-hut city formed the backbone of the Patriots' Fabian strategy and positional warfare in the Middle States. Maintaining the Main Army close to New York City, yet within defensible, hilly terrain, enabled Washington to husband the army's strength while pursuing a cautious strategy against a stronger enemy. The improvements and adaptations the Continental Army made to its sheltering practices during its winters in the New Jersey Highlands decisively shaped the development of the log-hut city into a viable form of military housing. The Main Army adopted concentrated winter deployments in rough terrain only after periods of debate and experimentation with other

options. It also grappled with the logistical, social, and political consequences of its strategy, including supply shortages, disciplinary lapses, and civilian agitation. By the war's final years, Washington and his subordinates had overcome most of these problems. The log-hut city built at New Windsor that housed the Rebel soldiers during 1782 and 1783 represented the best accommodations the Continentals ever knew. The log-hut city stood apart from European methods, a distinctly American way of providing winter shelter in the field. Washington's men could honestly claim themselves the most proficient builders of timber camps since the Romans. The army's ultimate success in implementing the log-hut city bequeathed a tradition of quartering soldiers in North America that endured for the next century. Armies mobilized to fight the early republic's wars, as well as both sides in the Civil War, used log huts for winter shelter. Valley Forge may have stood as the first and most well-known instances of building this type of shelter. This dissertation argues, however, that the log-hut city's ultimate success, and with it the viability of Patriot strategy, lay with the improvements made to quartering troops made at the winter encampments in the New Jersey Highlands.

Chapter 1 Notes

¹ Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1977), 3-17.

² Wayne E. Lee, *Barbarians and Brothers: Anglo-American Warfare, 1500-1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 197.

³ Mathew H. Spring, *With Zeal and Bayonets Only: The British Army on Campaign in North America, 1775-1783* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010), 8.

⁴ Examples of works of synthesis that have largely ignored encampments other than Valley Forge include: Christopher Ward, *The War of the Revolution*, 2 vols., (New York: MacMillan, 1952); Howard H. Peckham, *The War for Independence: A Military History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958); Don Higgenbotham, *The War of American Independence: Military Attitudes, Policies, and Practice, 1763-1789* (New York: MacMillan, 1971); Robert Middlekauff, *The Glorious Cause: The American Revolution, 1763-1789* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).

⁵ Richard H. Kohn, *Eagle and Sword: The Federalists and the Creation of the Military Establishment* (New York: Free Press, 1975); James Kirby Martin, and Mark Edward Lender, *A Respectable Army: The Military Origins of the Republic, 1763-1789* (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, 1982); Charles Royster, *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and the American Character 1775-1783* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979); Robert K. Wright, *The Continental Army* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1986).

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CHAPTER 2

EARLY-MODERN STANDING ARMIES AND THE PROBLEM OF SHELTER

Continental Army officers entered the War of Independence with ideas about how to shelter soldiers that stood at odds with North American realities. As a result, Patriot forces struggled to find adequate housing during the war's early years. These ideas derived from the European military experience that shaped how Rebel officers envisioned their new army. As with tactics, equipment, and dress, Continental officers tried to emulate European examples to shelter their men during the War of Independence. Therefore, it is crucial to first examine how contemporary European armies came to shelter their men in order to understand the Continental Army's decisions about where and how it quartered. By distinguishing the conditions that shaped quartering practices in Europe from those prevailing in North America, this chapter reveals the origins of the shelter crisis that Continentals faced during the first years of the war.

European quartering practices proved an imperfect model for the Continental Army. Armies in the Old World relied chiefly upon billets in towns and villages for their shelter, increasingly supplemented by purpose-built barracks at home and tents in the field. North America lacked a comparable number of significant settlements in which generals could have billeted their men, while the state and national governments created after 1775 lacked the fiscal power to provide Patriot forces with sufficient tentage or barracks-building materials during the conflict's early years. The second section of this chapter traces the influence of European military treatises on future Continental officers' ideas about military housing. The works of the military enlightenment available to North

American readers engaged with different aspects of castrametation, including strategic positioning of camps, camp administration, and construction, but did so superficially while maintaining their focus on traditional areas of interest, including infantry drill, fortification, and artillery. The Continental Army therefore entered the War of Independence with a limited intellectual grasp of castrametation. This chapter concludes by showing how practical experience in North America's imperial wars likewise revealed the inadequacy of the colonies' military housing infrastructure. The Continental Army thus operated initially without a coherent set of ideas for military housing, or what might be called a doctrine of castrametation. It was left to adapt its inherited notions to North American conditions to produce new methods of housing soldiers.¹

Barracks, Billets, and Tents: Housing Europe's Standing Armies

Soldiers' shelter arose as a distinct problem for European authorities with the advent of permanent standing armies during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As part of what historians term the Military Revolution, European states transitioned from armies composed of short-service mercenaries that often disbanded at the end of a campaign to long-term troops who stayed under arms year round. Armies also experienced a concurrent expansion in size. Consequently, sovereigns had to provide housing for their men throughout the year.² Historians have yet to recognize shelter as a distinct issue in early-modern military history. Scholars of the formation of powerful centralized governments during this period have examined barracks as part of larger projects such as fortress construction and the raising of permanent regiments. Meanwhile, institutional histories of individual armies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have covered tents and camp equipage as part of their broader treatments of

armies' maturation. The following section synthesizes the various studies of early-modern military shelter in its different forms. It reveals that housing, rather than being a minor aspect of military minutia, represented an important and dynamic component of the practice of war.

Essentially, a standing army, as a large, densely-packed population, constituted a mobile city. Similar to other high-population density entities, armies faced problems in finding sufficient shelter, food, fuel, as well as maintaining sanitary conditions in their residences. Whenever soldiers took position near civilian populations, these problems multiplied as a mobile military city superimposed itself on existing communities. Such concentrations of human bodies spread disease, undermined discipline, antagonized civilians, and overburdened the local housing stock. Military shelter demands led to the construction of new infrastructure in the form of barracks and fortresses, as well as refinements in camp administration and billeting practices in the field. Developments in military housing thereby contributed to the process of regularization that transformed European armies in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Nevertheless, even by the end of the Seven Years War, Europe's great powers had yet to provide comprehensive shelter solutions for their land forces.³

During the seventeenth century, civilians in continental Europe bore the brunt of standing armies' quartering demands. Within national boundaries, permanent regiments commonly lodged in garrison towns, with men taking shelter in houses and other buildings in town. This practice eased the crown's financial burden as it saved substantial funds that would have been needed to build and maintain dedicated structures for military housing.⁴ In France during most of the seventeenth century, and in Austria

and Prussia well into the eighteenth, rulers expected their subjects to share their homes with soldiers and provide men with rooms and cleaning services, as well as household items including salt, candles, and firewood, collectively referred to as utensils. Purpose-built permanent military housing remained rare, and some soldiers might also take refuge in unoccupied structures in and around their garrison towns.⁵

Although inexpensive, relying on billets to house the whole army within national borders carried several detriments. Maintaining strict discipline and preventing desertion proved difficult with the army constantly in close proximity to civilians. In Prussia, to deter such infractions, regulations stipulated corporal punishment for soldiers found guilty of damaging the property of their hosts. Conversely, townspeople who failed to meet their obligations to the army faced monetary fines. Despite these protocols, however, wherever soldiers spent extended periods quartered with civilians, discipline eroded.⁶ Billeting in houses also complicating mobilization and concentration at the outset of conflicts as garrison towns tended to be widely dispersed. Additionally, the abuses billeted soldiers inflicted on civilians, including property damage, theft, and rape, undermined support for the crown. Finally, the rapid growth of the army during the second half of the seventeenth century increased the army's housing needs beyond what could easily be found in civilian homes.⁷

Throughout Europe, from the late seventeenth century onwards, sovereigns and their administrators undertook reforms that provided standing armies with improved shelter. The most impressive changes occurred on home soil. Monarchs ordered the construction of permanent barracks to supersede the practice of lodging men in civilian houses. In France, for example, Louis XIV authorized the building of 160 barracks,

many of them situated within in the extensive fortress system erected along France's northwestern borders. These barracks could serve not only as housing for regiments during peacetime, but also shelter for armies on campaign on the frontier. This placement kept French troops away from heartland towns and close to the frontier locales where they would likely be needed.⁸ Likewise in Prussia during the mid-eighteenth century, the Hohenzollerns transformed quartering methods by initiating a program of barracks construction.⁹ When civilian residences lacked sufficient space, the Prussians supplemented household billets with "half-barracks," temporary wood structures built in the interstices between private homes. These structures alleviated some of the crowding created by billeting and added further space for accommodating the growing army during the eighteenth century.¹⁰ Prussia's longtime opponent, Austria, followed a similar trajectory, and began to build barracks after 1748.¹¹ Both states also converted abandoned or dilapidated buildings into makeshift barracks, though their inhabitants tended to find such structures unsanitary and unhealthy.¹² In Russia, only Moscow, St. Petersburg, and a few provincial towns hosted barracks by the end of the eighteenth century, and most of Tsar's soldiers continued to lodge in peasants' hovels.¹³

Britain's eighteenth-century army departed from its French and Prussian counterparts in that it operated amongst a more politically-empowered population suspicious of standing armies. During the seventeenth century, English civilians had suffered the pervasive billeting of troops during the civil wars of the 1640s and military buildups under the Stuarts following the Restoration. While householders were supposed to be able to cash a receipt with Parliament in exchange for payment for the inconvenience of accommodating soldiers, in actuality civilians rarely, if ever, received

financial recompense. During the late-seventeenth century, English civilians responded to these abuses by pressuring Parliament to restrict the army's quartering options. Consequently, Parliament passed the 1679 Disbandment Act, forbidding soldiers from billeting in private homes without the householder's consent, and reiterated this prohibition in the Mutiny Act of 1689.¹⁴

Britain kept its peacetime army small throughout the eighteenth century, reducing the redcoats' need for extensive quartering infrastructure. Nevertheless, facing legal restrictions unlike their counterparts in France or Prussia, British commanders sought alternatives to billeting as means for sheltering their men. In regions that experienced an enduring military occupation, such as Ireland and Scotland, permanent barracks accommodated redcoats without antagonizing local civilians.¹⁵ Just as in France and Prussia, these expensive structures remained in short supply throughout the eighteenth century, and left Britain with too few spaces to house its army. When situated in areas devoid of barracks, the army paid to lodge troops in local inns and taverns, and made use of whatever public buildings could be found. This dearth of barracks or suitable substitutes revealed the negative impact housing shortages had on operations. The lack of sufficient shelter inhibited the army's mobility within Great Britain, with regiments frequently strung out while on the march as individual localities could accommodate only a fraction of the unit at a time. Even when stationary, a garrison lost cohesion with men in groups of three or four distributed into public houses beyond barracks and fortresses.¹⁶

Not until the Napoleonic Wars would the barracks-state fully take hold in Europe. Prior to 1800, barracks proved insufficient for the rapidly-expanding armies' needs. In France, the number of new recruits raised during Louis XIV's later wars

exceeded the state's ability to erect additional barracks in which to house them. Thus even in the mid-eighteenth century, much of the French army continued to find shelter in civilian homes and public buildings in towns and villages. For Europe's most powerful military bureaucracy, barracks could only partially alleviate the burden of housing the army.¹⁷ Similar conditions prevailed in Prussia and Austria as well. *Ancien Regime* governments proved more adept at recruiting and arming their soldiers than providing them with sufficient permanent shelter. Nevertheless, barracks construction continued at a slow but steady pace among continental Europe's great powers through the late eighteenth century, and a recruit entering service during that era enjoyed more comfortable accommodations than his forebears, while civilians in town likewise must have appreciated the diminished military disruptions to their daily lives.

Civilians also most commonly bore the burden of providing housing for armies on campaign during the early-modern era. Between battles, soldiers most frequently took shelter in civilian homes, barns, and public buildings in the towns and villages wherever an army happened to find itself. Historian Myron Gutmann's study of civilian populations in the path of French armies in the early-modern Low Countries provides a vivid illustration of the burdens these people endured when housing soldiers. Generally, households could expect to house a number of men equal to the home's civilian habitation. Residents could thereby suffer the inconvenience of the doubling of the occupancy of their homes for the duration of an army's stay. Non-combatants and animals further increased these numbers, as a company of 100 men might include 20 women and 50 animals. Even at these rates, civilian homes could not accommodate all soldiers, and barns, public buildings, and crowding into the larger homes made-up the

difference. Larger towns, particularly those possessing fortifications, could expect to house an even greater ratio of soldiers to civilians.¹⁸ In seventeenth-century Flanders, villages of 2,000 or fewer residents faced the prospect of housing up to 10,000 men. Reflecting the continuities campaign quartering practices shared with domestic policies, commanders expected civilians to provide utensils. Upon taking up a billet, therefore, men could demand from a family commonplace household items including firewood, cooking implements, candles, pepper, and vinegar, which oftentimes led to great financial distress for their hosts. Longer stays brought increased demands, including stockings and a new pair of shoes. Some soldiers might leave a long billet with a “complete new wardrobe.”¹⁹

In addition to providing housing and utensils, civilian communities also bore the burden of supplying armies with food. Under the decentralized system of seventeenth-century war-making, officers expected their men to use their salaries to purchase their daily food needs from local farmers and merchants. The massive size of French armies in the Low Countries dwarfed their host towns, however, and strained the local countryside’s ability to sustain the troops. Small communities often confronted the overwhelming task of feeding armies several times their size, and failed to meet the challenge. In these instances, commanders compensated by foraging in the wider countryside, but if soldiers continued to go hungry they might turn to marauding.²⁰ In the countryside of Flanders, villages, farms, and forests frequently hosted armies up to eight times the peacetime population, bringing devastation to the local environment. Soldiers’ requisitions could deplete food stocks, while firewood requirements led to deforestation.

Even the physical impact of ten thousand men marching and camping could devastate land near camp sites and routs of march.²¹

During the eighteenth century, officers reined in their soldiers on campaign and mitigated their impact on civilian populations. The widespread implementation of drill and a rising proportion of officers to men made armies more disciplined, and therefore less prone to violence and plunder against non-combatants. Shifting cultural values, emphasizing restraint and order, also helped to curtail depredations as rulers instituted codes of conduct for their men, while newly-created military courts punished violators. The decline of religious motivations in warfare reduced antagonisms between soldiers and civilians, even when armies occupied enemy territory. Finally, as commanders wanted to maintain discipline and effectiveness, they sought to reduce prolonged contact with civilian populations.²²

With a formalized, enlightened approach to warfare taking hold in the eighteenth century, civilians living in the path of campaigning armies often faced fewer burdens. After 1700, the obligations of providing soldiers with food, clothing, and other utensils diminished. Central governments issued soldiers clothing and equipment, while many states hired private contractors to purchase and transport food to frontline units. The proliferation of fortresses along national frontiers provided reliable magazines from which armies now drew their supplies. Consequently, even families billeting soldiers during the eighteenth century could expect to provide only shelter and firewood to their tenants. Expanding state bureaucracies took charge of mediating these interactions between armies and civilians. Governments negotiated treaties of contribution with neutral or occupied communities, rather than leaving to soldiers themselves the task of

extracting money and supplies. Communities in war-torn regions also took steps to mitigate their suffering. The Principality of Liège, for example, created the position of military commissioner, making him responsible for facilitating foreign armies' search for lodging and supplies within the principality's territory and removing the burden of negotiation from individual town and village leaders. Financed with hard currency, the presence of soldiers in a town could stimulate the local economy.²³ Overall, what had been a predatory relationship between soldiers and civilian host communities in the seventeenth century progressed, in the best circumstances, towards one of co-existence by the middle of the eighteenth.

On campaign, fewer soldiers found themselves billeted in towns during the eighteenth century. More active central governments made their greatest impact on campaign shelter by supplying armies with larger numbers of tents. Prior to the eighteenth century, tents remained too few in number to cover large armies in the field. In France, for example during and immediately after the Thirty Years War, when billets in towns were unavailable, soldiers had commonly sheltered each night in hastily-built brush huts. While these huts presented no financial burden to army or state, they proved prone to leaks and drafts, and depended on locally available timber. The steady growth of standing armies of the later seventeenth and eighteenth century caused them to seek more reliable campaign housing. Thus during the latter years of the Sun King's reign, French troops discontinued the use of huts as their preferred temporary lodging and opted instead for tents. Provided by suppliers under contract from the French state, tents took less time to erect, were less prone to leaks, and more comfortable for soldiers than shanties.²⁴ Europe's other armies generally followed suit. Frederick the Great provided

his hard-marching blue coats with tents featuring canvas-covered floors, providing an added layer of protection from the elements.²⁵ Soldiers in a well-supplied army of the eighteenth century could hope to spend their nights covered by tents, even when campaigning at a distance from barracks or large towns.

Despite the spread of tents and barracks, a plurality of soldiers still took residence in civilian homes during this period. If the baggage train fell behind the infantry, or if rainy weather threatened to ruin an army's tents, nearby civilians again bore the brunt of the troops' housing needs. On the march, soldiers could expect to find shelter amongst civilians even for the briefest of respites. Notwithstanding Prussian battalions' fine tents, these units typically marched from village to village and spent their nights on straw beds laid down in barns, houses, and public buildings.²⁶ Despite the increased bureaucratic oversight prevailing after 1700, civilians could suffer from sanctioned plunder, especially in central Europe. Prussian armies of the mid-eighteenth century continued to demand hay, grain and livestock from villagers under the threat of destruction of their property, and satisfied their firewood needs by taking apart entire houses.²⁷ Just as with barracks, tents mitigated, but did not wholly safeguard civilians from inconvenience in sheltering soldiers.

Winter quarters first arose as an issue distinct from campaign shelter or domestic lodging during the seventeenth century. In earlier eras, armies in the field typically disbanded or retired to their home territory at the close of the campaign season. The increasingly large and long-term forces raised during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries required year-round shelter. During the Thirty Years War, commanders crafted new methods of obtaining housing for their men at year's end.

French generals operating in southern Germany during that conflict seized towns east of the Rhine late in the year to provide winter billets for their troops while denying such cover to their opponents. Doing so allowed French forces to remain in their theater of operations rather than withdraw back to their home territory and abandon whatever gains they had made that year. French Marshal Henri de la Tour d'Auvergne, Vicomte de Turenne, one of France's most successful generals of the Thirty Years War, articulated the benefits of winter quarters: "you can gain command of a tract of territory in which you have all the winter to refresh and remake your army."²⁸ During subsequent decades, most generals came to follow Turenne's advice and disperse their armies into nearby towns during the winter.

Compared to the improvements in sheltering practices on active campaign, methods of making winter quarters underwent few changes in the eighteenth century. To a limited extent, the civilian burden of providing shelter decreased during winter as it did for summer campaigns, as armies also began to build their own quarters. In the Low Countries, soldiers constructed small wooden barracks with straw and plaster coverings, followed by kitchens, stables, and even bridges. Nevertheless, armies only adopted this practice sporadically. Depending on the size of armies, availability of resources, and lateness of the season, building these rudimentary barracks could often prove unfeasible, and in such situations armies resorted to the tried method of wintering amongst civilians.²⁹ The relative novelty of keeping an army together year-round meant traditional and inexpensive methods relying on billets remained common. As barracks and fortresses proliferated by the mid-eighteenth century, commanders could also retire to these structures if they stood present near their theater of operations.

In practice, the need to find substantial shelter for all men under arms forced generals to spread their regiments over a great swath of countryside. Tents and shanties provided inadequate protection from the elements, and exposing tents to winter weather ruined them for use the following year. Therefore only barracks or other permanent structures would suffice. To find sufficient billets, armies typically dispersed for the winter, with detachments quartering in friendly, neutral, or captured enemy towns, barracks, or fortresses depending on the theater of operations. In the urbanized Low Countries, armies might find billets in a relatively small area given the large number of villages and towns that dotted the region. Elsewhere, dispositions conformed to the available housing stock, and soldiers went wherever they could find suitable quarters in towns and villages. In early 1758, the French army of the Comte de Clermont, operating in western Germany, occupied a chain of cantonments stretching seventy miles in length and fifty in width from Cologne to Cleves between the Rhine and Meuse rivers.³⁰ Further east, commanders dispersed their forces across entire provinces and packed troops into the larger towns. For example, during Frederick II's wars with Austria after 1740, he frequently distributed it in winter billets among Silesian, Saxon, or Bohemian towns depending on where his army found itself at the close of the campaign season, with his headquarters placed in the most significant town in the area. Billeting in towns continued as the preferred option for winter shelter, as homes and buildings provided the most comfortable and abundant accommodations. In the French Army, winter quarters in towns and villages remained official practice through the 1760s.³¹

Aside from skirmishes between outposts, retirement to winter quarters generally meant a complete cessation of military activity. Widely spread units could not conduct

large-scale operations or even institute strict training programs. Instead, armies took this time to repair damaged equipment, leaving men to rest in what contemporaries termed “quarters of refreshment,” while officers returned home on furloughs or took part in whatever social scene prevailed where they were quartered. In the French Army of the late eighteenth century, only one third of infantry officers and one quarter of cavalry officers stayed with their units during the winter. The rest departed for Paris or their home estates.³² Armies concentrated during spring, and gathered in large tent encampments. Here, new recruits and veterans alike could be trained, supplies gathered, and new equipment issued before the start of a new campaign. While winter quarters rarely witnessed the drama of the campaign season, they nevertheless provided armies with the crucial opportunity to rest men and repair equipment. An army that emerged from winter quarters healthy and well-rested could face the next campaign with an optimistic outlook.³³

Regardless of how a general quartered his men, disease persistently threatened eighteenth-century armies. Billets and tent encampments presented a particular problem for medical staffs due to the crowded conditions that allowed for the easy transmission of illnesses between soldiers, and frequently their civilian hosts as well. Diseases spread most quickly in winter quarters where crowded, dirty environments allowed for easy transmissions of illness. The youngest soldiers proved particularly susceptible since many had never been exposed to diseases prior to their arrival in camp. Up to a quarter of disease-related military deaths occurred during the first year of service.³⁴ Eighteenth-century medical services remained deficient at combatting disease. Even as growing bureaucratic strength, administrative skill, and officer professionalization streamlined the

conduct of war in recruitment, training, and logistics, military medicine continued to lag behind. While ill soldiers in camp or garrison did not often require the era's rudimentary surgical services that treated battlefield casualties, sick men in camp could hope for little more than a blanket and hospital bed. During stationary periods, commanders could also establish more permanent hospitals in nearby houses and buildings. French, Prussian, and Russian hospitals in particular suffered from corruption and bureaucratic neglect; one French hospital during the Seven Years War recorded a 40 percent death rate among its patients. Therefore, officers could best prevent the spread of disease by enforcing strict regimens of cleanliness and striving for sanitary conditions in camp.³⁵

Whether an army found itself housed in barracks, tents, huts or private homes, its stationary camps served as the most common setting for social life. Tents typically housed six men, similar to average billet size, providing soldiers with their most basic unit of comradeship while on campaign. Daily camp activities provided the rhythm for army life. Soldiers could expect to be placed on sentry duty, foraging detail, or spend their time in camp mending tents and uniforms as well as cleaning muskets.³⁶ Camp life reified the social differences between the rank-and-file and their officers. In contrast to the cramped spaces and daily drudgery enlisted men experienced, officers enjoyed more comfortable quarters and greater amenities. These included sheltering in a marquee, a large tent capable of housing one or two officers and several servants. When a marquee was unavailable, officers also made use of spare horse tents. Officers also enjoyed grander entertainment, with banquets, plays, and balls often characterizing inactive periods in camp.³⁷

Barracks likewise reflected social distinctions between officers and men. For example, in British barracks built on the North American frontier after 1763, the physical placement of officers and men reflected the social standings of the respective groups housed therein. Officers frequently enjoyed separate quarters from their men, in the case of the fort at Mobile, officers took quarters in town beyond the fort's walls. When residing within the confines of a fort, officers enjoyed their own rooms with material refinements including brick fireplaces, closets, and tile floors. Enlisted men, by contrast, made do with brick floors and stone fireplaces that doubled as interior partitions. Only at the smallest and most distant outposts did officers and men share closer accommodations.³⁸

By the wars of the middle of the eighteenth century, the proliferation of camps during winter quarters and on active campaign had grown into an integral part of military science. At the time of the Seven Years War, Europe's major land powers had all implemented improvements to military shelter, though barracks at home and tents in the field remained too few in number for these developments to be considered a true transformation in housing practices. A soldier might begin his career housed in a barracks. There, he could bond with his comrades and practice his drill separated from the indiscipline common to billets in towns. During a campaign, he might billet in a village along his rout of march, or take shelter in a tent provided by a civilian contractor hired by the state. When winter brought operations to a halt, he might take refuge in a barracks if his army controlled a nearby fortress, or build a makeshift barracks for himself if he could access the necessary building materials. Most likely, however, his regiment would withdraw to a large town removed from contact with the enemy. There

he could enjoy a comfortable billet in a civilian dwelling or public building. Come spring, his unit would march to a large, concentrated, tent encampment, where he would again drill in preparation for the next campaign.

Late eighteenth-century commanders recognized that the selection of proper quarters for their armies, whether they took cover in towns, fortresses, or tent encampments, produced important consequences for both the health and discipline of the troops and the potential outcome of an engagement. Prudent generals realized that camps could become battlefields and must therefore be placed in locales that rendered them easily defended. During the Seven Years War, Frederick the Great reflected on his Austrian opponents' employment of encampments protected by numerous artillery pieces, "and their ability to make better use than has been made before of natural obstacles in arranging the disposition of their troops."³⁹ The Austrians, it seemed to Frederick, always placed their camps in the most advantageous positions, using "ravines, cliffs, swamps, rivers, or towns," and choosing, wherever possible, to wage their campaigns in "only in rugged or forested country." Writing after the war in response to his opponents' predilection for making strong fortified camps, Frederick produced a work on the subject, *Elements des Castrametrie et de Tactique*, in which he listed castrametation alongside more renowned aspects of the military arts, tactics and artillery as topics his generals must study.⁴⁰

The fact that Europe's foremost soldier recognized the importance of castrametation reflected the developments in military shelter that had taken place over the course of the preceding century. By the time of the Seven Years War, commanders faced numerous decisions regarding shelter. The placement of camps affected operations, as a

camp sited in a vulnerable location could invite a stinging defeat, while a well-placed camp could provide a tactical advantage in the event of an enemy attack. Within camp, orderly arrangements of troops required officers' attention, otherwise indiscipline and poor sanitation could undermine an army's effectiveness. A network of barracks, fortresses, villages, and camps contained not only shelter, but also supply magazines and hospitals as well. This infrastructure undergirded eighteenth-century campaigns, giving commanders reliable and well-supplied quarters to which they could retire in the winter, and a foundation from which to launch operations during the active season. At the same time, wherever an army found shelter, officers needed to keep in mind the potential disruptions to civilian life that their troops' presence caused, as well as the possible erosions in discipline that might ensue from a long period quartered amongst the inhabitants. Castrametation thus required an officer's attention to strategic, administrative, and civil-military concerns.

Castrametation in Print: Intellectual Influences on Continental Quartering

The future commanders of the Continental Army learned of these developments in European castrametation practices via the texts of the military enlightenment. Throughout the eighteenth century, military scholars from famed commanders such as Frederick the Great to less-renowned officers such as Britain's Colonel Humphrey Bland produced various treatises, manuals, and guidebooks to instruct officers on military subjects. For Continental officers in particular, most of them bereft of experience on European battlefields, printed works provided education in the art of war. During the

War of Independence, the Hessian captain, Johann von Ewald, recorded that whenever his men captured Patriot baggage, he discovered his opponents' knapsacks "filled up with military books." Ewald listed some of the titles commonly owned by Rebel officers, including Frederick the Great's *Instructions to His Generals*, Johann Gottlieb Thielke's *Field Engineer*, and Thomas Auguste de la Roy Grandmaison's *La Petit Guerre*. Historian Sandra L. Powers has explicated Ewald's observation into a study of what military enlightenment works were known to North American readers at the time of the Revolution, and found that Continental leaders proved to be eager consumers of European military texts. Powers has documented more than sixty texts that were known to Patriot officers before or during the War of Independence, ranging from translations of such classics as Julius Caesar's *Commentaries* to recently printed theoretical works, including Campbell Dalrymple's *A Military Essay*. Prior to the establishment of formal military academies, these books served as the best means for an aspiring officer to learn about the military craft.⁴¹

The majority of the works known to Continental officers addressed the most salient military topics of the day: infantry drill and tactics, artillery ballistics, and the construction of fortifications. Most eighteenth-century writers devoted less attention to the topic of castrametation. Nevertheless, instructions for how to quarter troops, the best practices for maintaining camp sanitation, and recommendations for camp security and fortification did feature in a minority of military enlightenment texts. Of the pre-1775 works known to have been read by Continental officers, Humphrey Bland's *Treatise on Military Discipline*, Frederick the Great's *Instructions*, Bennett Cuthbertson's *For the Complete Interior Management and Economy of a Battalion of Infantry*, and Lancelot,

Comte Turpin de Crisse's *Essay on the Art of War*, all engaged with the placement, construction, or administration of military camps. This small body of literature comprised the intellectual underpinnings for the Continental Army's approach to quartering.

For generals, the works of Turpin de Crisse and Frederick the Great provided insights into castrametation as a strategic problem. De Crisse's text, purchased by George Washington early in his career in the French and Indian War, included a section on the strategic selection of quarters.⁴² The French writer emphasized the benefits gained by a commander aware of the strengths and weaknesses of his opponent's placement of winter quarters. He declared that a keen general "seeks to profit by all the advantages that the bad distribution of the enemy's winter quarters afford him," by surprising an isolated detachment or driving the entire opposing force to a more remote location.⁴³ To prevent such a catastrophe from befalling one's own men, de Crisse implored his readers to attentively study local geography when selecting sites for winter quarters. Commanders were to inspect nearby roads, valleys, forests, and heights to make themselves aware of any potential avenue of attack towards their quarters. By knowing the terrain, a commander could also spare his men the burden of extensive patrols and guard posts, thereby using geography to compensate for manpower.⁴⁴

Frederick the Great's *Military Instructions, Written by the King of Prussia, for the Generals of His Army*, largely paralleled de Crisse's recommendations, particularly regarding camp security. Unlike Frederick's *Elements des Castrametrie et Tactique*, which received only limited circulation, *Instructions* garnered a wide audience, including Continental officers in North America. To secure winter quarters, the Prussian king

recommended the placement of a chain of troops taking advantage of terrain features such as a river, mountain, or line of fortified towns. Employing examples from his personal experience, Frederick related how he had arranged his army behind the barrier of the Elbe River in Bohemia during the winter of 1741-1742, early in the First Silesian War. Frederick declared that rivers served as the least reliable type of defensive barrier because they were prone to freezing, as the Continental Army was to discover during the 1779-1780 winter in New Jersey. For the winter of 1744-1745, Frederick instead relied upon the Bohemian Mountains to safeguard his quarters. Like Turpin de Cresse, Frederick cautioned his generals to always remain wary of potential enemy attacks. In particular, he implored them to wait until they were certain their opponents had parceled out their armies into winter quarters before doing so themselves, lest they be surprised by a still active opponent. Frederick cited the historical example of the French Marshal Turenne, who had defeated the Elector of Brandenburg, Frederick William I, in the Alsace in 1675 by launching a surprise maneuver after Imperial troops had retired early to winter quarters.⁴⁵ Washington was to make a Hessian brigade pay for the failure of its commander Colonel Johann Rall's to heed such sound advice at Trenton in 1776. Later, fears of an enemy attack would delay Washington's decision to enter winter quarters in both 1778 and 1779.

While general works like Frederick's and Turpin de Cresse's placed castrametation within the broad context of the military arts, manuals more focused on unit management including Humphrey Bland's *Treatise on Military Discipline* and Bennett Cuthbertson's *For the Complete Interior Management and Economy of a Battalion of Infantry*, instead examined military camps as specifically administrative

problems. Bland's text outlined the various duties of regimental officers in arranging quarters for their men. It fell to regimental quartermasters to ride ahead of their units and select suitable sites, barracks, or villages for shelter. Bland's *Treatise* reflected the British tradition of avoiding billeting if possible. Only if barracks were not available to house officers with their men, did Bland recommend a regiment be "billeted in the houses which lie most contiguously to the eastern (fortified tent camp)."⁴⁶ In these instances, commanders were to assign individual regiments to specific villages or neighborhoods within larger towns to avoid the intermingling of units, with the concomitant confusion of responsibilities and command that might entail.⁴⁷ Prior to the soldiers' arrival, a regimental officer was to meet with town leaders and establish where the men were to stay.⁴⁸

Another popular work, Bennett Cuthbertson's *For the Complete Interior Management and Economy of a Battalion of Infantry*, first published in 1768, provided instructions for battalion commanders and covered topics ranging from the selection of subordinates and conduct of courts martial to the inspection of uniforms and equipment, and included a chapter on castrametation at the battalion level. Most of Cuthbertson's coverage focused on the practice of quartering soldiers in town while on campaign, indicating the prevalence of this method, although he also addressed barracks and tent encampments. Cuthbertson treated castrametation primarily as a disciplinary and organizational problem. Particularly when a battalion billeted in a town, officers faced the task of overcoming disruption to unit cohesion and erosion of discipline. Like Bland, he instructed battalion commanders to take care that individual companies occupied the same "lot" of houses within a village, and that each company's lot was "fixed in the most

contiguous manner, and as little intermixed as possible.”⁴⁹ If a battalion were to stay in a town for a longer period of a week or more, commanders were to inspect billets daily to ensure that soldiers had not left their prescribed homes. Men from the same units were to be quartered in the same house whenever possible. To minimize indiscipline, soldiers “addicted to irregularity” were to quarter with “discreet sober men,” and be placed as close as possible to the squad’s NCO. Similarly, raw recruits were to quarter with veterans.⁵⁰

Cuthbertson also established rules for regulating social interactions within the battalion and between soldiers and civilians. If men found their living quarters unsuitable, their commanding officers bore the responsibility of applying to the civilian magistrate to find better housing. Soldiers were to behave with “the utmost civility,” to the homeowners upon whom they were quartered. Cuthbertson’s instructions forbade soldiers from “disturbing the business of the family,” as well as expressing displeasure when properly provisioned. Conversely, if a landlord “used soldiers ill” or withheld “anything they have a right to demand,” soldiers could apply to their company commanders to redress their grievances.⁵¹

Compared to the disciplinary and organizational problems encountered when quartering a battalion in a town, barracks and tent encampments produced fewer concerns for commanders. Cuthbertson declared that armies should follow the same general guidelines set forth for quartering in towns when they found themselves in barracks; in the latter location, in which men stood directly under their officers’ observation, “there can be no excuse, for not having everything conducted in the most exact order.”⁵² In the field, ensuring the proper distribution of tents to accommodate all soldiers stood as an

officer's most important task.⁵³ During mobile campaigns, conducting proper training in striking tents quickly also occupied an officer's attention.⁵⁴

Cuthbertson, alone among his peers, provided guidelines for regulating gender relations within town billets. Soldiers were banned from bringing prostitutes into their quarters so as to prevent "the venereal distemper" that threatened to "weaken and enervate the strongest constitution." Cuthbertson also recommended that married sergeants and corporals should quarter close to their men, rather than with their partners. While some NCOs might prefer to seek more comfortable quarters for themselves and their wives, "no private convenience should be considered, where the good of the service is concerned."⁵⁵ Conversely, married "Private Men and drummers," of a battalion should enjoy the privilege of lodging with their wives, provided these were "sober, industrious women." Cuthbertson considered married specialists as less socially disruptive than common soldiers. Therefore, when landlords displeased with the prospect of providing lodging to common soldiers voiced their grievances to officers, Cuthbertson suggested married couples be substituted and new lodging found for the soldiers when possible.⁵⁶

In a departure from other treatises' focus on billets, barracks, and tents, Cuthbertson also included a brief section on hut encampments. In cases when an army remained in the field late in the season, soldiers required more substantial shelter than tents afforded. Referring to the practices of the British force in Germany during the Seven Years War, Cuthbertson provided a detailed plan for late-season shelter which consisted of a common tent surrounded with wicker, covered in straw, and secured with "square hurdles, large enough to cover a tent." As added precautions against the cold, Cuthbertson recommended battalions erect enclosed kitchens using "small trees" found

near camp, which would allow soldiers “to enjoy themselves with great comfort and satisfaction” around the kitchen fire. For the officers’ quarters, he suggested the building of sod chimneys attached to their marquees, ensuring not only warmth, but dry interiors as well.⁵⁷ Although the author referred to these winter shelters as huts, the cloth tent remained at the heart of the structure. When properly built, Cuthbertson claimed “nothing can be warmer than one of these habitations.” Conversely, his treatise proscribed other cold-weather shelter practices, including sinking huts into the earth for warmth and covering them with sod. Both of these methods, while they did provide an army with warm quarters, were “extremely damp,” and therefore unhealthy.⁵⁸ Continental troops would discover these shortcomings for themselves during the early years of the War of Independence.

Along with strategy and discipline, military enlightenment writers recognized camp sanitation as a crucial aspect of castrametation. Cuthbertson’s instructions for battalion commanders paid special attention to sanitation in quarters, with a particular focus on cleanliness in tent encampments and barracks. When camped in one locale more than one night, soldiers were to dig drainage trenches around their tents to prevent the inundation of the interiors during periods of rain. To further ensure that quarters remained dry, which was believed to deter infestation by vermin, Cuthbertson also instructed officers to have their men air out their blankets each day, and strike their tents for two hours at noon to allow straw floors to dry.⁵⁹ While in barracks, soldiers could expect to sweep floors clean twice a week, and were “never permitted to urinate” inside their rooms. Commanders were also to provide each barracks room with hand towels to dissuade soldiers from the habit of wiping their hands on bed sheets. By enacting these

measures, Cuthbertson's readers could expect that a barracks "will always be sweet and healthy."⁶⁰

Bland similarly emphasized cleanliness and sanitation in camp, but put the onus for maintaining clean quarters on camp color-men. Following the regimental quartermaster to the camp site, color-men were to mark out their unit's boundaries before digging "necessary houses," or latrines. Upon the regiment's arrival, color-men were to keep the camp "sweet and clean," while camp guards were to enforce strict discipline to maintain sanitation. Sentries were to make sure not to "suffer anyone to ease himself," anywhere besides the designated privies. Covering the full range of camp inhabitants, Bland declared commanders should subject any "soldier, servant, or sutler" violating sanitation rules to be "severely punished." During prolonged encampments, new privies were to be dug at least once a week.⁶¹

While Frederick did not dwell on camp sanitation in his *Instructions*, the Prussian monarch included one crucial recommendation, that camps be placed conveniently close to sources of wood and water. Access to the former would provide men with an abundant supply of fuel, while fresh water would facilitate hydration and cleanliness.⁶² Turpin de Crisse likewise emphasized the presence of wood along with forage and "some villages," as considerations for a commander when selecting a camp site.⁶³ For Continental officers, North American landscapes would frequently provide abundant wood for armies seeking camp sites, but finding a suitable combination of timber, fresh water, and ground suitable for erecting shelter would prove a frequent problem.

On a whole, the works addressing military shelter available in North America before the War of Independence fell well short of comprehensive coverage of the topic. While soldier-scholars Turpin de Crisse and Frederick the Great did offer insights into how to best quarter an army, neither author made these matters central to his work. Frederick's chapter on winter quarters comprised only three out of more than one-hundred pages in his *Instructions*. Likewise, Bland and Cuthbertson subsumed camp administration under more extensive coverage of drill. In contrast, a number of enlightenment works, most of them in French and German, addressed castrametation in depth, but apparently remained unknown in North America. In France, Guillaume Le Blonde's *Essai sur la Castrametation* (1748) and Joseph de Fallois's *Traité de la Castrametation* (1771) both provided book-length treatments of the subject of building and arranging military camps. Benton de Perrin's *Dissertation sur les Tentes ou Pavillions de Guerre* (1735) likewise offered a complete history of the use of tents in war, with examples ranging from antiquity to contemporary conflicts. These French writers featured wider-ranging coverage of shelter and included many more historical examples than the works read in North America. Perrin's *Dissertation* began with a lament that his peers focused too much on battles and sieges rather than camps.⁶⁴ Le Blond similarly depicted castrametation as an important aspect of the military arts that had been largely ignored by his contemporaries and looked back to the Roman writer Vegetius as the last military scholar to adequately address the topic.⁶⁵ To remedy this lack of recent work, Le Blonde studied France's wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, explaining the different methods French armies had used for shelter, and cited specific examples of men quartered in towns, tents, and huts. Fallois' later work

emphasized the benefits of tent encampments or timber-built field shelters (*barraques de toile*) compared to billets in villages as camps could be arranged for easy assembly for drill or in case of attack.⁶⁶ In addition to their historical examples and theoretical models, each of these French authors included detailed, hand-colored plates showing ideal camp layouts, dispositions for camps to take advantage of terrain, and drawings of different types of tents. Fallois also included detailed plans for the arrangement of tents in camps depending on an army's size.

By the late eighteenth-century, studies of castrametation flourished beyond France. Frederick produced his aforementioned study of the subject in response to the growing proliferation of field camps towards the end of the Seven Years War. Other Prussian writers addressed castrametation during the 1770s. In 1778, Johann Carl Deitrich Pirscher published *Von der Castrametation*, a work of similar length and coverage as those by his French peers, with equally detailed plates illustrating various camp layouts.⁶⁷ Another Prussian author, Freidrich Miller, produced in 1776 a work simply titled *Castrametation*, exhibiting a series of drawings depicting hypothetical camp placements, with an emphasis on advantageous locations atop hills or anchored by bodies of water.⁶⁸ An anonymous Prussian, likely of the same era, wrote a similar work, *Castrametatio*, which included extensive tables stipulating the dimensions and frontages to be occupied by armies of different sizes and compositions.⁶⁹ Further afield, a Portuguese writer published in 1792 *Pequeno Resumo de Castrametaco*, also including a similar milieu of diagrams of camp layouts.⁷⁰ Together, these works revealed the increasing complexity of military camps during this era, as well as the greater attention to detail required of officers in arranging their men's shelter.

In English, a book-length study of camp-making remained unavailable until the publication of Lewis Lochee's *Essay on Castrametation* in 1778.⁷¹ Lochee's work highlighted the neglected yet crucial topic and provided detailed insights into the distributions and depths of camp arrangements for infantry, cavalry, and artillery, as well as an explication of the camp duties of officers.⁷² Invaluably, Lochee also composed a series of maxims gleaned from the foremost European authorities on the art of war, including Turpin de Crisse, Jacques François de Chastenet Puysegur, and Francois de La Valiere. While these authors only addressed the subject of camps and quarters in passing, when their ideas were taken together, they formed an expansive corpus of castrametation knowledge.⁷³ Additionally, Lochee included illustrations of tents, camp arrangements, and dispositions. In particular, his warnings regarding the inadequacy of huts as winter shelter would have proven especially useful for Continental officers. Unfortunately for Patriot readers, Lochee's work was published only after the Valley Forge encampment, and there is no record of it reaching an audience across the Atlantic. Neither was Frederick's work on castrametation nor Le Blonde's or Fallois' available in North America for officers literate in only English and French. Continental Army commanders therefore remained ignorant of the most advanced writings on castrametation at the time of the War of Independence.

As a whole, the writings of the military enlightenment codified in print a new science of castrametation encapsulating the practical experience gained during recent conflicts and observations of Europe's foremost military minds. Treatises and guidebooks articulated a clear taxonomy of different housing options available to commanders, and stipulated the roles and responsibilities of officers in placing and

erecting encampments. Manuals prescribed proper camp layouts for the placement of shelters, streets, parade grounds, and fortifications, bringing a degree of order to camp environments befitting the improved discipline of standing armies. Finally, writers recognized the importance of maintaining healthy camps and established clear procedures for minimizing the spread of disease. Those that read Frederick II and Turpin de Crisse would also stand ready to defend their encampments and array their quarters in strategically advantageous postures.

Nevertheless, European castrametation texts provided the Continental Army's future leaders with a narrow overview of quartering practices that would prove an insufficient guide when it came time to shelter Patriot soldiers during the War of Independence. Texts targeted at both general and field officers devoted the majority of their space to the problems an army encountered when billeting in towns, with a secondary focus turned towards barracks. Much of North America lacked both the barracks and numerous small towns in which European writers expected armies to quarter. De Crisse, Frederick, and Bland offered few insights into how to best arrange tent encampments, while Cuthbertson provided the only, brief, overview of rudimentary shelters like huts. Aside from Frederick and Turpin de Crisse's short treatments of the subject, no authors seriously addressed winter shelter as a distinct problem, and European soldier scholars universally associated winter quarters with the retirement to a chain of billets in towns and cities well removed from the enemy. Had any of the works specifically dedicated to castrametation been available to Continental officers in 1775, they would have entered the conflict equipped with plans and diagrams for camp layouts, extensive historical references, and the recognition of castrametation as a distinct subfield

of the study of war. Instead, this knowledge lay scattered in abridged form throughout works devoting their attention to matters of drill and maneuver.

And, while military enlightenment writings did cover camp sanitation, they provided no insights into the prevention of epidemic diseases. Smallpox had developed into a viable weapon of war in North America over the preceding half century of colonial conflicts. As historian Elizabeth Fenn has found, European armies operating in North America schemed to infect their white and Native American opponents with smallpox throughout the Seven Years War.⁷⁴ For the Continental Army, comprised largely of a population lacking smallpox immunity, the concentration of soldiers in close quarters during the first years of the War of Independence gave rise to a smallpox epidemic that threatened to ruin the army's effectiveness. Continental commanders faced this crisis with no input from European experts. Likewise, strategies for coping with outbreaks mosquito-borne illnesses remained absent from military enlightenment texts. Malaria and yellow fever threatened armies operating in both the tropics and more temperate coastal regions of North America. Experience in the eighteenth century had demonstrated that densely packed forces could often suffer devastation at the hands of these diseases. Yet military writers' preoccupation with European campaigns meant that their texts ignored these threats to armies operating in North America.

Eighteenth-century texts also overlooked the difficulty of supplying large, concentrated armies in the field. Commanders of the era benefitted from the fiscal support of increasingly powerful central governments and improving administration of logistical services. Armies in western and central Europe were typically small in number compared to the size of the civilian populations amongst which they operated. Networks

of magazines, connected by road and river-bound transportation, meant soldiers in the field typically enjoyed adequate stocks of food, clothing, and equipment. The abundant farmland of Western Europe allowed generals to purchase provisions locally when supply lines suffered interruptions, while pastures offered bountiful forage for cavalry and wagon teams. Winter weather could disrupt the logistical apparatus by covering grasslands, blocking roads, and freezing rivers. By dispersing into more easily-provisioned chains of billets in towns, however, commanders could mitigate against supply shortages while in winter quarters. Generals serving in North America would not enjoy the same level of state support, and would be operating in regions lacking the widespread road and river networks that characterized many theaters in Europe.⁷⁵ Patriot commanders would have to adapt to these conditions without guidance. Overall, while European castrametation maxims did inform future Continental officers of their basic duties in maintaining a clean and orderly camp, but much of the information encapsulated in these texts held only limited applicability in the North American environment.

Military Shelter in North America to 1775

For Continental leaders, the works of de Cresse, Bland, and Cuthbertson provided one component of the intellectual framework for the Patriot army's approach to castrametation. The second influence derived from practical experience in North America's eighteenth-century wars. The French and Indian War of 1754-1763, in particular, witnessed the large-scale presence of long-service soldiers in the Thirteen Colonies for the first time. Both British redcoats and locally-raised provincial regiments

required substantial housing as garrisons in colonial towns and on campaign on the frontier.

Conducted amid political attitudes and environmental conditions different from those prevailing in continental Europe, the French and Indian War revealed that established quartering methods did not fully meet the needs of armies operating in North America, where neither civilian settlements nor existing military infrastructure existed on the scale seen in the Old World. In frontier areas such as the Champlain Valley, the absence of significant civilian settlements forced armies to build their shelter from scratch, relying on locally available materials. In the more densely-populated coastal regions, sufficient towns existed to house the Crown's soldiers, but most had no barracks at the outset of the conflict. Circumstances forced British commanders to billet their men with civilians, drawing the ire of a population unaccustomed to such practices.

British North America's early military experience brought little need for long-term military housing. While European states in the seventeenth-century raised increasingly large standing armies, the colonies relied on militias raised for short terms to wage war against Native Americans, abrogating the need for long-term shelter. Consequently, North American colonists garnered limited experience with European methods of castrametation through late-seventeenth and early eighteenth-century wars against Native Americans and New France. Most colonial forces operating during the early conflicts established only limited infrastructure, such as the small fortified posts and blockhouses guarding the New England frontier. Many militiamen served close to their homes, and could commonly shelter with friendly communities, if not in their own houses. Small units operating in northeastern forests typically relied on rudimentary

structures built of timber and brush. Overall, early colonial wars did not present the housing problems of the scale or duration as encountered in Europe.⁷⁶

A large, regular-army presence in the North American colonies did not arise until the outbreak of the Seven Years War in the 1750s. Then the influx of redcoats after 1754 brought a lodging crisis in British North America. Legal ambiguities in the colonies obscured the rights and obligations of civilians in the paths of British forces in need of shelter. British commanders turned to the Mutiny Act, which guaranteed homeowners the right to avoid billeting soldiers without their consent, but also established that householders, innkeepers, and tavern owners that provided billets were expected to also make available utensils, including bedding, kitchenware, and some food items. It remained unclear, however, if the Mutiny Act applied to the colonies, and colonial governments did, at times, invoke this ambiguity when they felt British commanders had gone too far in making demands of civilian communities. Nevertheless, the colonies, when faced with the prospect of providing shelter for newly arrived redcoats and provincials, mostly adhered to the terms of that law. Pennsylvania's 1756 Quartering Act even included verbatim the most salient clauses of the original Mutiny Act.⁷⁷

More pressing than legal wrangling, the small size of colonial towns, the dispersal of settlements, and the lack of preexisting quartering infrastructure meant that British officers commonly faced greater difficulty in securing suitable shelter for their men in North America than they did in Britain or continental Europe. Historian Jack P. Greene's study of British quartering in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1757 illustrates the problems commanders encountered when trying to find lodging for their regulars in the colonies. In June 1757, a force of 500 redcoats and 1,300 provincials under Lieutenant Colonel

Henry Bouquet arrived at Charleston to secure South Carolina from French and Indian attack. Initially, contemporary quartering practices functioned adequately, specifically the harnessing of civilian government to facilitate billeting and minimize troubles with local residents. In advance of the troops' arrival, in May the South Carolina Commons House of Assembly voted to fund the construction of new pine-built barracks in Charleston, the repair of several abandoned buildings (including an unused schoolhouse and several older barracks) and the purchase of firewood, candles, pepper, salt, and beer for the garrison. In providing such items for the barracks' occupants, South Carolina shared much in common with local leaders in Europe who similarly arranged for quarters and utensils.⁷⁸

South Carolina's preemptive measures notwithstanding, British commanders in the colony encountered problems peculiar to North America. On the Royal American Regiment's way to Charleston, the unit had passed through Philadelphia, where a smallpox outbreak had recently occurred. Fearing that the newly arrived soldiers might spread the disease to a dense population mostly lacking immunity, Bouquet placed the Royal Americans in a makeshift camp two miles outside of town. Two companies of Virginians, who had not been exposed to the disease, quartered within Charleston itself. Bouquet did not heed the advice of castrametation maxims, however, and placed the Royal Americans in a location lacking clean water and prone to flooding during summer rain storms. To alleviate the discomfort the regiment endured in camp, Bouquet applied to South Carolina's Governor William Lyttleton in July for quarters in Charleston itself.⁷⁹

Just as in England, however, Bouquet discovered that barracks and public buildings stood in too few numbers to adequately house his men. The new barracks

recently ordered would take more than a year to construct, leaving British and provincial troops with insufficient shelter in the interim. To alleviate the shortage, William Pinckney, the commissary general for South Carolina, rented rooms in houses for officers, and assigned space in four empty houses to most of the rank-and-file. The remaining 160 men took shelter in public houses. As the South Carolina government had neglected to fund the purchase of bedding, furniture, or kitchenware, these soldiers made do without. On September 3, another 1,000 men of the 42nd Regiment of Foot, the Royal Highland Regiment, arrived, complicating Bouquet's task even further. The commissary again rented rooms in houses for officers, but could find space only in half-finished structures, outbuildings, and abandoned houses for the enlisted men, mirroring the situation in which many European soldiers found themselves during the early eighteenth century, prior to the expansion of quartering infrastructure. Many of these buildings proved to be dilapidated, with leaky roofs and drafty walls that offered poor protection from the elements, thereby exacerbating illness in the ranks. Among the Highlanders who arrived in September, the number of sick men grew from sixteen to more than 500 after one month of residing in substandard housing.⁸⁰

Under pressure from Bouquet, South Carolina's legislature slowly responded to the housing crisis in Charleston. In October, it raised funds for additional barracks and ordered their immediate construction. In November, the lawmakers approved the purchase of bedding, tools, and other utensils absent in previous appropriations. Conversely, South Carolina's government stopped funding rent in December 1757 for more than eighty officers in Charleston. Henceforth, these gentlemen would have to pay for their own quarters. Bouquet protested this infringement on the customary privileges

officers enjoyed, and also pressed for greater purchases of firewood and the provisioning of blankets for his entire force. The South Carolina Commons nevertheless resisted these requests, and denied appeals for funds for additional barracks to be built for officers. Ultimately, the quartering crisis only eased in early 1758, when the completion of several barracks provided the enlisted men with proper shelter. In March, the Royal Americans departed the colony, while the Highlanders left in May. Inundated with soldiers in the summer of 1757, Charleston stood nearly devoid of a military presence by the late spring of the following year.⁸¹

The Charleston episode demonstrated in microcosm the myriad issues that arose whenever regular forces attempted to quarter in settled areas of North America. Disease, particularly smallpox, deterred commanders from quartering their men in towns, but unfamiliarity with the terrain, harsh climate, and inexperience in the art of castrametation often made tent encampments unhealthy and uncomfortable. Forced into towns, officers dealt with colonial governments jealous of their liberties and parsimonious with their funding, depriving soldiers of both the spaces and supplies needed to shelter adequately. While the colonial government did fund barracks construction, provision of utensils, and rent, it proved dilatory and resistant to large expenditures. Bouquet's complaint that he would rather "make two campaigns than settle the quarters of any of our American towns," succinctly summed up the difficulty officers encountered when attempting to arrange shelter for their men under North American conditions.⁸²

Similar friction between legislatures, officers, and civilian communities appeared wherever British forces needed shelter in populated areas. In New Jersey, the colonial assembly received petitions from communities protesting the quartering of British troops

in private residences. The assembly responded, like South Carolina's, with a program of barracks construction. Unlike South Carolina, however, New Jersey's difficulties were not confined to a single town, but to communities throughout the colony. In 1758, the New Jersey Assembly authorized the building of five 300-man barracks located along the main axis of travel through the colony from New York to Philadelphia. While these structures would not remove soldiers from civilian communities completely, they would lift the burden of military shelter from the shoulders of householders and tavern-keepers. British troops occupied the barracks in Trenton by late 1758, while the colony completed construction in Elizabeth, Perth Amboy, New Brunswick, and Burlington the following year.⁸³ The New Jersey barracks proved a successful remedy, as these structures eased civilian antagonisms during the war, and mitigated public outcry against Parliament's postwar Quartering Act. While colonists protested the costs of provisioning redcoats in North America, the presence of soldiers themselves proved mostly undisruptive; indeed it often stimulated local businesses in host communities. Larry R. Gerlach, a historian of New Jersey's responses to British quartering policies during the Seven Years War, has concluded that "by 1770 the garrisoning of troops had become an accepted part of life in New Jersey."⁸⁴

Acceptance, however, did not always imply enthusiasm. In West Jersey, Quaker minister John Woolman recorded his mixed feelings towards quartering British soldiers in his home in Mount Holly. In 1757, an officer arrived in the small town, seven miles southwest of Burlington, to direct the inhabitants to prepare to receive 100 soldiers. As part of the housing arrangements, Woolman was to provide billets for two soldiers in exchange for six shillings per week per man. The pacifist Quaker saw aiding the military

cause as “inconsistent with the purity of the Christian religion.”⁸⁵ Yet Woolman believed the British had acted with legal authority to solicit billets, and therefore agreed to provide rooms for the two redcoats. Ultimately, only one man took up residence in Woolman’s house. He stayed for two weeks and “behaved himself civilly.” To assuage his conscience, the Quaker refused to accept payment for providing the billet.⁸⁶

The relatively benign relationship between inhabitants and army that Woolman described in Mount Holly derived from the good behavior of the soldiers involved, the local population’s cooperation, and the sound accommodations provided. In more adverse circumstances, quartering problems led to troubled relations between soldiers and civilians. In the contentious political environment that developed after 1763, urban protests against British policies helped instigate clashes with local garrisons. In August 1766 and April 1767, the British 28th Regiment brawled with New York residents while lodged in the barracks in Manhattan. In both instances, the soldiers’ removal of liberty poles erected by crowds of protestors helped instigate outbreaks of violence between the military and civilians. According to affidavits taken after the August incident, civilians in the busy port city felt “uneasy” having “such a large number of armed men without any viable occasion for them” patrolling the streets.⁸⁷

In July 1767, members of the troubled 28th Regiment again found themselves at the center of a civil disturbance, this time in Elizabethtown, New Jersey. In contrast to the politically charged atmosphere in New York, the upheaval in New Jersey ensued when British officers encountered a lack of suitable accommodations in the town’s barracks. The officers had to instead seek quarters in private homes in town. New Jersey’s royal governor William Franklin refused to reimburse the 28th Regiment for their

expenditures, despite repeated urgings from that unit's commanding officer, Colonel John St. Clair. When the regiment departed Elizabethtown on July 28, the redcoats rioted, with soldiers damaging the windows and doors of Elizabethtown's court house and jail. Magistrates ultimately compelled the rioters to pay £25 compensation for the damages inflicted to the public buildings before the regiment departed the colony. A New York newspaper reporting on the riot lamented "it is a pity, that men, who call themselves men of honor, should leave a place with such an odious name behind them." By contrast, portions of the 28th that had quartered in Perth Amboy experienced better accommodations and created no disturbances.⁸⁸

The 28th Regiment's riot in Elizabethtown remained an isolated incident in New Jersey. As long as officers and men felt satisfied with their accommodations, they typically conducted themselves honorably. The completion of barracks minimized the inconvenience individual householders like John Woolman and his neighbors suffered and most communities continued to enjoy good relations with the barracks' residents as the British drew down their commitments in North America. When the 26th Regiment departed New Brunswick in 1770, the *New York Gazette* reported that the inhabitants expressed "our most sincere wishes for your honor and happiness in future life" to redcoats. The regiment's commander, Major Charles Preston, responded by recognizing the friendly relations and good health the regiment had enjoyed during its three-year stay in New Brunswick. Before leaving, the officers dined with the gentlemen of the town in a farewell feast.⁸⁹

Despite the overall success of barracks in New Jersey and the defusing of the quartering crisis in South Carolina, the scale of colonial building programs remained

miniscule compared to the size of the armies that would fight the War of Independence. The entirety of New Jersey's barracks could house only 1,500 men, while Charleston strained to build shelter for a similar number. These structures were built by colonial governments mostly removed from the threat of serious attack, with stable economies, and the backing of the well-financed British government. Consequently, the French and Indian War barracks proved a poor example of how to build military shelter when the numbers of men involved grew to 10,000 or more, as the young United States would face during the War of Independence.

Fortunately for colonial legislatures and their constituents, much of the fighting in the French and Indian War occurred in frontier areas far to the north or west of the more densely settled coast. In these distant regions, British and provincial regiments did not face the complaints of homeowners about billeting or wait for local governments to build barracks. Instead, the Crown's armies struggled to adapt their castrametation practices to fit local conditions, since they found few settlements capable of sheltering large forces. On campaign, the redcoats relied on tent encampments or sought shelter in fortresses replicating European methods. Given the poor weather, harsh terrain, and contemporary preference to supplement tents with more substantial lodging, the British army sought to build more permanent shelter on the frontier. To protect soldiers, suttlers, wagoners, and their families in the wilderness, British columns needed to build extensive, long-term, fortified structures. Consequently, in western Pennsylvania, during Brigadier General John Forbes' expedition against Fort Duquesne, British and provincial forces constructed several forts along their route of march, to house both the army itself as well civilian camp followers and westward bound colonists.⁹⁰

After the war's conclusion, North America experienced its largest expansion in military housing to date, as British regiments garrisoning the west erected several new outposts, culminating in Fort Pitt. These units found shelter in significant barracks. Fort Pitt had three such structures, each of two stories for enlisted men and another for officers. These buildings could hold up to a total of 1,000 men. While Fort Pitt represented the most substantial of Britain's western forts, even more modest structures like Fort Ouiatenon on the Wabash River possessed a sixty-foot square blockhouse that contained living quarters for its garrison. North American forts also featured parade grounds for assembly, inspection, and drill, as well as cleared lands beyond the ramparts to ensure open fields of fire. Gardens provided vegetables to augment standard rations. Forts also took on urban characteristics. In the cases of locales such as Detroit, fortified walls ensconced existing communities, while Fort Niagara witnessed the development of villages beyond its walls populated by traders and civilian workers.⁹¹

The quality of accommodations within frontier posts varied. Barracks at Fort Pitt featured brick fireplaces, wooden floors, and separate kitchens. Smaller forts might feature log construction, stone fireplaces, and fewer specialized rooms. In the smallest forts, officers and men might share the same room, while some frontier outposts placed men in cabins or huts as if on campaign. In British-built barracks, most rooms provided roughly 400 square feet of living space for their occupants, while structures taken over from the French and Spanish demonstrated greater variation, but generally offered less space. British barracks rooms were intended to hold twelve men in six bunks, with a table and benches provided for the common space. Half of a room's complement was expected to be on duty at any one time during the day. In practice, at small forts, or when

a sizeable force was present, barracks could often become more crowded than designers intended.⁹²

Similar to the barracks built in colonial towns, frontier forts rarely accommodated more than a few hundred men. In their isolation, they did not provide a sound example of the kind of shelter that would be needed to house a large, concentrated army during and after active operations. The most significant instance in which future Continental officers and soldiers garnered experience in castrametation on this scale came in 1759 in northern New York. In that year, Britain fielded its largest force during the Seven Years War in North America under Major General Sir Jeffrey Amherst, campaigning in the Champlain Valley. This army included large numbers of colonial soldiers, enlisted for terms that transcended the short periods that had characterized earlier militia service. Although these provincial regiments served in mostly auxiliary roles, they nevertheless required long-term housing while deployed to northern New York and Canada. For many colonial troops, these campaigns provided their first exposure to European castrametation methods.

The armies in New York and Canada lacked the time and resources needed to build fortified camps along their routes of march sizeable enough to accommodate all troops present before the onset of winter. Amherst's 15,000 men encamped for the winter of 1759 at the recently captured French post Fort St. Frederic. Here they erected a series of smaller fortified posts to anchor their position. Ultimately, the British constructed a new, larger fortress called Crown Point. It mounted 105 guns and could accommodate up to 4,000 men, but completing this project took three years. In the interim, this left Amherst's army in need of housing to shelter 15,000 men through the

cold months of 1759 and 1760. Consequently, British and provincial troops erected wooden huts. These rudimentary structures supplanted tents in the harsh climate, but remained a temporary expedient in response to local conditions, and were made possible by the abundance of timber in northern New York. As the army lacked experience in constructing such shelters, the Crown Point huts exhibited little uniformity; Amherst described them as “not better than a single clapboard, or shingle,” while another officer recorded his hut’s dimensions as a scant nine feet by six.⁹³ Alongside their regular comrades, the provincials failed to meet their British counterparts’ orderliness and discipline. New England soldiers’ encampments often featured poorly-cleared ground littered with stumps and haphazardly placed shelters. The provincials’ huts also proved even more rudimentary than the British regulars’, with colonial soldiers commonly sheltering in wigwams made from bark, brush, and animal skins.⁹⁴ This lack of uniformity in dwelling placement and style reflected the colonists’ amateurishness in the military arts overall, and castrametation in particular.

Aside from the 1759 campaign, the French and Indian War brought few opportunities for future Continentals to garner experience in creating and managing large military camps. The isolated fortified posts built along the Pennsylvania or Virginia frontiers bore more resemblance to earlier colonial methods than contemporary European practices. Barracks construction in eastern towns alleviated some of the overcrowding brought on by the arrival of armies, but colonial legislatures had proven sluggish at responding to military housing needs. Even the 1759 winter encampment on Lake Champlain likewise indicated that European quartering practices would not suffice unaltered for North American conditions. The few large fortresses and numerous small

posts built in the west after 1763 chiefly housed regular British troops rather than provincials, and lay at too great a distance from colonial population centers to play a major role in the next war. Nowhere in the 1750s or 1760s did British North America appear prepared to quarter a large standing army.

Conclusion

Through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, European military powers dealt with the problem of providing shelter for their growing regular armies. Governments developed different methods for lodging soldiers within home territory, on active campaign, and in wartime winter quarters. Sovereigns' quests to improve accommodations for their soldiers progressed through the eighteenth century, as less expensive, but socially disruptive practices based on housing men in civilian residences gave way to expensive, permanent barracks. While soldiers in Europe and the colonies increasingly took shelter in tent camps while on campaign, billeting remained common, and for winter quarters, commanders continued to disperse their men throughout civilian towns and cities during the eighteenth century.

Conditions in North America departed from those prevailing in European in several ways. The small scale of conflict prior to the 1750s left the colonies with little need to develop the expansive quartering infrastructure that undergirded the European military system. The fiscal, coercive, and bureaucratic power of colonial governments remained minor compared to that of eighteenth-century European states that had drastically expanded their governmental ability to house, clothe, and feed armies over the

course of the previous fifty years. North America's comparatively sparse population on the frontier and lack of infrastructure in coastal areas presented a reduced number of housing options, even for smaller North American armies. The colonial population, inheriting Britain's aversion to standing armies, remained opposed to large-scale quartering of regular forces amongst civilians, particularly while short service terms and militias continued to appear viable. Nevertheless, European methods encapsulated in enlightenment texts and officers' limited experiences during the Seven Years' War, provided the foundation of Continental Army thinking about castrametation techniques at the outbreak of the War of Independence. In 1775 and 1776, the contrast between North American and European conditions would eventually reveal the inadequacy of contemporary techniques and force Washington and his subordinate to seek alternative methods of providing shelter.

Chapter 2 Notes

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CHAPTER 3

THE EARLY-WAR SHELTER PROBLEM: HOUSING THE CONTINENTAL ARMY, 1775-1776

In early October 1775, the Continental Army found itself encircling British-controlled Boston, maintaining a blockade that had begun shortly after the commencement of hostilities on April 19. With his headquarters at Cambridge, General George Washington, the Continentals' commander-in-chief, oversaw the training and disciplining of his new army, directed operations to contain his British opponents in Boston, and guided campaigns further afield, including the concurrent invasion of Canada. Amidst this demanding workload, Washington's attention turned to what would become a familiar problem during the war; the Continental Army faced a shortage of adequate shelter. Like contemporary European forces, Washington's army encircling Boston first erected tent encampments for living quarters, but the number of men gathered to blockade the city greatly exceeded the number of tents available. Furthermore, even those troops with access to tents would find insufficient protection from the elements through the coming New England winter. On October 6, 1775, Washington notified the Massachusetts legislature that in order to find adequate accommodations for the approaching cold season, the army would need to take quarters in houses in and around Cambridge. Many of these homes had been abandoned at the outset of the war and thus lay open to military use with little protest. The likely return of the civilian population following the stabilization of the military situation around Boston, however, threatened to cause antagonisms between the local residents and the army now

occupying their homes. While Washington admitted to feeling a “great repugnance,” at inconveniencing citizenry, he declared that military “necessity in this case I fear will supersede all other considerations.”¹

The commander-in-chief’s letter to the Massachusetts legislature highlighted the problems inherent in procuring adequate shelter for the Continental Army.

Washington’s army, numbering over 10,000 men for much of the war’s early years, comprised a mobile city. It required substantial infrastructure to ensure it remained fed, healthy, and housed. Holding position for extended periods, such as during the Boston siege, exacerbated the sanitation and shelter problems the Continentals faced. Prolonged occupation of the same ground without proper hygienic regulations rendered camps unhealthy. Keeping the army embodied through the winter necessitated more substantial cover than tents. Civilian homes offered comfortable quarters for soldiers and could be rapidly occupied, but that practice inconvenienced host populations, diminished popular support, and undermined the army’s discipline.

The Revolutionary War forced North American commanders to contend with the troubles of maintaining an army in the densely populated coastal regions of New England and the mid-Atlantic. Officers and men operated amidst farms and villages inhabited by a population suspicious of standing armies and keen to protect their homes and fields from damage. Ideology aside, close proximity to civilians also helped spread disease, particularly smallpox. Colonial civilians had dealt with these issues when occasional redcoat or provincial regiments garrisoned in their towns during the last war, but had experienced nothing like the array of 20,000 men that gathered around Boston in 1775 and marshaled in New York in 1776. Likewise, Rebel officers who had served in the

Seven Years War had mainly garnered experience with finding shelter and administering camps in sparsely-settled frontier regions.

Lacking much of the quartering infrastructure present in Europe, the Patriots entered the War of Independence unprepared to house the newly formed Continental Army in 1775. European forces, often serving in similarly densely populated areas, typically had the option of quartering in large towns and barracks for shelter. While Rebel military leaders sought to emulate their contemporaries, providing barracks and even tents remained beyond the nascent United States' resources even as the national government worked to establish a larger, more permanent army in 1776. The British occupation of Boston through the 1775-1776 winter and capture of New York in September 1776 removed the largest concentrations of housing stock potentially available to the Continentals in their operational theater. Washington's men therefore endured the war's first two campaigns with inadequate shelter, undermining soldiers' health, discipline, and morale in the process.

This chapter reveals how inadequate housing affected the main Continental Army during the war's first campaigns, focusing Boston in 1775 and early 1776, followed by operations in New York and New Jersey later in that year. During these campaigns, Patriot officers remained beholden to European ideas and practical experience garnered during the Seven Years War. They attempted to quarter their men in tents through the summer and barracks during the cold months. Where no barracks existed, as in the Massachusetts countryside, Washington ordered his men to build large, permanent structures from scratch. These methods proved ill-suited to the conditions facing the Patriots at the outset of the War of Independence. Tent shortages, a lack of building

materials, and inexperience in construction left Washington's men with inadequate shelter. Beginning in autumn 1776, the Rebels began to supplant barracks with smaller, more easily-built huts. Nevertheless, at the close of the Rebels' counteroffensive in New Jersey in early 1777, Washington resorted to billeting most of his men in private homes despite the traditional civilian opposition to such measures. The army had dwindled to a few thousand men by this point, easing the task of finding sufficient billets.

The housing shortage undermined the Continentals' effectiveness in the field. Dispersed and variegated shelter broke up units' cohesion around Boston, hindering training and organization. Poor camp sanitation in New York left nearly one third of the army too ill to face the British in August 1776. Inadequate cover harmed morale and led to increased desertion rates. Over time, the contrasts between North American and European conditions would eventually reveal the inadequacy of early-war quartering practices and force Washington and his subordinate to seek alternative methods of providing shelter. Beginning in early 1777, the encampments in northern New Jersey were to play a central role in the process of developing a new American science of castrametation. First, however, Washington's army was to endure a trying lesson in the difficulties of waging war with a standing army lacking proper quartering infrastructure.

The Quartering Crisis of 1775

Following the war's opening shots at Lexington and Concord, what would become the Continental Army assembled in the Massachusetts countryside to blockade the British Army in Boston. For the most part, the soldiers besieging Boston hailed from New England, and carried with them the traditions and practical experience forged in that

region. Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire contributed the bulk of the forces encircling the city, although contingents from New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia later joined the Main Army or the expedition sent to conquer Canada. Boston remained the Continentals' principal target, and the burden of housing the young army fell overwhelmingly on Massachusetts during the conflict's first campaign.²

The Patriot camps outside Boston bore little resemblance to the well-ordered tent cities prescribed in European writings. Tents themselves stood in short supply, as the number of men answering the call to arms exceeded the ability of the individual colonial governments to provide the item in adequate quantities. For example, the Massachusetts Assembly had only 1,100 tents available in the spring of 1775, far too few to shelter the growing force around Boston.³ Upon Washington's arrival outside the besieged city in July 1775, he noted this "want of tents," which persisted despite the assembly's campaign to collect sail cloth from nearby port towns. Lacking any regular means of shelter, the army occupied college buildings and vacant civilian homes in the towns around Boston. Doing so dispersed Washington's forces into isolated and potentially vulnerable detachments. This lack of military housing promised not only to hinder the army's cohesion and readiness in case of attack, but also undermine its health and discipline. Billeting men in towns greatly complicated the task of drilling regiments, while cramped urban quarters threatened to accelerate the spread of disease. The commander-in-chief therefore requested that John Hancock, the president of Congress, send for additional tent-cloth from Philadelphia so that the Continentals might be gathered into orderly

camps. In the interim, the army had no other option but to remain “much dispersed in quarters” in Cambridge and Roxbury.⁴

As European armies frequently discovered, small towns rarely contained enough homes and other buildings to adequately house a large army, thereby forcing some units to seek alternative methods of shelter. Consequently, many Continentals found themselves outside of the Massachusetts towns, taking cover by using whatever materials they could find. Indicative of the army’s disorganization, and limited experience, its first encampments fell short of the well-ordered temporary cities specified in European military treatises. While passing through Continental camps outside of Boston, Reverend William Emerson of Concord observed shelters made of boards, sailcloth, and combinations of the two, as well as stone and turf, while still others were built of birch and brush. Emerson described a built-environment in which many shelters appeared “thrown up in a hurry and look as if they cannot help it.” Some soldiers apparently took time to erect structures “curiously wrought with doors and windows done with wreathes and withes in the manner of a basket,” their individual character and style contrasting with expectations of orderliness and uniformity commonly associated with military life.⁵ Regardless of these rudimentary structures’ external appearance, however, some proved comfortable during the mild summer months. Lieutenant Joseph Hodgkins declared that he and a comrade were “much pleased,” lodging in a tent outside Cambridge in early June, even as other officers in his militia unit quartered in a “very pleasant chamber” in a nearby building.⁶ Nevertheless, the haphazard housing situation upset the army’s routine in camp.

A small number of soldiers seem to have maintained more reputable looking camps than their peers. Emerson described Rhode Islanders' shelters as "proper tents and marquees, and look like ye regular camp of the enemy." Compared to the other colonists assembled around Boston, the Rhode Islanders were "furnished with tent equipage from among ourselves and everything in the most exact English taste."⁷ The Rhode Island contingent's small size, and thereby the easier task its colonial government faced in supplying it, bore responsibility for the sharp contrast in camp equipage compared to the other colonies. On a whole, however, the camps around Boston, with their assortment of structures featuring irregularly-added doors, windows, and adornments, resembled the haphazard New England provincials 'camps of 1759, and belied the early Continental Army's amateurish roots.⁸

Faced with the rag-tag appearance of the army's shelter, Washington took steps to improve the organization and administration of the Main Army's camps. Recognizing the importance of camp cleanliness to the overall health of the army, the Virginian laid out guidelines for cleaning company streets, removing offal and carrion from camp environs, and digging new necessaries weekly that aligned with the provisions laid out in Cuthbertson and Bland's influential works. Reflecting the army's haphazard housing arrangements, Washington acknowledged that enforcing cleanliness regulations remained an officer's duty whether his men found themselves "in barracks, or quarters."⁹ Fortunately for the rebels, the inactivity of the British garrison permitted Washington's men to organize a series of camps encircling the city. An influx of tents from the other colonies ameliorated the worst quartering problems by late July.¹⁰ By autumn, the young

Continental Army consisted of 22,000 men organized into four encampments located at Cambridge, Prospect Hill, Roxbury, and Winter Hill.¹¹

As early as late July, Washington recognized that his men required substantial upgrades to their current means of shelter to comfortably endure the winter. On July 26, 1775, he decreed that all future boards sawed for the army should “should be built in the form of barracks,” initiating the stockpiling of materials needed to build winter quarters.¹² Even in early August, Washington recognized the difficulties in supply and shelter that a winter campaign would attend, highlighting potential shortages in clothing, fuel, and winter shelter in an August 4 letter to John Hancock. The general pointed out that “if the army, or any considerable part of it is to remain embodied” as a standing army, that would necessarily complicate the difficulties of making war through the winter.¹³ On August 15, Washington ordered the Continental Army’s quartermaster general, Colonel Thomas Mifflin, to begin an examination of the housing situation of every regiment around Boston. Those units still quartering in civilian homes were to be “provided as soon as possible” with tents or boards necessary to build proper military shelters.¹⁴

The Patriots would need to build barracks for winter quarters because the most common European method of providing long-term shelter, billeting in nearby towns, proved impossible to implement on a large scale during the Boston siege. Civilians’ ideological aversion to the quartering of armies in private homes made billeting politically undesirable. Even had Washington chosen to risk incurring the wholesale disaffection of the population, eastern Massachusetts lacked a town available to the Patriots sufficiently large to offer housing for an army of 22,000. Only Boston itself could provide adequate shelter for a large army, and the British garrison there made

ample use of the city's homes, barracks, and public buildings until it evacuated the place in March 1776.¹⁵ The Continental Army found itself blockading a British force occupying the only large town in the area, which thus obviated the possibility of billeting in a city. This pattern would continue throughout the War of Independence.

Washington posed the question of winter quarters to his senior subordinates in early September, sending a circular to his general officers soliciting their opinions on two points: whether the army should attack Boston before winter, and what the army should do for shelter if the campaign continued through the winter. Recognizing that the approaching cold season would necessitate more substantial shelter, Washington wished for "warm, comfortable barracks," that would ensure "the security of the troops against the inclemency of the winter." He realized, however, that maintaining the blockade through the winter promised to strain the local environment. To supply the army with wood for both construction and fuel, Washington believed the Continentals would deplete the region's "fences, woods, orchards, and even houses themselves." The housing shortage also portended a recruitment shortfall. If the army felt "the severity of winter without proper covering," Washington reasoned, "how then shall we be able to keep soldiers to their duty?"¹⁶ So pressing was the shelter problem that Washington listed it as a justification for a potential attack on Boston at a September 11 council-of-war. A successful assault on the city would abrogate the need to keep the army embodied through the winter, and therefore remove the expense of building and fueling barracks. Nevertheless, the unlikelihood of success in such an endeavor led Washington and his subordinates to unanimously reject the idea. Consequently, the army would have to confront the problem of building suitable winter shelter with limited resources.¹⁷

Despite the possible complications a lack of building materials, financial support, or skilled labor might cause, Continental officers remained committed to building barracks in the proper European fashion for winter shelter. In late September, President Hancock promised congressional support for construction.¹⁸ At this point, several Patriot regiments had already begun to erect barracks. At Cambridge, William Tudor reported to John Adams on September 30 that “a large number of hands are at work on the barracks,” and believed quarters for the whole army would be finished during the next month.¹⁹ In early October, Washington ordered Mifflin to study the potential expenses involved in building winter housing sufficient for the 12,000 men expected to remain around Boston into early 1776. This established a trend, to continue throughout the war, of Washington delegating to his quartermasters general the responsibility for arranging the Patriots’ shelter. Mifflin responded with a proposal for the army’s first designated shelter-type of the war. The barracks Mifflin suggested to would be wooden buildings with dimensions of ninety-six feet by sixteen feet, divided into six rooms. Each barracks could accommodate a company of 100 officers and men. The army would need substantial building materials to complete this project, including boards, joists, frame timbers, shingles, nails, and bricks. Including the extra wages Mifflin expected to pay to soldiers employed in construction, the total cost of a single barracks approached £100. With more than 10,000 men expected to remain with the army through the winter, the quartermaster planned for ninety barracks at Cambridge and another thirty at Roxbury. The total costs incurred in building these structures and providing them with firewood for six months stood, in Mifflin’s estimation, at £20,000. A contemporary report by Commissary General Joseph Trumbull on feeding Washington’s army for the next six months

estimated a total cost of £200,000. Thus housing the Continental Army was likely to consume 10 percent of the expenses budgeted for feeding it.²⁰

Notwithstanding the costs involved, the Continentals stationed around Boston made their first attempt to produce adequate winter quarters throughout late 1775 and early 1776. Although Washington had organized the army into six brigades, the burden of overseeing construction fell overwhelmingly to each regiment's colonel or acting commander. The quartermaster general provided only limited overall direction. At the start of October, Washington ordered every colonel to direct the carpenters in his unit to undertake construction. He seems to have hoped every regiment possessed enough men with sufficient carpentry experience to enable construction.²¹ Due to inadequate organization and oversight, building proceeded haphazardly, with tents, shanties, and barracks competing for materials and labor poorly apportioned.

The experience of Simeon Lymon, a militiaman serving in a company from New London, Connecticut, illustrates the disorganization with which barracks construction proceeded. Lymon's company arrived at Roxbury on September 27 as part of a levy of New England militia that bolstered the Continental Army's numbers during the autumn of 1775. Lymon received boards to augment his tent on October 4.²² Two weeks later, officers ordered Lymon to "tend mason," to build chimneys for under-construction barracks. This service absolved Lymon of all other duties until his work party finished the chimney. He also gained an extra gill of rum per day as an added incentive.²³ A day later, however, officers dismissed the New London soldier on the grounds that the militia, due to depart in December, were unlikely to stay in barracks more than a few days. Throughout October and November the Connecticut militiaman found himself instead

posted to picket duty, foraging, and cooking in camp.²⁴ Rain continued intermittently throughout the month, and the Connecticut men were likely grateful to receive another shipment of boards to cover their tents on October 26. On November 17, amidst dropping temperatures and the first snows of the season, Lymon's comrades exchanged their tents for a barn. The soldiers departed the camp on December 10, having spent their entire three-month tenure without having seen the inside of a completed barracks.²⁵

The lack of trained manpower or centralized organization demonstrated by Lymon's experience hindered the Patriots' ability to construct barracks in a timely manner. Throughout fall and early winter, both military and civilian authorities proved overly optimistic in assessing when the army would finish building its winter quarters. In early November, James Warren informed John Adams that barrack construction continued outside Boston, and hoped they would be finished by the end of the month.²⁶ In a mid-November letter to William Ramsay, Washington admitted that the army's time had "been much taken up in building barracks," and did not believe his men would complete the task for another twelve days.²⁷ Even this estimation proved wildly optimistic as Washington admitted to his aide-de-camp, Colonel Joseph Reed, on December 25 that barracks were "not yet done." He included the want of shelter alongside other shortages in such crucial articles as wood, blankets, and powder.²⁸ Similarly at Prospect Hill, Brigadier General Nathanael Greene reported on December 18 that the barracks there were not yet done.²⁹ One month later, another General Order reiterated that "barracks are to be finished as speedily as possible." Washington expected that militia regiments scheduled to arrive in camp would not find adequate housing in the incomplete barracks and would therefore have to "look out in time for other quarters."³⁰

Doctor James Thacher's Massachusetts regiment found alternative quarters in late February, appropriating the mansion formerly owned by colonial governor William Shirley in Roxbury.³¹

When Washington's troops managed to finish any barracks, they did so haphazardly, with regiments occupying several different types of shelter. An anonymous account of the state of military lodging outside of Boston in January 1776 reveals the slapdash manner in which the army went about building these quarters, as well as the continued prevalence of other housing types. For Colonel Jedediah Huntington's 8th Connecticut Regiment at Roxbury, field and staff officers resided in a civilian house while company officers occupied four rooms in different houses, a "small barrack," and eight rooms in two other barracks not yet finished. The rank-and-file boarded in five rooms in civilian homes, three holding twenty men each and two, presumably smaller, holding twelve apiece. The six rooms of a completed barracks held 120 privates, while 110 were left to shelter in huts. At Prospect Hill, another regiment had only two barracks, sufficient for 240 men, forcing two whole companies to winter in nearby barns. Over 1,500 men remained in buildings belonging to Harvard College, while those still assigned private houses in Cambridge went unrecorded.³²

The insufficiency of adequate winter shelter forced the army to keep its tents in service even as cold weather arrived. Tents unsurprisingly provided unsatisfactory protection from the elements. Lieutenant Joseph Hodgkins at Prospect Hill complained that his tent "grows cold" in early October, and was subsequently buffeted by an autumnal rain storm.³³ Heavy rains left interiors cold and damp, as rain falling through the chimney put out the fire. Hodgkins' men fortunately transitioned to a newly-built

barrack in early January; however, a separate room for officers was not finished until February 12.³⁴

Using tents through the winter also threatened to wear them out when they were needed for shelter during the active campaign season. In November, Washington directed his units, to return their scarce tents to the quartermaster general's department upon completing their barracks. The returned tents were to be washed, repaired, and preserved for the upcoming campaign.³⁵ This would become a recurring practice throughout the war. With tents in short supply and exposed to harsh condition, proper care and conservation were imperative for maintaining this equipment for future campaigns. Nevertheless, the inexperienced army outside Boston failed in some instances to properly look after these vital articles. In early January, Washington expressed dismay at seeing tents vacated by a unit that had moved into a barrack "standing uninhabited, and in a disgraceful, ruinous situation," rather than returned to the quartermaster for storage.³⁶ Washington voiced his concerns over the lack of tents to Hancock on January 14, reminding the president of Congress of the importance of tents, and his hope that the national government had taken steps to procure them.³⁷ The same day, the commander-in-chief lamented to Lieutenant Colonel Reed that when the next campaign season arrived, he feared the army "shall not have a tent to lay in."³⁸ Washington himself lacked a headquarters tent until late March, when Reed procured a new marquee in Philadelphia.³⁹

The general's complaints led the national government to take action. A January 30 resolution in Congress ordered the purchase of all available tent cloth in Philadelphia and New York, to be forwarded to Washington's army around Boston before the arrival

of spring.⁴⁰ In a follow-up message to Reed in February, Washington recognized that “in all my letters I fail not the mention of tents,” and appreciated that his persistence had come to fruition in the form of the Congressional resolve of January 30. Reed agreed, replying “what our army is expected to do without them I cannot conceive.”⁴¹ Who bore responsibility for paying for these supplies initially remained unclear. On March 13, some of this cloth, purchased from a William Barrell of Philadelphia, arrived in camp at Cambridge. Barrell had applied to Quartermaster General Mifflin for payment of the £7,500 in Pennsylvania currency at which the cloth was valued, but Washington reported to President Hancock that the army’s poor finances prevented him from discharging the debt.⁴² Ultimately, Congress took responsibility for reimbursing Barrell.⁴³

Congress’s growing authority over tent procurement demonstrated the positive impact the national government could have on improving the army’s military housing situation. Yet neither Congress nor the army showed themselves to be as capable of overcoming the shortages in building materials or lack of skilled labor that inhibited barracks construction around Boston, some of which remained unfinished as late as February. Beginning with Washington’s orders to regimental carpenters on October 1, 1775, the Continental Army spent at least four full months working to construct permanent shelters. By February, little remained of the inactive winter season in which the barracks would have been most useful. Indeed, the British evacuated Boston only eight weeks after the General Order of January 24, 1776. Given these lengthy delays, the 1775-1776 barracks-building program outside of Boston stands out as a failure.

The blame for the army’s inability to erect adequate winter shelter in 1775-1776 could be appertained to several factors. Foremost was the shortage of building materials.

In August, Washington had appealed to the Massachusetts government for aid in gathering timber for firewood and construction.⁴⁴ The Massachusetts House of Representatives responded by approving £2,000 for purchasing cut wood and timberland in the vicinity of Boston.⁴⁵ Yet this supply barely adequately fulfilled the army's fuel needs, much less the building material required for 120 barracks. At the end of December, Greene blamed the lack of timber, stating "we have suffered prodigiously for want of wood," for which "the barracks have been greatly delayed."⁴⁶ With few sources available, Greene's men had expended all fences and trees within a one-mile radius of camp. The local environment contributed to this shortage, as the area in close proximity to Boston was one of continuous settlement for 150 years; therefore few extensive forests remained. The strategic necessity of encamping the Continental Army so close to the British-held city thus carried negative consequences for the Patriots' means of shelter-building. Future Continental quarters would benefit from placements in more remote locales.⁴⁷

In addition to wood shortages, fault lay with the over-ambitious nature of the barracks. Erecting structures large enough to house 100 men remained beyond the young army's administrative and technical capabilities in 1775 and early 1776. Housing up to an entire company in a single structure would have greatly streamlined the Patriots' arrangement around Boston. Washington envisioned whole brigades "quartered as compactly as the barracks will admit of."⁴⁸ The time and resources needed to build such large structures meant that they could not be relied upon for winter quarters. Although the commander-in-chief had ordered men from each regiment with carpentry experience to spearhead construction, building structures of such size and complexity required

skilled workers, building materials, and tools beyond what were available locally. Neither the Patriot army nor the Continental Congress could provide any of this in 1775 in Massachusetts. In subsequent winters, Washington's men would demonstrate the practicality of smaller, less-ambitious structures.

Beyond Boston, generals and statesman in other theaters grappled with similar shelter problems. In northern New York, a second large Rebel army assembled under Major General Philip Schuyler. Like the Main Army in New England, the northern force lacked tents. It enjoyed, however, the advantage of pre-war barracks located in Albany and at the recently captured Fort Ticonderoga. Unfortunately for Schuyler, overcrowding and indiscipline led to unclean conditions within the barracks, which had "already been productive of disease" by August, 1775.⁴⁹ In December, Schuyler reiterated his complaints about the state of barracks at Albany to Congress, describing them as "out of repair," and requested to hire a team of carpenters to restore them.⁵⁰ The Northern Department's soldiers under Schuyler's direct supervision ultimately muddled through the winter sheltering in frontier forts, augmented with hastily-built huts. The contingent sent into Canada under Brigadier General Richard Montgomery enjoyed the relative comfort of billets in Montreal, though the men who went on to besiege Quebec had to make do with rudimentary measures.⁵¹

Elsewhere in the rebellious colonies, civilian governments, rather than Patriot officers, addressed the problem of military housing in their respective bailiwicks. While few Continental units made their presence felt aside from those at Boston or northern New York, colonial legislatures nevertheless recognized that the military buildup to resist the British would require creating a new quartering infrastructure or updating the old one.

Through the war's first year, however, results in the colonies remained uneven. In New Jersey, the General Assembly recognized that the French and Indian War barracks were "in such a state of decay that unless repaired they will be in ruins." Yet as that colony stood far from the major sites of conflict in late 1775, the government did not see barracks repair as imperative, and the measure to fund repairs failed by a narrow thirteen to twelve margin.⁵² The handful of Continentals the colony had assembled to guard its eastern frontiers opposite New York City instead made do by making whatever repairs and improvements to the aging barracks with whatever materials they could acquire locally. Major General William Alexander, Lord Stirling, commanding the New Jersey forces, took charge of provisioning these quarters in the traditional manner. In early December 1775, he directed blankets and "the usual barracks furniture" from Continental stocks delivered to the barracks. In a contrast to British practice, repairs, as well as firewood, would be paid for by the army commissary, rather than colonial funds.⁵³ Beyond upgrades to the state's existing barracks, however, New Jersey would not erect any new permanent military structures during the war.

Throughout the Thirteen Colonies, the Rebels never built barracks in great enough numbers to accommodate a substantial portion of the army. Several colonies did rehabilitate pre-existing barracks in the interior to house prisoners of war. Only in New York did the army build new barracks while hostilities raged, and these only in the forts guarding the Hudson Highlands. Here Patriot builders benefited from working in a region that remained in close proximity to the enemy throughout the war, thus affording them both time and a consistent motivation for building these structures. Most of the barracks that remained from the previous conflict, as well as those few that went up after

1775, commonly stood at sites distant from the actual scenes of fighting. While they did come to provide shelter for units on garrison duty, barracks rarely served to house forces in close proximity to the enemy. In an expansive arena of combat that eventually included the entire eastern coast of North America, fixed barracks and forts rarely played a major role in sheltering front-line formations. They remained an extravagance that took too long and cost too much to build in the numbers Continental officers wanted.

While the Patriots failed to build adequate military shelter during the war's first year, they encountered more success in implementing order and discipline in their rudimentary camps. Whatever their form of shelter, the Boston siege placed a large military force in close proximity to civilian communities for the first time. In keeping with the respectable image Continental officers espoused, they imposed regulations to limit vice and indiscipline in camp. Washington's General Orders of October 3 prescribed confinement for any officer, non-commissioned officer, or soldier found playing games of chance within Continental encampments or the surrounding villages.⁵⁴ Within the newly erected winter barracks, the commander-in-chief placed the onus on regimental commanders to enforce proper conduct. These field officers were to ensure cleanliness, proper food preparation, and good behavior. This emphasis carried moral as well as practical weight. In Washington's view, officers' reputations were best served by rank-and-file who appeared "healthy, clean, and well-dressed." The commander also set rules and regulations for his officers' conduct in camp. On December 7, he reminded officers in the quartermaster's department to restrict the use of building materials in the construction of unapproved houses in camp as "none such will be allowed for, by the public."⁵⁵ Expecting officers to set good example for their men, and to reside as

physically close to camp as practical, clearly demonstrated the influence of Cuthbertson's and Turpin De Crisse's maxims.

Concentrating such a large force and adopting a stationary posture for eleven months also brought to the Main Army the threat of increasing illness, and particularly the danger of a smallpox outbreak. The 1775 army, composed of rural, native-born New Englanders, lacked prior exposure to the virus. Their condition contrasted with that of European armies that drew many of their soldiers from urban populations that had developed immunity to the disease as a result of exposure from a young age.⁵⁶ Indicative of the fear with which rural colonists regarded the disease, a Connecticut soldier commented at the end of July, 1775, that "we heard today that there are one man got the smallpox though I hope that it is not true."⁵⁷ Before Washington's arrival outside Boston, Major General Artemas Ward had established a smallpox hospital far removed from the main camps to quarantine those infected. To prevent that disease's spread, Washington forbade soldiers in early July from visiting fresh water ponds in that particular hospital's vicinity.⁵⁸ Toward the end of that month, Washington expressed confidence that such measures had prevented smallpox from spreading to the army.⁵⁹ In early December, however, civilian refugees fleeing Boston introduced the disease to the Massachusetts countryside.⁶⁰ Given the constant coming-and-going of soldiers among the camps around Boston, attempts to quarantine infected civilians from the army met with only limited success, though Washington's command managed to avoid a serious outbreak until the following year.⁶¹

Aside from smallpox, other diseases also affected the army in camp. While early strength returns indicated 13 percent of the army remained unready due to illness during

1775, this number increased sharply to 16 percent in early 1776. Common camp diseases included dysentery and autumnal fever.⁶² In August 1775, one observer found that some men suffered from camp diseases, several had died, and “a great many” in the country were sick.⁶³ In November 1775, James Thacher recorded that hospitals in camp were “crowded with sick soldiers,” suffering from these illnesses.⁶⁴ David Avery, a chaplain serving with the Connecticut troops, logged in his diary in late December that 300 men had died of smallpox at Roxbury and Cambridge since the start of the Boston siege. On January 6, 1776, Avery noted that his regiment had experienced an “extraordinary dying week,” with up to fourteen soldiers having died in the past seven days.⁶⁵ While the turnover in assembled forces after January 1 and the docility of the Boston garrison mitigated diseases’ impact on Continental operations, the increase in smallpox cases in camp indicated the potential threat illness posed to a stationary army. This threat would become more apparent later in 1776.

Washington avoided an even more severe housing crisis outside of Boston due to the short-terms of his soldiers’ enlistments. The majority of the men that had served through summer and fall departed at the beginning of December 1775. This forced the commander-in-chief to call out 5,000 New England militiamen to cover his lines, but most of these men stayed only until the new year. The militiamen’s departure left Washington with only 5,600 men fit for duty in January. A month later, Patriot manpower remained under 10,000.⁶⁶ The Rebels thereby lacked the numbers to adequately man the siege lines encircling Boston, much less fill their camps. The static nature of the Boston siege meant the Continentals, some of whom had been in place since May 1775, enjoyed ample time to erect shelters, haphazard and rudimentary as they may

have been.⁶⁷ The Main Army did not face the challenge of sheltering its men during a mobile campaign, or providing winter quarters for long-service troops. Washington's men would face a tougher test later in 1776.

Housing and the New York Campaign

The shift of operations to New York and New Jersey in 1776 and 1777 created new housing challenges for the Continental Army. As at Boston, the Patriot soldiers in and around New York City in 1776 faced the prospect of waging a campaign with insufficient shelter. They would again lack either the tents or barracks necessary to satisfactorily quarter an army that grew to more than 20,000 by the late summer. Similar to 1775, Washington attempted to enact a barracks-building program to remedy these problems. In the New York theater, however, unlike the Boston blockade, the Continental Army faced a war of movement that precluded it from building permanent shelter as it had the previous year. British advances during the late summer and autumn months drove the Continentals from New York and across New Jersey, depriving the latter of the limited quartering infrastructure available. While a lack of building materials and labor had enabled Continental quartering around Boston to attain a partial success, British advances spoiled the Patriots' plans to erect housing around New York by November 1776.

The British evacuated Boston in March 1775, leaving Washington victorious in the war's opening act. The Continental commander-in-chief then shifted his forces southwards to New York City, where the conflict's next campaign was to unfold that summer. New York offered better prospects for quartering Patriot forces than had the

Massachusetts countryside. The city held pre-war barracks and fortifications, as well as 4,000 houses in which to billet soldiers. The existing barracks sufficed to lodge the small Continental force under Major General Charles Lee that garrisoned the city in March. Across the East River, however, sparsely-inhabited Long Island possessed too few houses to accommodate the troops stationed there.⁶⁸ The extant infrastructure would not suffice to quarter the much larger army Washington intended to bring to the area.⁶⁹

To undergird the coming campaign in a new theater, Washington took preemptive measures to ensure the army marching for New York would enjoy adequate shelter upon its arrival around the city. On March 24, 1776, the commander-in-chief directed Quartermaster General Thomas Mifflin to go to New York and make arrangements for barracks construction, fuel, and forage, as well as to secure houses for general officers' quarters, hospitals, and horses.⁷⁰ In the interim, until adequate barracks could be built or tents arrived in New York, the Continentals resorted to lodging in civilian homes. To a greater extent than at Roxbury and Cambridge, billeting with civilians in New York presented problems for a standing army operating amongst a Whig population. Just as Bland and Cuthbertson advised, Continental officers sought to impose discipline on a still new army quartering in a large town for the first time. An April 17, 1776, General Order admonished soldiers staying in private homes for damaging civilians' floors by cutting wood on them and soiling the ground by pouring waste from the windows. Offending soldiers faced fines to compensate their civilian hosts, as well as "severe corporal punishment." Enlisted men received a reminder of this threat of punishment on April 30. Officers were instructed to ensure cleanliness both within the barracks and in soldiers' personal appearance.⁷¹

The large army also had a negative impact on the environment, wreaking destruction on the pastoral landscapes of the greater New York area. The army's presence proved a nuisance in the form of soldiers' trampling of crops in a "wanton and disorderly manner," leading Washington to press his officers to "convince their men that we come to protect, not to injure the property of any man." Despite these proscriptions, managing soldiers' conduct when placed in close proximity to civilian communities and their property continued to cause headaches for Patriot officers throughout their stay in New York. On May 5, Washington ordered the officers commanding guard detachments to "prevent any waste, or depredation," upon the fields, fences, trees, or buildings near camp. The cutting of turf was deemed permissible only by the direct order of the chief engineer, while any personnel found cutting trees or shrubs or damaging rail fences faced confinement and trial for disobedience of orders. In place of plundered timber, to ensure clean, dry interiors for tents and discourage damage to rail fences, the quartermaster general was to supply boards for flooring to each regiment. These floor boards were "upon no account to be converted to any other use."⁷²

To further alleviate tensions with inconvenienced New York civilians, Mifflin began on April 25 to lay out tent encampments on Long Island. The island's sparsely populated countryside presented fewer possibilities for antagonizing the inhabitants. On April 29, the Patriots prepared to march into their new camp sites carrying their tents, straw, firewood, and other camp equipage. The bulk of the army made do with tents and newly-built temporary structures. Only the artillerists stayed in the city, lodged in pre-war barracks on Manhattan. The establishment of new tent cities on Long Island occasioned another round of directives regarding camp routine from headquarters. To

ensure streamlined organization, from May 11 onwards all men, ranging from officers to rank-and-file, were prohibited from residing outside of their regiment's encampment unless sick. To dissuade desertion and prevent espionage, Washington also doubled the nightly sentry details.⁷³

Throughout the summer, the Patriot build-up continued around New York City. An influx of militiamen swelled Washington's numbers to nearly 20,000 by the end of June. Their arrival further strained the region's quartering infrastructure. The commander-in-chief beseeched Congress in early June to "have all the tents and cloth proper for making'em that can be procured" sent to camp immediately.⁷⁴ In the absence of sufficient tents, soldiers found quarters in a mix of barracks, civilian homes, public buildings, and newly-built rudimentary structures. Edward Morgan, a Continental captain from Connecticut, informed his wife Hannah that he was "now in a good house," in early August, 1776. Notwithstanding the sound quarters in which he found himself, however, some of his comrades were "sick with camp distemper."⁷⁵ Another Connecticut soldier similarly described conditions as "a good deal sickly in the camps."⁷⁶

The need to secure the various islands and waterways around the city led Washington to disperse his men. Detachments took position on Governor's Island, Manhattan, Brooklyn Heights on Long Island, as well as along the Hudson in New Jersey.⁷⁷ Despite officers' efforts, discipline, order, and especially sanitation eroded in the weeks leading up to the British and Hessian onslaught on Long Island. New arrivals proved particularly averse to camp routine. Despite officers' prohibitions, soldiers continued to relieve themselves in ditches and fortifications rather than specified latrines, thereby exacerbating the spread of disease. By July, the poorly disciplined Continentals

and militia around New York had rendered their camps polluted and putrid. The sick rate in the Main Army surged from under 10 percent in June to over 30 percent by September.⁷⁸

Washington's opponents also began the 1776 campaign facing deficiencies in shelter. Much of the redcoats' camp equipment had been in poor shape when the war started in 1775. Therefore, the British undertook a complete re-equipping of tents and other camp items at the start of 1776. Although General William Howe's landed on Staten Island in early July, the British commander had to wait for adequate tentage until shipments arrived from England at the end of the month. The cautious Howe refused to undertake a campaign until his men had access to suitable shelter.⁷⁹

Compared to the dispersed, undisciplined, and dirty camps the Continentals erected, the British force embodied the order and cohesion expected of a regular army's castrametation practices. After the tents arrived, Howe's men set about building neat and orderly encampments to shelter the large expeditionary force. The long-service redcoat and Hessian soldiers had the experience and discipline needed to maintain an orderly camp, while their officers knew the core tenants of castrametation well. Participants highlighted the Staten Island camps' sanitary conditions, clean water supply, and even pleasant smell.⁸⁰

Beset by the illness and indiscipline produced in camp, the weakened Patriot army faced Howe's advance at a disadvantage. Fewer than half of Washington's nominal strength of 20,000 men stood ready to confront the redcoats and Hessians on Long Island in late August. The rest remained in Manhattan and outlying posts, or were sick. The Rebels consequently suffered a crushing defeat at the Battle of Long Island on August 27.

That debacle set into a motion a disastrous campaign season that saw them lose much of the ground and quartering infrastructure they had occupied around New York since March. Continental officers struggled amidst frequent retreats to adapt their quartering methods to a mobile campaign. On August 30 the Patriots evacuated Brooklyn. With the army freshly concentrated on Manhattan, Washington ordered his men to lodge in houses within the city. Recent rain storms had left the army's entire complement of tents wet and unsuitable for habitation. The commander-in-chief recognized the potential issues that retiring to civilian homes might incur. General Orders reminded officers and men alike to "see, as little damage as possible, done to houses where they are quartered."⁸¹ The inconvenience to city residents proved temporary. On September 15, Howe's forces landed at Kip's Bay, north of the city, forcing Washington to abandon the urban area at the southern tip of Manhattan.

The Patriots now found themselves in a strategic situation resembling the previous campaign at Boston, with a large Rebel army operating outside a British-held port. Even before the evacuation of New York, Washington envisioned a strategy similar to that of the past winter by maintaining a fixed position close the enemy-controlled city. Following a September 7 council-of-war, the commander-in-chief laid out plans to establish posts in upper Manhattan and Kingsbridge, just north of that island. He hoped defenses at Fort Washington on Manhattan and Fort Lee across the Hudson River in New Jersey would secure that waterway. The Main Army could then establish winter quarters at Kingsbridge. Fortifications on the heights of Harlem, four miles south of Kingsbridge, would provide a forward defense. By holding these posts, the Patriots could keep Howe's army confined to New York City itself.

Washington recognized that his new strategy would require permanent shelter for his men. The recent retreats had deprived more than a third of the army of its tents, while the rigors of the campaign left the remaining ones in worn shape. The approaching winter would not, in Washington's estimation, "admit of continuing in them long." Furthermore, the army's complement of clothes, shoes, and blankets were intended, like the tents, for a summer campaign. These items would likewise provide insufficient protection from the winter's cold.⁸² On September 9, Washington's aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Colonel Tench Tilghman, described the situation to Colonel Stephen Moylan, who had served as the Main Army's quartermaster general since early June: "The season advances fast, when it would be impossible for the troops to lay in camp, even if they were all supplied with tents and had a sufficient stock of blankets and other clothing." Therefore, Tilghman recognized, the army "must then depend upon barracks for shelter."

Experience at Boston had demonstrated how a lack of building materials would retard construction and delay getting the army sheltered. To avoid such pitfalls in 1776, Washington sought out lumber supplies from several sources from mid-September onwards. In contrast to Boston, New York's environment promised more abundant natural resources to sustain barracks construction. Tilghman directed Mifflin to procure quantities of wood, plus brick or stone, along with lime, to build chimneys and ovens.⁸³ To fulfill the army's lumber requirements, Washington appealed to the Northern Department, requesting that white-pine boards cut in northern New York be shipped down the Hudson to Kingsbridge. Major General Philip Schuyler, the departmental commander, responded that he hoped to collect 40,000 boards, with a "considerable number of rafters," while the New York government might provide another 20,000.⁸⁴

Boards came into camp in sufficient quantity to begin construction by October 9.⁸⁵ The abundant forests of upstate New York afforded the Continentals plenty of wood, while the Hudson River made for a straightforward supply rout. Schuyler's performance sharply contrasted with the meager amount of timber that the Massachusetts government gathered in 1775. The Main Army could thus expect to erect barracks more quickly than in the timber-poor Boston area. Until this lumber arrived, Washington gathered wood from sources nearer to hand. He directed units in the Main Army, currently using boards for temporary shelters to move into billets in nearby outbuildings in upper Manhattan. The wood was then sent to Kingsbridge.⁸⁶

With building materials en route, Washington turned his attention to the optimal placement of barracks in northern Manhattan and Kingsbridge. Following a skirmish at Harlem Heights on September 16, the Patriot position stabilized. On September 21, Washington directed Major General Israel Putnam and Brigadier General Joseph Spencer to examine the ground around Kingsbridge, to find suitable sites for winter camps. Applying proper castrametation practice, the Continentals sought dry, level ground with access to fresh water. When suitable spots were found, Quartermaster General Moylan was then to mark out sites for barracks and assemble building materials as quickly as possible.⁸⁷ Meanwhile, Deputy Quartermaster General Hugh Hughes hired ninety carpenters in three teams to facilitate construction. The Continentals thereby avoided the mistake of relying on common soldiers to build complicated structures, as they had at Boston. This demonstrated limited progress from the previous campaign.⁸⁸

Proper winter quarters appeared imperative in autumn 1776 as the Continentals' current shoddy lodgings undermined morale. The rapid evacuations of Brooklyn and

lower Manhattan had led the army to abandon much of its baggage, including tents. Captain Edward Rogers of Colonel Fisher Gray's regiment of Connecticut state troops informed his wife on September 17 that he had all of his shirts, stockings, his regimental coat, and watch in the confused retreat from Brooklyn and lower Manhattan. He described his regiment to be "in a broken state," with its colonel captured, its major ill, and only three captains fit for duty. For poorly-clad men such as Edward Rogers, shelter stood imperative in the face of autumn wind and rain.⁸⁹

On September 20, Washington reckoned half of his army remained "greatly distressed" without cover while the other stood "comfortably supplied." The commander-in-chief implored officers in regiments that still possessed tents to "store their men thicker" to free up space for the less fortunate. Five days later, Main Army brigade commanders met with the quartermaster general to divide up whatever tents remained on hand.⁹⁰ Such arrangements, however, did little to lift the army's spirits. In a letter to President Hancock, Washington complained that new arrivals in camp, ignorant of military life, "particularly in lodging," quickly fell ill, homesick, and undisciplined.⁹¹ So poor was the quality of the army's remaining tents that soldiers took boards intended as flooring to reinforce the structures' walls. This "practice peculiar to this army," in Washington's words, indicated that the rank-and-file preferred to lay in the mud rather than endure the wind and rain coming through their drafty cloth shelters. Washington nevertheless banned the practice. The general likely realized that given the army's poor attire, and the unsanitary conditions prevailing in camp, uncovered tent floors would likely exacerbate the spread of illness. Amid these uncomfortable conditions, morale and

order broke down. Soldiers increasingly plundered nearby farms and carelessly allowed beef provisions to rot in company streets.⁹²

Even as the Rebels attempted to build substantial housing on proper ground, they began to consider winter quarters other than barracks for the first time. Washington's orders of September 21 prescribed huts as a suitable alternative, recognizing the difficulty the army would likely encounter in building larger structures.⁹³ He had likewise suggested rudimentary huts to cover Colonel John Glover's brigade stationed at Throg's Neck, six miles east of Washington's headquarters in upper Manhattan. Glover's men suffered from the army's chronic lack of tents, and had few civilian structures available for quartering beyond barns, which were already occupied by the sick. Washington argued huts could provide practical late-season shelter "until proper barracks can be erected."⁹⁴ While the barracks required the use of boards and stone, the huts that were to supplement them could be built of straw, rails, and sod, essentially whatever building materials could be acquired nearby cheaply and quickly.⁹⁵

Although experience had demonstrated the importance of building shelter quickly in 1775, circumstances meant that the Continentals could not devote their full attention to construction in October 1776. Unlike the previous year, the British army remained in an aggressive posture, which made defensive fortifications the Patriot army's primary concern. Washington decreed that work on barracks and huts should not impede the construction of defenses, and soldiers were to erect their quarters only in their "spare time." Nonetheless, hut construction appears to have been well underway by the first week of October. The quartermaster general issued axes to picket detachments for felling local trees to be used in building huts. On October 17, General Orders reminded brigade

and regimental commanders to “prevent the irregular and promiscuous placing of huts,” and to ensure they were built solidly enough to withstand the weight of any potential snowfall.⁹⁶ Nevertheless, fortifications took precedence over lodging. Lieutenant James McMichael of the Pennsylvania Line recorded on October 9 near Fort Washington, “our lines [are] advantageous and well-fortified, both by nature and art,” but a week later his regiment remained covered only by tents.⁹⁷ While Washington emphasized regularity in hut arrangement once more in his General Orders of October 9, he again placed shelter construction as secondary to building defenses. With shelter construction lagging, soldiers continued to suffer with inadequate cover. The unfortunate captain Rogers contracted a camp disease in late September. On October 2, he wrote to his wife from his sickbed, declared “lodging at present uncomfortable makes the soldiers grow feeble.”⁹⁸

During October, Patriot troops appeared to be successfully implementing a castrametation strategy evocative of the practices outlined by Frederick the Great and Turpin de Crisse. A line of well sited fortified camps situated on high ground could double as winter shelter and defensive bastions, hemming his British opponents into lower Manhattan. Forts Lee and Washington promised to guard the lower Hudson, while the fortifications further up-river near Peekskill would do the same for the passage through the Hudson Highlands. Barracks in and around these forts and at Kingsbridge would provide comfortable shelter for the army over the winter, supplemented by huts until the barracks could be finished. Demonstrating impressive improvisational skill, the Continentals labored to build quartering infrastructure where none had existed previously.

Despite the resources and effort expended, however, the Rebels never completed the barracks, huts, and fortifications at Harlem and Kingsbridge. The Continentals' plan for a protracted defense of upper Manhattan came undone when, on October 12, Howe's army landed at Pelham Bay in Westchester County, threatening to cut off Washington's force from the rest of the state. Within a week, the bulk of the Rebel army abandoned the few structures it had built along the Harlem River and withdrew northwards to a line covering New Rochelle.⁹⁹ Washington ordered all supplies intended for his men northwards to White Plains.¹⁰⁰ The withdrawal to this new position upset the Continental commander's plans for covering his army for winter. The barracks available at Peekskill near White Plains were set aside to shelter ill soldiers, while the rest of the army resorted to what was left of its tattered tent supply, the bulk of which had been left behind at the now isolated at Fort Washington.¹⁰¹ From mid-November onwards, Washington's men suffered with little cover in the field. James McMichael's men spent beginning of November "very uncomfortable," camped in a forest near White Plains without tents, the "cold and frost very severe."¹⁰² Fort Washington remained the Rebels' only post on Manhattan. On October 24, General Greene recommended that the barracks standing at the fort should be torn down so as to not allow the enemy to use them for winter quarters. Greene's suggestion went unheeded, and the fort with its barracks fell into British hands on November 16.¹⁰³

After the fort's surrender, Washington led the majority of his army westwards to defend New Jersey from Howe's invasion. The troops that stayed behind in New York east of the Hudson came under Major General William Heath's command. These men withdrew to the fortifications in the mountainous Hudson Highlands, thirty miles north of

Manhattan. Here, throughout the summer of 1776, Continentals and New York militiamen had worked to build Forts Montgomery, Constitution, and Independence, to guard the Hudson's passage through the mountains. Similar to the Main Army's experience outside Boston and on Manhattan, the soldiers in the Hudson Highlands encountered delays in building barracks to house the forts' garrisons. The Main Army in Manhattan siphoned away most of the skilled labor, boards, and nails available in the region, leaving the Hudson Highlands short of building materials. By autumn, the barracks in the Hudson Highlands stood incomplete.¹⁰⁴

The Continentals' retreat made imperative the completion of shelter in and around the forts, since the Hudson Highlands lacked any sizeable town in which the Rebels could billet. In October, Brigadier General Thomas Mifflin, who had succeeded Moylan as quartermaster general in late September, took direction of building barracks in the Hudson Highlands. In a memorandum dated October 26, he provided new dimensions for barracks to be built at Peekskill and Fishkill. These structures were to be thirty-six feet long and nineteen feet wide, with ceilings standing seven feet high.¹⁰⁵ Mifflin had merely adapted his designs for winter shelter to a less ambitious model in the wake of the failures outside Boston. Nevertheless, even these structures would take weeks to build. In the interim, the Continentals adopted more rudimentary constructions. Nathanael Greene, writing from nearby King's Ferry, reported on November 5 that "many of our people have got into huts, tents are sent forward as fast as the people get their huts complete."¹⁰⁶ Washington officially sanctioned such methods on November 12, recommending Heath have his men build "the cheapest kind of barracks," made from logs, rather than cut boards, which make those structures essentially huts.¹⁰⁷ Heath

reported new barracks and defensive works under construction in the Hudson Highlands by November 18.¹⁰⁸ Heath's men worked to build barracks sufficient to house 5,500 men split between Peekskill and another site further north, with the general estimating construction to be about half-finished on November 21. While the rough terrain made for a strong natural defense, the rocky ground also hindered construction. A lack of tools also slowed the army's progress.¹⁰⁹ Given these difficulties much of the shelter finished in the Hudson Highlands consisted of rudimentary huts. Despite the army's best efforts, building barracks remained overly time-consuming and resource-draining.

Shelter and the New Jersey Campaign, November 1776-January 1777

By mid-November, the campaign's focus had shifted from New York. Howe's Redcoats and Hessians captured Fort Washington, with the bulk of the Rebels' tent supply, on November 16. Four days later, the British crossed to Hudson and commenced their invasion of New Jersey with the seizure of Fort Lee. Aside from the assorted forts, barracks, and huts in the Hudson Highlands, the Rebels lost control of the entirety of the quartering infrastructure built around New York City.

Housing considerations played a significant role in Howe's shift of the campaign into New Jersey, as well as his dispatch of Lieutenant General Henry Clinton's force to Rhode Island.¹¹⁰ Continental officers had recognized that denying shelter to the enemy could weaken their opponents' morale and health. In September, both Nathanael Greene and Charles Lee suggested setting fire to New York to deny its housing to the British and Hessians. While Washington agreed with his subordinates, Congress denied him permission to torch the city. Nevertheless, a terrible fire broke out on September 21,

destroying more than 600 houses and leaving many others unsuitable for habitation.¹¹¹ The city's remaining homes could not meet the large Crown force's quartering needs. Across the Hudson River, New Jersey's Seven Years War-era barracks in Burlington, Trenton, New Brunswick, Elizabethtown, and Newark beckoned to shelter Howe's men. In addition to those barracks, the good-sized towns along New Jersey's heavily populated central corridor could provide billets for British and Hessian troops. In keeping with proper European practice, Howe's regiments sought to disperse into towns throughout the region for comfortable winter quarters.

Even as Washington abandoned these locations to the enemy in November and December, the British and Germans discovered that New Jersey's towns were often too small to accommodate their considerable numbers. On the eve of the Patriot counterattack at Trenton, the Hessian regiment sent to garrison nearby Bordentown found that the village possessed too few houses and buildings for its men and therefore had to camp on the open ground outside of town.¹¹² Evidently, neither army operating around New York encountered circumstances enabling it to quarter using methods customary in Europe. Howe's troops, at least, enjoyed better access to suitable clothing, blankets, and most of the region's public and private buildings.

Washington likewise fixed his attention on the shelter available in New Jersey's population centers. As the commander-in-chief had done prior to the New York campaign, he took steps to prepare adequate lodging for his men as the scene of fighting shifted to New Jersey. On November 7, he ordered Nathanael Greene to make preparations for the defense of the state. That included readying the pre-war barracks in New Brunswick for occupation, and establishing a magazine in that town.¹¹³ Similarly,

Washington requested Governor William Livingston arrange for repairs to the barracks at Elizabethtown and Perth Amboy.¹¹⁴ The rapid Patriot retreat through the state, however, rendered these preparations futile. Through late November and early December, Rebel troops alternatively camped in woods or lodged in the larger towns along their line of march, including Newark, Elizabethtown, New Brunswick, and Princeton, but fell back any time the enemy approached.¹¹⁵

On December 12, Washington's army, now outside Trenton Falls in Pennsylvania, found itself in an area devoid of military infrastructure. The commander-in-chief instructed his subordinates "to quarter their brigades in houses or huts as compactly as possible."¹¹⁶ Lord Stirling reported that three regiments under his command lay "compact & well-covered with boards."¹¹⁷ Other soldiers billeted in private homes in Bucks County, however, which indicated no single housing type prevailed in the bedraggled army of mid-December 1776.¹¹⁸ Lieutenant James McMichael's unfortunate Pennsylvanians bivouacked in the woods, "having neither blankets or tents." On December 29, as the Continentals rested between the first and second battles of Trenton, McMichael lamented that his men posted at Yardley's Ferry had "no tents, and no houses to lodge in!"¹¹⁹

In two months since the British landing at Pelham Bay, the Continentals had lost control of the quarters they had built in upper Manhattan and Kingsbridge, as well as the barracks, houses, and public buildings of New Jersey's largest towns. The only area of northern New Jersey free of British occupation lay west of the Watchung Mountains and north of the Raritan River. In late November, Continental forces under Major General Charles Lee moved from New York into this lightly-defended region. The British

invasion of New Jersey had forced Washington to separate his forces to both oppose Howe's army while also securing the Hudson. Lee commanded 7,000 men at North Castle on the Hudson's west bank. Washington ordered Lee to march southwards to join the main body while keeping "between the enemy and the mountains."¹²⁰ Lee dithered in departing New York, however, worrying in particular over where his poorly-clad men would find shelter as they marched into the mostly uninhabited mountains along New York's border with New Jersey.¹²¹ His contingent consequently moved slowly and missed any chance at a junction with his commanding officer upon the latter's withdrawal from the line of the Raritan. Lee's troops reached Morristown, the most significant settlement in the region on December 4. A day earlier, Washington had moved his headquarters to Trenton.¹²² Forty miles of British controlled territory now separated the two Patriot wings.

Like Washington's force, Lee's contingent endured the onset of winter weather with only tattered tents and hastily-built shanties for cover. Sergeant John Smith of Rhode Island recorded sleeping in his tent pitched in the woods most nights during the march from the Hudson into northern New Jersey. When the baggage train carrying the tents suffered a delay, Smith and his comrades "was obliged to make us huts with rails and covered with straw for us to sleep in under this night." At Pompton, Lee's army lodged in the woods where "water was scarce and mud plenty." The Patriot soldiers found little sympathy from the Loyalist-leaning population in the vicinity of Ramapo, just inside the New Jersey border. Here, Smith related that "the inhabitants abused us calling us damned rebels and would not sell us anything for money." Not until the army reached the Morristown area did they encounter sympathetic civilians. Because the houses at

Morristown and nearby Chatham were “all full” perhaps with Whig refugees who had fled New York, Smith and his fellow soldiers continued to camp in the woods under tents, even as the weather grew colder and rain turned to snow.¹²³

Lee’s contingent near Morristown posed a threat to the rear of British forces operating elsewhere in the state. Lee proffered to Washington a plan to use his corps as “a body hanging on their flank, or rear,” which would threaten to cut-off any British advance southwards in pursuit of Washington’s men.¹²⁴ The Main Army’s withdrawal led Lee to shift his objectives from affecting a juncture with Washington’s forces to solidifying the Rebels’ hold on the area. Lee hoped to tighten the Patriots’ hold on the state’s northwestern corner and clamp down on dissent. Keeping in mind the importance of rallying civilian support, he planned to “cloth my people at the expense of the Tories,” which would succor his own men and raise the spirits of the Whig population.¹²⁵ After establishing his headquarters at Morristown on December 8, Lee again argued in favor the region’s strategic benefits. Positioning his forces between Morristown and nearby Chatham would place the army close enough to menace Newark, Elizabethtown, Woodbridge, and Boundbrook, a stance that would “annoy, distract, and consequently weaken,” British forces.¹²⁶ By following this strategy, Lee believed the Patriots could render British and Hessian winter quarters in northern New Jersey untenable.¹²⁷ Yet Washington still desired to combine his forces with Lee’s contingent, ordering Brigadier General William Maxwell on December 8 to gather boats at Tincium along the Delaware to transport Lee’s men southward. The commander-in-chief remained dismissive of Lee’s plan to establish a post at Morristown in a December 10 letter to President

Hancock.¹²⁸ Instead, Washington once again urged his subordinate to march southwards on December 12.¹²⁹

The disagreement between Washington and Lee in late 1776 reflected the two generals' differing outlooks on the prosecution of the war. The former, intending to fight a conventional conflict, needed to concentrate his forces either to defend Philadelphia from an overland British advance, or to launch a counteroffensive into New Jersey if the opportunity presented itself. By recovering the state's principal towns, the Patriots would gain access to the proper shelter for a conventional standing army. Conversely, Lee conceived of the struggle as a popular rebellion in which civilian populations and partisan warfare would play a central role. In such a war, the militia would bear the brunt of the fighting, and these men would have little need for long-term shelter. The New Jersey Highlands' rugged terrain and small villages stood out as a logical location from which to wage a partisan campaign.¹³⁰ Eventually, the Patriots would adopt elements of both Washington's and Lee's ideas.

Lee's disobedience of orders kept Continental troops in the Morristown area, securing the region for the Rebel cause at a time when resistance collapsed elsewhere in the state. As Washington withdrew into Pennsylvania, Lee's corps at Morristown constituted not only the lone Patriot force remaining in the northern part of the state, but also the only protection to the lines of communication linking New York's Hudson Highlands with the states to the west and south.¹³¹ Conflict in the area intensified on December 13, when a British cavalry patrol captured Lee at nearby Basking Ridge. Five days later, Morris County militia skirmished with British troops near Chatham, a portent,

local Patriot leaders feared, of a British thrust through the gap in the Watchung Mountains leading to Morristown.

Following Lee's capture, Major General Alexander McDougall arrived to take command of the Continentals at Morristown. As per Washington's original orders to Lee, McDougall was to lead Patriot troops southwards to reinforce the army along the Delaware. McDougall feared however, that withdrawing all of the Continentals at Morristown would lead civilians to worry that the army had abandoned the state. Describing New Jersey's loss as "fatal to our common cause," McDougall ordered three regiments under Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Vose passing through the region to remain at Morristown.¹³² Washington acquiesced with McDougall's decision, believing three regiments at Morristown with "about 800" collected militia would be useful to "inspirit the inhabitants" and raid British supply lines. He dispatched Brigadier General William Maxwell, a New Jerseyan, to take command.¹³³

Crown forces remained quiescent at Newark and Elizabethtown, and had evacuated an advanced post at Bound Brook, where Hessian Captain Johann Ewald described increased patrolling following Lee's arrival "in the mountains of Morristown toward the right flank of the army."¹³⁴ By late December, Howe viewed the campaign as effectively over, and retired his forces to inactive winter quarters. At Morristown, Major William DeHart observed on December 27 improved spirits among the population. He could also count 300 militiamen newly arrived at Pluckemin in addition to a similar number under at Morristown. DeHart carried "the greatest confidence," that Patriot forces "shall be able to maintain this part of the province."¹³⁵

By the date of DeHart's letter, Patriot strategic fortunes in New Jersey had already shifted as a result of Washington's successful attack at Trenton on December 26. Envisioning an offensive to drive the British completely from the state, Washington ordered McDougall and Maxwell at Morristown to gather available Continental and militia forces to harass the British rear and prepare to join with Washington's men. Meanwhile, Major General William Heath was to move southwards from the Hudson Highlands and press to the Hackensack River.¹³⁶ In this manner, the commander-in-chief adopted a similar plan to that outlined by Lee two weeks earlier. Following Washington's victory at Princeton on January 3, the Rebel leader pressed his men northwards, initially intending to seize New Brunswick. Given the exhausted state of his army after a week's campaigning in winter weather, however, he opted instead for a more conservative strategy and led his troops towards the secure northwestern corner of the state.

Having been on the move for nearly two weeks, Washington's small force had abandoned whatever quarters it had erected along the Delaware. The towns and villages of the New Jersey offered the best opportunity for winter shelter. Recognizing the pitfalls of waging an extended winter campaign with his poorly clothed army, Washington resolved to put his troops "under the best cover I can." Until the army reached the population center at Morristown, however, the Patriots had to sleep each night in the open air.¹³⁷ January 4 found the Rebels at Pluckemin at the southwestern terminus of the Watchungs. Here Captain Thomas Rodney of Delaware recorded in his journal "the army in this situation was obliged to encamp on the bleak mountains whose tops were covered with snow, without even blankets to cover them." Rodney, covered in

only his great coat, took shelter in a nearby house where he “fared comfortably well.” He did not record whether the house was abandoned or occupied.¹³⁸ Likewise, James McMichael’s men rested only on “large stones, which served us as pillows.”¹³⁹

On January 6, Washington reached Morristown itself. He hoped to draw in all available Continental and militia detachments and “watch the motions of the enemy,” while awaiting a moment to strike.¹⁴⁰ If such a moment failed to materialize, Morristown offered a position “best calculated of any in this quarter, to accommodate and refresh,” his men. After resting the army, Washington hoped to relocate, though the general offered no indication of where he intended to move his army after Morristown. Indeed he admitted “I do not know how we shall procure covering for our men elsewhere.”¹⁴¹ Newark and Elizabethtown lay too close to New York to permanently station the army in those towns through the winter. The area immediately south and east of the Watchungs presented few options. Likewise, any locale further north of Morristown lacked significant settlements, as Lee’s recent march from the Hudson Highlands had demonstrated.

A lack of housing options had thereby again imposed limitations on operations. Washington’s optimism for a further offensive notwithstanding, the exhausted and diminished state of the Patriot army in early January, as well as the worsening weather, ultimately dissuaded the Rebel commander from launching any further major attacks. Skirmishes in the New Jersey countryside would continue for several months, but large-scale operations came to an effective halt until spring. Although Washington had not held a position at Morristown in high regard, circumstances forced him to settle on the New Jersey Highlands as the home for his army for early 1777. While the town had so

far served principally as a stopover point for troops marching southwards, and its chief champion as a strategic point now languished in captivity, by early January 1777 the New Jersey Highlands represented the Patriots' best option for winter quarters.

The army's January arrival in Morristown brought to a close the whirlwind mobile campaign around New York that had begun in August 1776. These operations had witnessed the collapse of Continental defenses around New York City and the loss of the quartering infrastructure built in that region. Until December, the New Jersey Highlands had remained on the periphery of the dramatic maneuvers and battles taking place to the east and south. While Washington's December 26 counterattack quickly overshadowed the drama surrounding Morristown and the New Jersey Highlands during December 1776, the actions of Lee and McDougall critically affected the course of the campaign. Guarded by just small number of Continentals and militiamen, the area around Morristown, with its population of New Jersey Patriots and Whig refugees, remained in Rebel hands. Through the first five months of 1777, Continental troops dispersed into winter billets throughout the state's north and west. Houses in Morristown, Chatham, and Boundbrook all hosted Patriot forces. A contingent from New York moved into Bergen County and lodged in Hackensack. Further south, the Patriots also wintered at Trenton and Princeton. Militiamen, operating from their own communities, screened the army's winter quarters and waged a lively partisan campaign against British foraging operations.¹⁴²

Had the British seized Morristown and the surrounding area, Washington would have had few options for a secure winter base following his victory at Princeton. A move to recover New Brunswick would have placed him in a head-on collision with the British.

To have stayed south of the Raritan would have left only Princeton, Trenton and a few small towns in that area in which to winter the army. These locales would have all lacked the natural protection that the Watchungs afforded Morristown. The army could also maintain communications with the Hudson Highlands and New England from Morristown better than any post to the south. Furthermore, the raids launched from behind the Watchungs induced the British to abandon Newark and Elizabethtown, leading to the re-capture of these important Whig population centers.

By recovering much of New Jersey, the Patriots denied most of that state's towns and barracks to their opponents. To maintain a foothold in New Jersey, Howe kept more than 10,000 troops at New Brunswick, Perth Amboy, and nearby villages. Combined, the towns contained too few buildings to cover such a large force. Crowding exceeded standards set in European wars. New Brunswick's 400 houses hosted six battalions of British and Hessian grenadiers, as well as two full infantry brigades, artillery, and a dragoon regiment. Light infantry erected shanties in the countryside outside of town that proved uncomfortable and unhealthy. Reinforcements arriving from Rhode Island had no option but to stay on their transport ships anchored in the Raritan Bay. Through the first months of 1777, the Crown's soldiers suffered the ill effects of inadequate shelter much as the Patriots had during the previous year. Disease spread rapidly among the troops packed into towns and aboard ship, while morale plummeted.¹⁴³ Thus, the New Jersey campaign led to a reversal of fortune in the two opponents' respective quartering situations. The British had invaded the state to secure good cover for the cold season, only to be turned out by Washington's counter-offensive. The Patriots, who had in late December suffered in the open along the banks of the Delaware, had by early January

secured good billets for themselves. While Howe's men languished along the Raritan, the Rebels gained the chance to regain their strength in relative comfort.

Conclusion

Overall, Continental quartering methods maintained continuity from 1775 through late 1776. Throughout this period, officers drew upon European practices codified in military enlightenment texts, as well as their own limited experiences, to craft a quartering policy centering on tents while on campaign and barracks during the winter. Billets in civilian homes and public buildings supplemented these structures, despite the suspicion with which the colonial population held towards the practice of quartering in private homes. The geographic, material, and administrative realities of the early war years revealed the shortcomings in the first attempts to house Washington's army. Congress failed to purchase sufficient tents for the Rebels gathered around Boston, and the inexperienced officers and men of 1775 and 1776 proved poor builders and administrators of camps. Most saliently, permanent barracks showed themselves to be too complex, time consuming, and draining on resources for the young army to build in suitable quantities. Finally, camp sanitation and disease prevention, particularly smallpox, remained unresolved issues, and promised to present even greater problems as the rebelling colonies marshaled a larger, long-service army in the spring of 1777.

Throughout this period, housing shortages and poor camp administration directly affected the conduct of operations. Fears inspired by a lack of winter quarters had led Washington to consider a premature offensive against Boston in 1775, and the haphazard arrangement of camps in Massachusetts had undermined the new army's organization

and at times left it vulnerable to attack. Later in New York, widely distributed and unhealthy camps undermined the army's effectiveness during its battles against Howe's army. The loss of quartering infrastructure and tents in the autumn of 1776 added to the miseries Washington's men as the army nearly dissolved. In November and December, the Continentals compounded their tent shortage by abandoning New Jersey's billets and barracks to the enemy. Recovering this infrastructure, and denying to the enemy, represented the most important immediate result of Washington's counterattacks at Trenton and Princeton. Nevertheless in early 1777, the Continentals faced to an ongoing war in the New York region with only a scattering of small New Jersey towns for shelter. As long as the British remained in New York City, however, the region of New Jersey west of the Watchungs and north of the Raritan offered the Rebel army its best prospects for a base of operations. From 1777 onwards, the Continentals would seek to develop the quartering infrastructure needed to sustain a standing army in the New Jersey Highlands.

Chapter 3 Notes

¹ Washington to Massachusetts Legislature, October 6, 1775, in W.W. Abbot et. al., eds., *The Papers of George Washington: Revolutionary War Series*, 25 vols. to date, (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1987-), 1: 118-19. Hereafter cited as *PGW*.

² Robert K. Wright, *The Continental Army* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1989), 45-56.

³ David C. Hsuing, "Food, Fuel, and the New England Environment in the American War of Independence, 1775-1776," *New England Quarterly* 80 (December 2007): 615.

⁴ Washington to Hancock, July 11, 1775, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 1: 84.

⁵ William Emerson to Mary Emerson, July 17, 1775, quoted in Allen French, *The First Year of the American Revolution* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1934), 300.

⁶ Joseph to Sarah Hodgkins, June 8, 1775, quoted in Herbert T. Wade and Robert A. Lively, *This Glorious Cause: The Adventures of Two Company Officers in Washington's Army* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958), 24.

⁷ William Emerson to Mary Emerson, July 17, 1775, quoted in Allen French, *The First Year*, 300.

⁸ James Thacher, *A Military Journal during the American Revolutionary War, from 1775 to 1783; Describing Interesting Events and Transactions of this Period; with Numerous Historical Sketches of Several General Officers* (Boston: Cottons & Barnard, 1827), 35.

⁹ General Orders, July 17, 1775, *PGW*, in Revolutionary War Series, 1: 114-15.

¹⁰ Washington to Hancock, July 21, 1775, in *Ibid.*, 136-37.

¹¹ Hsuing, "Food, Fuel," 619; Thacher, *Military Journal*, 37.

¹² General Orders, July 26; Washington to Hancock, August 4, both in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 1: 172, 223

¹³ Washington to Hancock, August 4, 1775, in *Ibid.*, 225.

¹⁴ General Orders, August 15, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 309.

¹⁵ Hsuing, "Food, Fuel," 620.

¹⁶ Circular to General Officers, September 8, 1775, in *PGW, Revolutionary War Series*, 1: 433-35.

¹⁷ Council of War, September 11, 1775, in *Ibid.*, 450-51. Present at this council were Major Generals Artemas Ward, Charles Lee, and Israel Putnam, as well as Brigadier Generals William Heath, John Thomas, John Sullivan, Joseph Spencer, and Nathanael Greene.

¹⁸ Hancock to Washington, September 26, in *Ibid.*, 49.

¹⁹ William Tudor to John Adams, September 30, 1775, Sara Martin, ed., *The Adams Papers*, 16 vols. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2008–2017), 3: 173.

²⁰ Estimate of Quarter Master Expenses, October 5, 1775; Estimate of Commissary Expenses, October 7, 1775, both in *PGW, Revolutionary War Series*, 2: 151, 150; Erna Risch, *Supplying Washington's Army* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1981), 141.

²¹ General Orders, October 1, 1775, in *PGW, Revolutionary War Series*, 2: 76

²² Simeon Lymon, "Journal of Simeon Lymon," entry for September 27, 1775, in *Collections of the Connecticut Historical Society*, 31 vols. (Hartford: Connecticut Historical Society, 1899), 7: 120.

²³ *Ibid.*, 121.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 122-23.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 124, 126, 131.

²⁶ James Warren to John Adams, November 5, 1775, in Martin, *Adams Papers*, 3: 280.

²⁷ Washington to William Ramsay, November 10-16, 1775, in *PGW, Revolutionary War Series* 2: 344.

²⁸ Washington to Joseph Reed, December 25, 1775, in *Ibid.*, 606-7.

²⁹ Greene to Samuel Ward Sr., December 18, 1775, in Richard K. Showman, Dennis R. Conrad, and Roger N. Parks eds. *The Papers of Nathanael Greene*, 13 vols. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1976-2005), 1: 165.

³⁰ General Orders, January 24, 1776, in *PGW, Revolutionary War Series*, 3: 176.

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- ³¹ Thacher, *Military Journal*, 46.
- ³² An account of the barracks improved by the Continental troops, (undated, but likely January 1777), in Peter Force, *American Archives*, 4th series, 4: 844.
- ³³ Joseph to Sarah Hodgkins, October 6, 1775, quoted in Wade and Lively, *This Glorious Cause*, 41.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, 42.
- ³⁵ General Orders, November 22, 1775, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 2: 415-17.
- ³⁶ General Orders, January 3, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 3: 13.
- ³⁷ Washington to Hancock, January 14, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 85.
- ³⁸ Washington to Reed, January 14, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 88.
- ³⁹ Reed to Washington, March 7, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 429.
- ⁴⁰ Worthington C. Ford, et. al., eds., *Journals of the Continental Congress*, 34 vols. (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1904-1937), 4: 102.
- ⁴¹ Washington to Reed, February 10, 1776, and Reed to Washington, March 15, 1776, both in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 3: 287, 3: 477.
- ⁴² Washington to Hancock, March 13, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 465.
- ⁴³ Ford, et. al., *Journals of the Continental Congress*, 4: 238, quoted in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 3: 465.
- ⁴⁴ Washington to the Massachusetts Council, August 29, 1775, in *Ibid.*, 1: 376.
- ⁴⁵ *Massachusetts House of Representatives Journal*, July-November 1775 session, 229-30, quoted in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 2: 119, footnote 1.
- ⁴⁶ Greene to Samuel Ward Sr., December 31, 1775, in Showman, et. al., *Green Papers*, 1: 173.
- ⁴⁷ Hsuing, "Food, Fuel," 645-51.
- ⁴⁸ General Orders, January 24, 1776, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 3: 176.
- ⁴⁹ Schuyler to Washington, August 6, 1775, in *Ibid.*, 1: 255-57.

⁵⁰ Schuyler to Congress, December 8, 1775, in Force, *American Archives*, 4th series, 4: 219-20.

⁵¹ Michael Barbieri, "Winter Soldiering in the Champlain Valley" *Journal of the American Revolution*, October 19, 2015. <https://allthingsliberty.com/2015/10/winter-soldiering-in-the-lake-champlain-valley/> (retrieved December 16, 2016).

⁵² "Motion to Make Provision for Repairing Barracks," New Jersey State Assembly, in Force, *American Archives* 4th series, 3: 1884.

⁵³ Lord Stirling to Isaac Bonnell, December 4, 1775, in *Ibid.*, 172.

⁵⁴ General Orders, October 3, 1775, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 2: 81.

⁵⁵ General Orders, November 22 and December 7, 1775, both in *Ibid.*, 415, 503.

⁵⁶ Ann M. Becker, "Smallpox in Washington's Army: Strategic Implications of the Disease in the American Revolutionary War," *Journal of Military History* 68 (April 2004): 387-89.

⁵⁷ Amos Clark to Sarah Clark, July 31, 1775, Andre de Coppet Collection, Box 3, Folder 6, Princeton University Firestone Library, Princeton, NJ.

⁵⁸ General Orders, July 4, 1775, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 1: 55.

⁵⁹ Washington to Hancock, July 21, 1775, in *Ibid.*, 140.

⁶⁰ William Sever to Washington, December 11, 1775, in *Ibid.*, 2: 535.

⁶¹ John Morgan to Washington, December 12, 1775, in *Ibid.*, 541.

⁶² Becker, "Smallpox in Washington's Army," 392.

⁶³ Asa Andrews to Josiah Williard, August 6, 1776, American Revolution Collection, Box 11, Folder B, Connecticut Historical Society.

⁶⁴ Thacher, *Military Journal*, 40.

⁶⁵ David Avery Diary, December 21, 1775, and January 6, 1776, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Connecticut.

⁶⁶ Edward G. Lengel, *Washington, A Military Life*, (New York: Random House, 2005), 116.

⁶⁷ Wright, *Continental Army*, 55-56.

⁶⁸ William Thompson to Washington, March 28, 1776, in *PGW, Revolutionary War Series*, 3: 558.

⁶⁹ Lee to Washington, February 29, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 390.

⁷⁰ Washington to Thomas Mifflin, March 24, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 520.

⁷¹ General Orders, April 17 and April 30, 1776, both in *Ibid.*, 4: 75, 174.

⁷² General Orders, April 25 and May 5, 1776, both in *Ibid.*, 123, 204.

⁷³ General Orders, April 25, April 29, April 30, May 11, and May 20, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 123, 162, 174, 274, 343-44.

⁷⁴ Washington to Hancock, June 8, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 463.

⁷⁵ Edward Morgan to Hannah Morgan, August 9, 1776, American Revolution Collection, Box 11, Folder C, Connecticut Historical Society.

⁷⁶ Amos Clark to Sarah Clark. August 5, 1776, Andre de Coppet Collection, Box 4, Folder 6, Princeton University Firestone Library.

⁷⁷ Lengel, *Washington*, 132-34.

⁷⁸ David Hackett Fischer, *Washington's Crossing* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 86-87.

⁷⁹ Arthur Bowler, *Logistics and the Failure of the British army in America, 1775-1783* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 147-48.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 87.

⁸¹ General Orders, August 30, 1776, in *PGW, Revolutionary War Series*, 6: 163.

⁸² Washington to Hancock, September 8, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 249-52.

⁸³ Tench Tilghman to Stephen Moylan, September 9, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 252-53.

⁸⁴ Washington to Schuyler, September 12, 1776; Schuyler to Washington, October 6, 1776, both in *Ibid.*, 297, 492.

⁸⁵ General Orders, October 9, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 514.

⁸⁶ General Orders, September 13, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 299.

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- ⁸⁷ General Orders, September 24, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 385.
- ⁸⁸ Hugh Hughes Letterbook, September 12, 1776, quoted in Risch, *Supplying Washington's Army*, 143.
- ⁸⁹ Edward Rogers to Hannah Rogers, September 17, 1776, American Revolution Collection, Box 11, Folder C, Connecticut Historical Society.
- ⁹⁰ General Orders, September 20, 1776 and September 25, 1776, both in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 6: 347-50, 393.
- ⁹¹ Washington to Hancock, September 25, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 396.
- ⁹² General Orders, September 28, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 418.
- ⁹³ General Orders, September 21, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 359.
- ⁹⁴ Washington to Glover, September 18, 1776, *Ibid.*, 330.
- ⁹⁵ Robert Hanson Harrison to William Heath, September 30, 1776, quoted in *Ibid.*, 436-37.
- ⁹⁶ General Orders, October 9, 1776 and October 17, 1776, both in *Ibid.*, 496, 514.
- ⁹⁷ James McMichael, "Diary of Lieutenant James McMichael, of the Pennsylvania Line, 1776-1778," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 16 (July 1892): 136.
- ⁹⁸ Edward Rogers to Hannah Rogers, October 2, 1776, Revolutionary War Collection, Box 11, Folder B, Connecticut Historical Society.
- ⁹⁹ Robert Hanson Harrison to John Hancock, October 20, 1776, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 6: 592.
- ¹⁰⁰ Washington to Robert R. Livingston, October 20, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 594.
- ¹⁰¹ General Orders, November 5, 1776, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 7: 85; Risch, *Supplying Washington's Army*, 149.
- ¹⁰² McMichael, "Diary," 138.
- ¹⁰³ Greene to Washington, October 24, 1776, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 7: 23.

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- ¹⁰⁴ Lord Stirling to Washington, June 9, 1776; James Clinton to Washington, July 1, 1776; Clinton to Washington, September 8, 1776, all in *Ibid.*, 4: 478, 5: 165, 6: 246.
- ¹⁰⁵ Mifflin to Duer, October 26, 1776, in Force, *American Archives*, 5th Series, 2: 1254.
- ¹⁰⁶ Greene to Washington, November 5, 1776, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 7: 87.
- ¹⁰⁷ Washington to Heath, November 12, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 147.
- ¹⁰⁸ Heath to Washington, November 18, 1776, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 7: 176.
- ¹⁰⁹ Charles Lee to Heath, November 20, 1776; Heath to Lee, November 21, 1776, both in Henry Edward Bunbury, ed., *The Lee Papers*, 4 vols. (New York: New York Historical Society, 1872) 2: 290, 291.
- ¹¹⁰ Charles Lee to the Governor of Rhode Island, November 14, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 278.
- ¹¹¹ Fischer, *Washington's Crossing*, 106-7.
- ¹¹² *Ibid.*, 185-89.
- ¹¹³ Washington to Greene, November 7, 1776, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 7: 108.
- ¹¹⁴ Washington to William Livingston, November 7, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 111.
- ¹¹⁵ McMichael, "Diary," 138-39.
- ¹¹⁶ Orders to Brigadier Generals Stirling, Mercer, Stephen, and La Rochefermoy, December 12, 1776, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 7: 307.
- ¹¹⁷ Stirling to Washington, December 12, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 319.
- ¹¹⁸ John C. Dann, *The Revolution Remembered: Eyewitness Accounts of the War of Independence* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 394.
- ¹¹⁹ McMichael, "Diary," 140.
- ¹²⁰ Washington to Lee, November 24, 1776, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 7: 209-10.

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- ¹²¹ Charles Lee to Joseph Reed, November 24, 1776, in Bunbury, *Lee Papers*, 2: 305-6.
- ¹²² Washington to Lee, November 24, 1776; Lee to Washington November 24, 1776 and November 26, 1776, all in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 7: 209-10, 210-11.
- ¹²³ Louise Rau, ed., "Sergeant John Smith's Diary of 1776," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 20 (September 1933), 262-63.
- ¹²⁴ Lee to Washington, December 4, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 259.
- ¹²⁵ Lee to Washington, December 4, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 259.
- ¹²⁶ Lee to Washington, December 8, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 276-77.
- ¹²⁷ Charles Lee to the President of the Massachusetts Council, November 22, 1776, in Bunbury, *Lee Papers*, 2: 303-04; Lee to Congress, December 8, 1776, Papers of the Continental Congress, microfilm M247, reel 177, item 158 p93, National Archives, Washington, DC.
- ¹²⁸ Washington to Maxwell, December 8, 1776, Washington to Hancock, December 10, 1776, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 7: 278, 286.
- ¹²⁹ Washington to Lee, December 10, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 288.
- ¹³⁰ John Shy, *A People Numerous and Armed: Reflections on the Military Struggle for Independence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 133-62.
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- ¹³² McDougall to Washington, December 19, 1776, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 7: 376-78.
- ¹³³ Washington to Hancock, December 20, 1776; Washington to Maxwell, December 21, 1776, both in *Ibid.*, 385, 402.
- ¹³⁴ Johann Ewald, *Diary of the American War: A Hessian Journal*, trans. Joseph P. Trustin (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 24.
- ¹³⁵ William DeHart to Washington, December 27, 1776, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 7: 453.

¹³⁶ Washington to McDougall, December 28, 1776, Washington to Heath, December 28, 1776, both in *Ibid.*, 472-73, 469.

¹³⁷ Washington to Hancock, January 5, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 523.

¹³⁸ Thomas Rodney, "Diary of Captain Thomas Rodney 1776-177," Caesar A. Rodney, ed., *Papers of the Historical Society of Delaware*, 42 vols. (Wilmington, DE: The Historical Society of Delaware, 1888), 8: 38, 39.

¹³⁹ McMichael, "Diary," 141.

¹⁴⁰ Washington to Heath, January 5, 1777, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 7: 531.

¹⁴¹ Washington to Hancock, January 7, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 8: 9.

¹⁴² Fischer, *Washington's Crossing*, 352-60.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 350-51.

CHAPTER 4

CONTINENTAL SHELTER IN TRANSITION, 1777-1778

During 1777, the Continental Army underwent significant changes to its composition. As a result of a Congressional resolution of late 1776, new recruits now enlisted for “three-years or the war.” Unlike the levies gathered around Boston or straggling into Morristown in January 1777, the army gathering in the spring would not disperse at year’s end. The new army also promised to be the largest Continental force yet assembled. Congress had authorized the states to raise eighty-eight battalions, and then approved additional regiments to bring the total force to over 100. At full strength, this would give General George Washington some 80,000 men. While actual recruitment fell well short of this number, the 1777 reforms put the army on a more stable footing.¹

Providing shelter for this new army led to several additional problems for Continental officers. First, by concentrating new recruits gathered from diverse geographic backgrounds, Patriot camps and billets exacerbated the spread of smallpox to both soldiers and civilians. Left unchecked, the disease threatened to undermine morale and sap military strength. Even absent smallpox, unhealthy camps had sapped the Main Army’s strength around New York in 1776. To maintain operational effectiveness, the new army needed to hone its skills at building orderly and sanitary camps in the field. Finally, as soldiers would no longer depart with the expiration of short-term enlistments at year’s end, the 1777 army required a new method of winter shelter to supplant its billets for its annually reduced numbers.

This chapter traces how the Continental Army adapted to the shelter problems of a long-service army during 1777. Washington overcame the first concern, smallpox, by implementing an inoculation program in February and March. Subsequently, Continental soldiers would not present a danger to each other or their host civilian populations, removing one of the major obstacles to quartering men in the future. Inoculation, however, disrupted the organization and training of new recruits. Consequently, Washington turned to another European method, the large, concentrated, spring encampment, to reorganize and train his new regiments. The Middlebrook encampment of May-June 1777 served to instill discipline in officers and men alike and provided many Continentals with their first taste of camp life. Concurrently, the Continental Congress provided the army with a substantial quantity of tents, reducing the reliance on the rudimentary shelter methods of past camps in the field. From June 1777 onwards, temporary shelter on campaign no longer presented a substantial problem to Continental officers. Finally, during the winter of 1777-1778, Washington and his subordinates, after much debate, crafted a new scheme for winter quarters, the log-hut city at Valley Forge. This new method, involving hundreds of timber-built structures capable of housing a dozen men, provide shelter for a long-service army operating in a region devoid of barracks, fortresses, or large towns needed for billets.

While Valley Forge rightfully stands out as a new innovation in the art of castrametation, it rested atop developments made earlier in the year in the New Jersey Highlands. Without inoculation and improvements to camp discipline developed in northern New Jersey between January and July 1777, building winter quarters at Valley Forge would have proven an even more daunting task for Washington's army. Overall,

the period of early 1777 to mid-1778 represented a transitional time for both for the Continental Army as a whole and its sheltering methods in particular. Morristown, Middlebrook, and Valley Forge provided a foundation upon which the Continentals would build a new doctrine of castrametation in the following year.

Health, Shelter, and Strategy in Northern New Jersey

After the counter-offensive that recovered much of New Jersey in early 1777, Morristown remained the center of Continental Army dispositions for the remainder of that winter. With the mobile phase of the campaign concluded, Washington again turned to the problem of where and how to shelter his men. With the season too far gone to begin building barracks, the Continentals resorted to more rudimentary methods, billeting in Morristown and other nearby towns. While offering better protection from the elements than sleeping in the open, this mode created further difficulties.

Throughout January, Washington's haggard men took shelter in and around the village with no qualms about quartering in private homes. Morristown contained a pre-war population of some 250 people inhabiting some fifty houses. Washington's army, despite stragglers and expiring enlistments, still numbered more than 4,000 men. To billet these soldiers, Patriot officers crowded their men into civilian homes. Captain Thomas Rodney's Delaware infantry took over the "very large house" of Jacob Ford, a prominent resident of Morristown and colonel in the militia. Ford's family of six shared their living space with Rodney and thirty-five of his men during early January.² John Read, a Pennsylvania militiamen, complained on January 8 of being "forced to write on my knee as the house is exceedingly crowded."³ A week later, his quarters remained

“surrounded by a roomful of people” whose constant noise he blamed for distracting him from composing his thoughts.⁴ Cramped conditions similar to those encountered in Morristown defined the experience of Patriot forces scattered throughout New Jersey and the Hudson Highlands of New York in early 1777. In Hanover, a few miles north of Morristown, Reverend Jacob Green’s house provided billets for ten officers and two servants in addition to the family of nine.⁵ Despite the congested conditions, Rebel troops found the substantial coverings to their liking. Lieutenant James McMichael of Pennsylvania also lodged in a civilian home in Morristown. After weeks spent under the open sky, McMichael recorded on January 7 having “secured good quarters, where I lived happily while we remained in Morristown, with very agreeable people.”⁶

Continental commanders quickly discovered that the small village could not adequately shelter their entire force. A day after the Delaware regiment’s arrival, Captain Rodney found himself in command of the camp guard, comprising twenty-six men, to be housed near Washington’s quarters.⁷ Rodney solicited the assistance of Quartermaster General Colonel Thomas Mifflin to find a suitable guard house, but Mifflin responded that the only structure available had been used as a hospital. The Delaware commander objected to housing his guards in such a building, and ultimately the unit remained at the Ford Mansion, inconveniently placing them more than a mile from Washington’s headquarters.⁸

The lack of sufficient structures to cover the army in a small village such as Morristown led Washington to disperse his troops to other towns in the region. From Morristown, Major General William Alexander, Lord Stirling, directed the Ninth Virginia and Twelfth Pennsylvania regiments, along with the New Jersey and Delaware

militias, southward to Trenton. There under the care of Delaware militia Brigadier General Caesar Rodney, these units could find better shelter and guard Patriot lines of communication to Philadelphia.⁹

Elsewhere in the state, the Continentals and militia that moved to and from the seat of war in the Highlands found shelter in towns along their routs of march. New York militiamen operating in northern Bergen County under the command of New York Governor George Clinton billeted in houses near Paramus because no barracks were available for winter quarters.¹⁰ Margaret Morris, a resident of Burlington, a town in southern New Jersey perched on the banks of the Delaware, recorded in early February that “several hundred” soldiers, returning from Morristown, “quartered on the inhabitants.” Morris heard that these men “behave well.” Unlike the armies to the north, the military presence in the southern part of the state proved ephemeral. The soldiers quartered in Burlington departed after a single day’s rest.¹¹

The departure and arrival of soldiers and their dispersal to various towns brought Patriot troops into contact with communities throughout the state. Trenton served as a marshaling point for reserves arriving from distant states where units could rest and re-provision before marching to forward positions. In late January, Delaware Governor Caesar Rodney, serving in his capacity as a militia brigadier general, took command at Trenton. Rodney sent most of his small force to reinforce Major General Israel Putnam at Princeton and Washington at Morristown, as expiring enlistments diminished Continental strength at these two forward deployments.¹² The brigadier general attended to disciplining the soldiers that remained behind in the town. With the army dispersed, the task of instilling discipline and maintaining order fell to local commanders like

Rodney. The Delaware brigadier proved particularly attentive to these matters, issuing orders that emphasized personal cleanliness and sobriety and cutting the rum-ration to a third of the normal allowance to enforce the latter, to ensure that his men did “no injury to any of the inhabitants.”¹³ By mid-February, the growing tide of expiring enlistments in northern New Jersey created a vacuum into which new units were drawn, with many bypassing Trenton in favor of the more direct route to Morristown through Coryell’s Ferry, ten miles upstream. Thus in late February, Caesar Rodney left Trenton for his home state, having won Washington’s praise for “the alertness observed by you in forwarding on the troops from Trenton,” and that town declined in importance to Continental strategy.¹⁴

While Trenton and Burlington sheltered troops distant from the fighting, towns nearer New York found themselves lodging Continentals involved in combat operations. East of Morristown, Patriot troops took position at Chatham. Here they could guard the main gap in the Watchungs leading to the Rebel headquarters. Lieutenant McMichael recorded obtaining “very agreeable quarters” in the “suburbs” of that town, presumably civilian housing on the outskirts of the town’s center.¹⁵ From their post at Chatham, McMichael’s men patrolled the New Jersey countryside below the mountains, billeting in Westfield, Springfield, and Quibbletown. At the latter location they fought a sharp skirmish against a British detachment on January 24.¹⁶ A week later another sweep took McMichael’s unit closer to British lines as it marched through Elizabethtown, Connecticut Farms, and Springfield, before returning to their comfortable quarters at Chatham.¹⁷ With the winter shelter shortage forcing the army into such dispersed

arrangements, winter operations remained small in scale, with no more than a few companies undertaking patrols in the countryside.

During the early months of 1777, disease, rather than Hessians and Redcoats, posed the greatest threat to the Rebel Army. The close quarters Patriot troops kept while billeted in such towns as Morristown and Trenton helped to spread smallpox. The European texts that had informed the Continental Army's organization and administration stood silent on the topic of managing smallpox. Old World armies generally possessed more widespread immunity to that illness, as soldiers recruited from urban areas were typically exposed to it from a young age. European civilians, living in a similar environment, likewise proved less susceptible to smallpox when in close proximity to soldiers. Inoculation, the deliberate infecting of at-risk individuals with mild strains of smallpox, rendered subjects immune for life provided they survived their bout with the illness. Europeans viewed inoculation with less suspicion than North Americans and proved more willing to implement measures to prevent its spread. Redcoats stationed in Boston underwent inoculation during the war's first year and throughout the conflict smallpox did not impact British operations to the same extent as the Patriots.¹⁸ By contrast, the largely rural, American-born soldiers that filled-out Washington's ranks did not possess immunity to smallpox. Nor had most Patriot soldiers undergone inoculation prior to 1777. Colonial communities had developed their own methods for coping with outbreaks during the eighteenth century, emphasizing quarantining the infected. The possibility of death from even a mild case of the disease, and the difficulty in limiting the illness's spread, made inoculation an unpopular practice at the time of the Revolution.¹⁹

The pestilence presented a particular threat to the army whenever it remained stationary for long periods. In camp, smallpox spread quickly amidst frequently crowded and unsanitary conditions. Cold, wet weather and exposure to the elements due to poor shelter rendered soldiers vulnerable to contracting illnesses. A new influx of recruits from unexposed rural areas typically led to a rise in sickness as well. During 1775 and early 1776, the Main Army around Boston had avoided a serious epidemic as smallpox had remained largely confined to Boston itself. Washington's limited measures of quarantining ill soldiers and refugees prevented a major outbreak, and the percentage of the army on sick lists remained between 10 and 16 percent into early 1776.²⁰

In contrast, the Patriot army that invaded Canada during the 1775-1776 winter found quarters within Montreal itself. In crowded urban conditions, smallpox rapidly spread through Continental ranks. The arrival in camp of infected refugees from Quebec City exacerbated the outbreak, as did the frightened Continentals' practice of unregulated self-inoculation. With smallpox ravishing the Northern Army, the Patriot invasion of Canada collapsed, and the disease-ridden Continentals withdrew back to New York during the spring of 1776. The Northern Army established a new camp near Fort Ticonderoga, where cramped quarters and poor hygiene exacerbated the disease's spread. Connecticut chaplain David Avery chronicled smallpox's rapid expansion through the Continentals' ranks in June 1776. Avery recorded one Smallpox death on June 1, followed by two more on June 17. On June 24 he found the army "sick in the most shocking manner," and by July 9 forty-four men in one regiment had fallen ill. Roughly 600 men filled the hospital on August 22.²¹

The Main Army's desperate situation during late 1776 led to the unintended spread of smallpox throughout its ranks. In dire need of manpower, Washington had drawn reinforcements from the Northern Army still reeling from disease. Additionally, the arrival into camp of men who had passed through urban locales, particularly Philadelphia, further contributed to the disease's spread. Finally, the poor weather and lack of shelter that had left many men exposed to unhealthy conditions during November and December 1776 rendered the Rebels particularly vulnerable to sickness. Consequently, while the disease had remained relatively isolated to the Northern Army during the summer of 1776, it had reached epidemic proportions throughout the colonies by early 1777. Unsurprisingly, the rate of rank-and-file reported sick peaked in the winter of 1776-1777 at 34 percent in December 1776.²²

By January 1777, with an increasingly ill force quartered upon a rural civilian population lacking any immunity, smallpox reached a crisis level.²³ Fearing the "unhappy situation of our Northern Army last year," in late January Washington pressed his subordinates to assist him in crafting a response to the disease. On January 20, he gave his aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Colonel Robert Hanson Harrison, then in Philadelphia, the power to advise and consult in the general's name with officials in that city so that "vigorous measures" could be adopted "to remove the infected and infection before we feel too sensibly the effects."²⁴ That same date, Washington dispatched Dr. John Cochrane from Morristown to Newtown, Pennsylvania, between Trenton and Philadelphia, to inquire about the state of smallpox there and "use every possible means in your power to prevent that disease from spreading in the army and among the inhabitants." Cochrane was to find houses suitable for quarantining the infected, and

work with Dr. William Shippen on plans for establishing an army hospital in Philadelphia.²⁵

Philadelphia, through which many recruits passed on their way to Morristown, received much of the blame for the disease's spread. Writing from the city, Shippen reported to Washington to have found a "great number of your troops here in a miserable situation," with smallpox spreading in the city. The doctor also estimated that "it is three to one that all in town have taken the infection & will carry it to the army unless inoculated." In such an atmosphere, Congress advocated immediate inoculation.²⁶ Despite congressional sanction, and Shippen's expert advice, Washington remained hesitant to enact inoculation wholesale. He feared that to do so would leave him with too few healthy soldiers. Instead, the commander-in-chief continued to place his faith in isolating the disease. He ordered Major General Horatio Gates, commanding in Philadelphia, to route recruits free of the illness through Germantown, bypassing the locus of infection in the city itself.²⁷ Shippen and Cochrane reported that they had found sufficient homes outside of Philadelphia to house the sick, thereby reducing chances of the disease's spread.²⁸

The ongoing recruitment of new soldiers throughout the colonies, and their subsequent movement to the front lines in New Jersey, ultimately forced Washington to reconsider his stance on inoculation. While quarantine and re-routing may have allowed some soldiers to avoid contracting smallpox in Philadelphia, these measures promised to do little to alleviate the plight of the soldiers already at Morristown. Smallpox was also spreading among recruits in New England.²⁹ An exasperated Washington admitted to Gates on February 5, "I am much at a loss what step to take to prevent the spreading of

the smallpox.” Once again, he reiterated his fear of leaving the army vulnerable to attack should he proceed with inoculation. The commander-in-chief apparently underwent a change of heart shortly after writing those lines, however, and the following day he informed Gates that he had decided to implement inoculation wholesale. Washington declared that “this is the only effectual method of putting a period to the disorder.”³⁰ The general explained his reasoning to John Hancock, president of the Continental Congress on February 5. Washington observed that “the smallpox has made such head in every quarter that I find it impossible to keep it from spreading through the whole army in the natural way.” The general had therefore resolved to inoculate all troops at Morristown and all new recruits arriving at Philadelphia.³¹ The commander-in-chief placed Dr. Shippen in charge of inoculation in Philadelphia, while Dr. Nathaniel Bond supervised the procedure for the troops stationed around Morristown.³² Ultimately, Washington dispatched doctors to oversee inoculation in communities hosting soldiers throughout the northern states. The Patriots established smallpox hospitals throughout Connecticut, at Trenton in New Jersey; Fishkill, the Hudson Highlands, and Fort Ticonderoga in New York; Bethlehem, Newtown, and Philadelphia in Pennsylvania; as well as Alexandria, Colchester, Dumfries, and Georgetown in Virginia.³³ Thus inoculation took place wherever significant army concentrations already existed, and wherever recruits gathered before marching to active theaters. The Continental Congress Medical Committee expressed its approval for these measures on February 13, acknowledging that “smallpox may greatly endanger the lives of our fellow citizens who compose the army.”³⁴

For the troops quartered in New Jersey, inoculation affected the army’s relations with the local civilians. The rural population had already dealt with the influx of refugees

from New York and suffered an army billeted in their homes. On top of all that, smallpox presented a distinct threat to the community. In Burlington, Margaret Morris reported during early February that two doctors had been imprisoned in that town, charged with inoculating their families against the orders of Major General Israel Putnam. They were released a few days later, presumably after Washington issued his pro-inoculation orders.³⁵ To minimize the impact inoculation might have on civilians, Major General John Sullivan, commanding at Chatham, recommended a system of quarantining those undergoing the process far from the army's camps and civilian population centers. He suggested erecting a hospital "at some back town" wherein the sick could be sent and the uninfected could be inoculated at a safe distance.³⁶

Those living in the "back town" selected, however, would hardly relish the prospect of playing host to a cadre of ill soldiers. The citizens of Hanover, a few miles north of Morristown, petitioned Washington on February 12 to request that no Continentals undergo inoculation in their community. The Hanover residents recognized their particular vulnerability to the disease. They pointed out that "comparatively very few in our town has had that infectious disorder," leaving the rest without immunity. The residents also highlighted further vulnerabilities which left them ill-equipped to support a population of convalescent soldiers. Much of their grain and firewood stores had gone to supplying the army. Many of their young men were absent from town on militia duty, leaving no one behind to maintain order. Inoculation appeared to them one burden too many for a village that had already suffered so much.³⁷ Jacob Green, Hanover's prominent Presbyterian minister, traveled with members of his congregation to Morristown to implore Washington to consider removing the army from the presence of

civilians while it underwent inoculation. The general countered that soldiers could never be kept completely isolated from the civilian population, therefore inoculating both the army and its hosts stood as the only viable option to ensure the health of all.

Ultimately, Morristown, Hanover, and surrounding villages served as sites of inoculation and quarantine. Jacob Green returned home to undergo inoculation under the supervision of Dr. Bond. Eleven of the twelve Continentals quartered in the Greens' house endured the procedure, the only exception being an Irish-born waiter who had already contracted the disease. Green's family experienced particularly mild cases of the illness. The Presbyterian minister's church served as a hospital for the more severe cases that had developed naturally, rather than through inoculation. In the recollection of Green's son Ashbel, "most of these died," indicating the fate that might have befallen more of the army and surrounding communities had Washington chosen not to inoculate.³⁸ In May 1777, Sergeant Jeremiah Greenman of Rhode Island noted the lingering presence of smallpox in Washington's army, describing a "very unwholesome time, very sickly," time while encamped at Bottle Hill, east of Morristown. Greenman observed "very plenty small pox," at the town, where inoculations were still taking place.³⁹

Although preventative measures largely proved successful, inoculation nevertheless threatened to undermine civilian morale at a delicate time. Brigadier General William Maxwell believed the New Jersey militia would fail to turn out after the news of the pending Continental inoculation broke. Instead, Maxwell believed the Morris County militia would "stay at home to take care of their families."⁴⁰ This potential militia inaction threatened to harm the Patriot cause. By remaining home and therefore

safely isolated from the inoculating Continentals, the militia would be unable to render assistance in the event of a British offensive at a time when Washington's regulars lay vulnerable. The commander-in-chief therefore wrote to New Jersey militia Brigadier General Philemon Dickinson to call out the Essex County militia. The Essex men resided further from the Continental concentrations around Morristown and therefore would stand a lower chance of contracting smallpox.⁴¹ In the interim, Maxwell was to implore the Morris County militia to remain at their posts and reassure them that the strict quarantine measures Washington had imposed on inoculation sites would mitigate the chances of the infection's spread.⁴²

Essentially, while inoculation promised a long-term solution to the smallpox problem, in the interim it left the Rebels without an army. In New Jersey, only the militia that turned out could shield the Continental posts in Morris County while the soldiers there underwent the inoculation procedure. Further afield, the imperative of inoculating men before they marched for New Jersey meant that reinforcements for Morristown would suffer significant delays and arrive piecemeal. Washington impressed upon his subordinates the importance of proceeding with inoculation rapidly wherever recruits for the new army assembled. To Colonel George Baylor in Virginia, Washington insisted he inoculate his men "as fast as they are enlisted," and send them on to camp even if they were not yet equipped with weapons.⁴³ A late March memorandum to the generals in charge of recruitment in Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire similarly urged commanders to send their regiments towards the front lines, in fragments if need be, but to let nothing interfere with inoculation.⁴⁴

While the British Army had regularly practiced inoculation, the wholesale implementation of the procedure for an entire army gathering for a new campaign stood unparalleled in military history. Treating new levies invariably upset plans for organizing and training recruits. The need to inoculate forced Brigadier General James Varnum to divide his class of recruits in Rhode Island, sending 150 men who had already had the disease westward at the beginning of April, but retaining the remainder in hospital until they had recovered from intentional infection.⁴⁵ Varnum had delayed setting up smallpox hospitals in Rhode Island, placing that state behind its peers in the recruitment process and earning him Washington's ire.⁴⁶ The brigadier general attempted to excuse his delay on a communications error.⁴⁷ Much of the blame lay with the lack of purpose-built barracks or hospitals that would have streamlined the administering of the procedure and care for those in recovery. Inoculation, while generally successful, proved fatal in some instances. Brigadier General Samuel Holden Parsons lost twenty of his Connecticut recruits to the disease, while the remainder of his men delayed their march to join Washington as smallpox had, in Parsons' words, "been very heavy on them."⁴⁸

Washington's worries over the weakness of his force derived from his awareness that the new campaign season was about to begin. As an astute reader of military enlightenment texts, Washington realized the potential danger of being caught in winter quarters unprepared by a more alert enemy. In a letter to Colonel Samuel Blachley Webb dated April 7, the commander-in-chief railed against his recruiting officers for remaining in their homes in comfort and delaying their departure for the front. Realizing that inoculation meant that unit cohesion would be lost, he settled for having his men sent forward in penny packets, "even by twenties," with disciplinary infractions ignored all in

the name of bringing recruits to Morristown. Until they arrived, Washington complained, he was left to “take the field with little more than my family,” meaning his headquarters staff. The general recognized the importance of having a concentrated force to begin operations and worried that due to recruitment delays he would lose the opportunity to gain a strategic advantage at the outset of a campaign. With the active season “on the very eve of opening,” the commander-in-chief feared a “decisive blow at the beginning” that could potentially leave his force crippled for the remainder of the year.⁴⁹ Civilian observers shared the general’s apprehension. Reports of the arrival of British reinforcements in New York led Robert Morris and George Clymer of the Executive Committee of Congress to fear a renewed thrust against Philadelphia while inoculation rendered Washington’s army ineffective. Smallpox inoculations, with their concomitant impact on the army’s size, worried the two lawmakers more than “any other thing as it makes us weak and will keep us so for sometime.”⁵⁰ Another congressman, William Whipple, also worried that the inoculation of troops raised in the states west and south of New Jersey promised to delay the arrival of reinforcements at Morristown.⁵¹

By early March, inoculation, coupled with expiring enlistments and the departure of most of the militia left Washington with fewer than 1,000 Virginian Continentals in five understrength regiments and the remnants of three other battalions. Pennsylvania and New Jersey militia augmented this meager force, but in Washington’s dim view “they come and go when they please.” Shielded behind the Watchungs, this tiny force enjoyed safety only through British ignorance. Otherwise, Washington believed his opponents “would never suffer us to remain unmolested.” So weak were Washington’s forces that he felt it imprudent to admit the army’s situation on paper for fear of revealing

its true strength to his enemy.⁵² Fortunately for the Patriots, the screen of militia troops east of the Watchungs, and British quiescence, kept the army safe from enemy attack throughout late winter and early spring.

Returns from various commands submitted to headquarters on March 15 demonstrated the army's weakness in New Jersey. The largest Continental detachment held a post on the southern edge of the Watchungs at Boundbrook, with 342 Pennsylvanians. A force of 260 Continentals, mostly Pennsylvanian riflemen, held Chatham, guarding the gap in the Watchungs that led to Morristown. Smaller detachments of regulars and Maryland, Virginia, and New Jersey militia defended towns south and east of the mountains, including Westfield, Raritan, and Spanktown. These militia were, however, due to return home on April 1. At Morristown, fewer than fifty Pennsylvanians guarded Washington's headquarters. Nearby in Whippany, the site of the region's primary smallpox hospital, 571 men remained bed-ridden. On the southern edge of the army's deployment in New Jersey, 284 Continentals stood guard near Princeton. In sum, Washington had 2,543 regulars and 976 militia under his command in New Jersey on March 15, with the militia's terms to expire in two weeks.⁵³

This manpower shortage eased the burden of housing. With so many expired enlistments and the delayed arrival of new recruits, Washington's dispersal of the army into garrison towns ensured troops had access to sufficient homes with which to adequately quarter for the winter. While billeting did exacerbate the smallpox crisis, inoculation promised to mitigate the worst of this threat and ensure that moving forward the Continental Army could maintain concentrated encampments in close proximity to civilians. Despite the initial widespread opposition to inoculation, news that the army

had implemented measures to curtail the disease's spread heartened civilians living near military posts throughout the colonies. From Baltimore, John Adams advised that "the smallpox is so thick in the country there is no chance of escaping it in the natural way." Yet the Massachusetts congressman hoped that the soldiers in the "new army" being raised that spring would be inoculated before departing for their destinations.⁵⁴

From late-April onwards, the manpower shortage brought on by inoculation began to ease. On April 26, Thomas Davis, an ensign in the 15th Virginia Regiment at Morristown, angrily questioned what had caused "the delay of the Southern troops. Her Virginia follows into lethargy, her brave ones all asleep?"⁵⁵ Disease and the complications wrought by preventative measures, rather than lethargy, bore responsibility for the hindering the deployment of fresh troops. In Connecticut, Jonathan Trumbull lamented the "strange delay of raising and completing the standing Continental Army," imposed by the combination of enlistment expirations and inoculation. He hoped that the measure would "prove effectual."⁵⁶ It had. By late spring, the smallpox crisis had passed. On June 17, Washington reported to Brigadier General Parsons in Connecticut that in northern New Jersey there remained "but one woman in the whole army who has it [smallpox] and she will be removed."⁵⁷ The same day he similarly informed Major General Israel Putnam that "the camp is thought to be entirely clear of infection and the country pretty much so."⁵⁸

Overall, winter quarters in early 1777 bore some resemblance to the European methods Continental officers held in high regard. Dispersing soldiers into billets and limiting contact with the enemy broadly followed the practice of contemporary standing armies. With short-service units haphazardly arriving and departing their village billets,

however, Washington's army in the New Jersey Highlands shared more in common with the mercenary armies of the early seventeenth century than the regular forces of the late eighteenth. Comparatively few Continentals spent the entire winter in New Jersey. While this numerical weakness may have caused consternation in the Rebel headquarters eager to drive the British from the region, from the perspective of castrametation, a smaller force greatly eased the task of quartering. During early 1777, the Rebel troops in New Jersey did not need, and did not attempt to build larger permanent structures as they had outside Boston. Given the limited housing stock available in New Jersey's small towns, sheltering a larger army through the winter in billets would have been impossible. Inoculation stood as Washington's most important achievement during the 1777 winter at Morristown. Intentional, controlled infection had solved the smallpox crisis. This disease would no longer threaten whenever soldiers and civilians found themselves in close proximity. Nevertheless, the inoculation program further contributed to the army's disorganization even as it marshaled its strength for a new campaign.

The First Middlebrook Encampment: Health, Discipline, and Strategy

During the spring of 1777, an influx of new recruits induced further improvements to Continental quartering methods. These men, enlisted for "three years, or the end of the war" presaged the transformation of the Continental Army into a fully permanent, regular force. The haphazard mustering of recruits resulting from inoculation produced a poorly disciplined, disorganized force. As these new regiments gathered in northern New Jersey, Patriot leaders sought to organize their men into orderly, disciplined, and sanitary camps that surpassed in size and concentration any

witnessed previously in the war. Since many of these men had been rushed forward to New Jersey piecemeal, the spring camps in that state would provide recruits with their first opportunity for proper discipline and drill.

The swelling of Continental numbers in northern New Jersey coincided with the arrival of warmer weather. This allowed Washington's men to exchange their billets for tent encampments in the neighboring countryside. Rhode Island Sergeant Jeremiah Greenman, arriving in the New Jersey Highlands in late April, described Morristown as "full of troops," forcing him and his comrades to camp three miles outside of town.⁵⁹ Facilitating discipline and order remained difficult, however, given the dispersed nature of the army's deployments. Significant forward detachments held position near Chatham, Bound Brook, and in the Sourlands. Even within these posts individual units might camp far from one another. For example, Putnam's contingent at Princeton actually lay divided between smaller camps at Rocky Hill, Kingston, Princeton itself, and Trenton.⁶⁰

During April, Washington attempted to instill order on the new recruits scattered throughout various small encampments. General Orders directed men to establish parade grounds intended for inspection and drill. The Patriots also implemented a system of alarm guns to signal troops to assemble.⁶¹ Within camp, discipline remained a problem. Continentals frequently returned from sentry duty drunk, leading to the flogging of "three or four men every day," according to Jeremiah Greenman.⁶² The return of warmer weather to northern New Jersey also forced Continental officers to deal with camp sanitation. Washington implemented measures on April 10 to "have the camp cleared of every kind of garbage and filth with which it is at present incommoded."⁶³ On April 21,

General Orders published at Morristown further detailed the troops to clear out “dead horses, dogs, or any kind of carrion in and about the town.” Soldiers were also to bury the offal near the slaughter house, and “remove all filth from the goal.” These actions served not only to ensure the Continentals’ health, but also that of Morristown civilians. With the onset of warm weather, Washington pointed out that the consequences of an unsanitary camp near town “may be fatal, as well to the soldiery, as the inhabitants.”⁶⁴ General Orders on April 25 extended cleanliness regulations to include camp guard houses.⁶⁵

Throughout the spring, soldiers continued to travel from both the Southern states and New England to join the Main Army near Morristown, bringing civilian communities into contact with soldiers along the routes of march. On April 10, Virginia congressman Richard Henry Lee reported to Washington from Philadelphia that the Maryland recruits stationed in that city were “under inoculation,” as were 1,000 Virginians undergoing the process in Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Wilmington. Nearby Bristol, Pennsylvania provided billets for 1,500 men with the population at one point in their northward march.⁶⁶ The 1,000 men Lee estimated present in Philadelphia would leave the city for a new encampment outside the city, with the men to be quartered “in tents as quickly as the physicians can discharge them.” Compared to Washington’s army in northern New Jersey, the officers commanding the recruits in Philadelphia had added incentive to get their men out of that city. It was, in Lee’s description, an “attractive scene of debauch and amusement.”⁶⁷ Even in such a large city, providing many men with proper shelter proved difficult. Major General Phillip Schuyler lamented having “not a blanket to cover” the troops quartered in town, and blamed Quaker population for resisting attempts

to collect necessary supplies.⁶⁸ Notwithstanding Lee's and Schuyler's negative outlooks, Continental recruits passing through the city on their way to New Jersey proved well-behaved. Pennsylvania Colonel Walter Stewart thanked a new regiment briefly quartered in the city's barracks for its good conduct while transiting through the city.⁶⁹

Even as Continental recruits flowed into northern New Jersey, Patriot forces stood widely scattered in April. In addition to the recruits marshaling in and around Philadelphia, the main force in New Jersey maintained outposts from Princeton to Paramus, while the Hudson Highlands in New York also hosted significant forces. Uncertainty over British intentions during early April led Continental leaders to re-assess this distribution of men. Israel Putnam, writing from Princeton, informed Congress that General Sir William Howe, the British commander in New York, had collected transports at Perth Amboy at the mouth of the Raritan River in New Jersey. This concentration indicated to Putnam the possibility of an imminent British offensive towards Philadelphia.⁷⁰ On April 9, Congress appointed a committee to seek possible places to gather forces to resist a British attack. The committee proffered the idea of establishing a camp along the Delaware in Pennsylvania, at which the recruits passing through the city could be concentrated to face the enemy. Congress indicated to Washington that should the British launch an amphibious attack on Philadelphia in April, the recruits present in the city could form the nucleus of a defense, along with the local militia. Understanding that Howe's thrust might be aimed up the Hudson instead, or that Washington might opt for an offensive if the opportunity presented itself, Congress ultimately deferred to the commander-in-chief's judgment.⁷¹

Washington followed established European castrametation methods by drawing together his scattered winter detachments into a more concentrated encampment that would better facilitate training and administration. In a letter to William Maxwell, Washington described plans “to have the number of our posts reduced -- the men drawn a little more compactly together.” Doing so would minimize the threat of an isolated detachment suffering defeat and enable a more flexible response to British aggression by the whole of the army. Taking advantage of the growing regular strength in New Jersey, Washington adjusted his dispositions, shifting a brigade of New Jersey militia from Millstone to Morristown, while newly arrived Continentals reinforced Benjamin Lincoln’s force at Boundbrook, fifteen miles south of Morristown.⁷² Although Washington had frequently complained about the militia’s performance in the past year, its presence allowed secured territory in the embattled state while allowing the Continentals’ to concentrate near Morristown. Washington planned for the New Jersey militia to cover the hilly country stretching from Morristown northwards and eastwards to Pompton and Hackensack. With the state’s citizen soldiers holding this area, the Continentals could thereby “move to the lines.”⁷³ Washington hoped another militia detachment at Hackensack, in Bergen County closer to New York, would “protect the well affected, awe the disaffected,” and check Tory regiments operating in the region.⁷⁴

Ultimately, the risk Washington had taken in ordering mass inoculations proved warranted. Over the course of the next month, freshly inoculated recruits flowed into the region, increasing the Continentals’ numbers substantially. On May 20, the general reported ten brigades stationed in New Jersey, containing men from Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and New Jersey, with a total strength of 8,188.⁷⁵ The

commander-in-chief once again had an army capable of active operations. Washington sought to gather these troops into a single camp at which he could streamline their training. Given the aggressive posture of Howe's force in New York, Washington also wanted to establish a forward base from which to operate during the opening of the coming campaign. For a camp site, the commander-in-chief selected Middlebrook, fifteen miles south of Morristown. Lying at the southwestern edge of the Watchung Mountains, the area had briefly hosted both Rebel and Crown forces over the previous winter. While not as remote as Morristown, Middlebrook nevertheless enjoyed the security afforded by the nearby hills, and a strategic flanking position along the roads linking New York and Philadelphia.

Assembling this large force represented the first sizeable Continental encampment since the war's first year. To this point, the army had developed a poor record when concentrating its numbers. At Boston, haphazardly arrayed tents and shanties, private homes, and long-delayed barracks had failed to adequately house the young Continental Army, reflecting that force's inexperience and indiscipline. More recently, the dispersion, confusion, and disintegration experienced in New York and New Jersey during 1776 and 1777 had evinced little improvement. With new recruits arriving in northern New Jersey throughout spring 1777, Continental officers again turned their attention to shelter, sanitation, discipline, and strategy.

As the army's first task, officers needed to find ground suitable for encamping over 8,000 men. Washington tasked his trusted subordinate, Major General Nathanael Greene, along with Deputy Quartermaster Colonel Clement Biddle, to Middlebrook on May 24 to inspect the ground and begin laying out the camp.⁷⁶ Given the attractive

nature of the terrain, Greene and Biddle rapidly selected a locale suitable for the army's tent arrangements. The Continentals then turned to erecting and administering a proper camp. The state of shelter at Middlebrook revealed some of the material progress the young nation's political leadership had made in supplying the army since the war's outbreak two years earlier. Whereas outside of Boston, Washington's men had faced a chronic shortage of tents, in New Jersey such problems gradually began to ease.

At the camp's opening in late May, it first appeared as if tents would again present a problem. A British raid on Danbury, Connecticut, in April resulted in the loss of a significant stock of Continental camp equipment that had been earmarked for the coming campaign. Consequently, Greene informed Washington on May 25 of a "great want of tents" among several of the brigades that had arrived in camp.⁷⁷ This proved only a temporary inconvenience, as Congress procured new tents from North American and foreign sources. Quartermaster General Thomas Mifflin noted on May 27 that he had gathered 4,035 tents for operations in the Middle States, with an additional 500 on hand in Philadelphia. Another 500 were due to arrive from France. The marquees, only thirty-five, remained too few for all of the army's officers. Mifflin felt that Continental commanders, in the absence of large marquees, must "fair as British Officers frequently fair—i.e.—put up with good tents."⁷⁸ The quartermaster's efforts ameliorated the shortage that Greene had decried on May 25. At the end of the month, Washington recorded the arrival of 2,306 tents, more than needed. In this one item, at least, the chronically under-supplied force under Washington enjoyed an adequate stock.⁷⁹

This bounty of tents came at the price, however, of shortchanging the Northern Army. This second sizeable Continental force of the war's early years also confronted a

shelter crisis during the 1776-1777 winter. In northern New York, an absence of civilian settlements, coupled with the region's severe climate, necessitated more substantial cover than tents. During the summer of 1776 after retreating from Canada, Brigadier General Benedict Arnold identified the barracks at Crown Point as a potential destination for the Northern Army. He recognized, however, that additional shelter would be needed.⁸⁰ After the Patriots' defeat in Canada, they encamped near Fort Ticonderoga, turning first to the fort's stone barracks, sufficient for 400 men. To supplement this pre-existing shelter, soldiers undertook construction of additional barracks on Mount Independence for another 800 men. Nevertheless, the hasty construction of these substantial post-and-beam structures yielded unsatisfactory shelter for the northern Continentals. Lieutenant Ebenezer Elmer from New Jersey described the miserable conditions inside. The barracks, he wrote, featured "a room so open, I could not sleep."⁸¹

As the Ticonderoga barracks could hold only 1,200 men, and tents provided insufficient protection from the elements, the Northern Army sought alternative forms of cover. Turning to the abundant resources of New York's forests, Rebel troops placed boards and bark over their tents to provide protection from the weather, with grass and leaves added for insulation. Some soldiers added further protection with wood or stone floors or dug their tents into the earth. The Northern Army did not adopt a single pattern for its huts. Dimensions, placement of doors, roofing materials, and presence of windows and bunks varied from hut to hut. Whether soldiers used bark, boards, or cut wood, roofs leaked throughout the winter. Organization remained poor. One soldier returning from a hospital stay found his hut fully occupied, forcing him to take shelter on a piece of bark lying between two huts. These methods reflected similar techniques used in this theater a

generation earlier, indicating the persistent castrametation problems that the environmental setting inflicted upon armies operating in that region.⁸²

While rudimentary structures sheltered the army through the winter, the Ticonderoga encampment's log huts ultimately proved unsatisfactory. So poor was the encampment's condition by May 1777 that Major General Horatio Gates, now assigned to the Northern Department, wrote to Washington imploring his superior for tents to augment the meager cover available at Fort Ticonderoga.⁸³ These huts, which Gates described "made of earth and flimsily put together," failed to meet the army's needs. After a winter of use, Gates claimed the buildings were "mostly in ruins."⁸⁴ The major general's request for tents raised the issue of shelter's impact on Continental strategy. Washington tied the means of cover to the Northern and Main armies' prospective strategic posture for the coming campaign season. Presuming the northern force would remain stationary through the summer, Washington argued that it could rely on fixed structures. By contrast, the expected mobile campaign in the Middle Department meant "nothing but tents can serve us." Overestimating the capacity of the Ticonderoga barracks, as well as the Northern Army's construction abilities, the commander-in-chief claimed that Fort Ticonderoga could accommodate up to 4,000 men, provided Gates ordered the barracks' expansion or augmented them with huts.⁸⁵ Ultimately Congress intervened to alleviate Gates' shelter shortage, forwarding 1,000 tents to the Northern Army at the end of May.⁸⁶ In June, with the Champlain Valley now "well supplied" with tents, Congress diverted new tents to Washington's force in New Jersey.⁸⁷

With their men properly sheltered, Continental officers at Middlebrook turned to the second crucial aspect of castrametation, maintaining soldiers' health in camp. The

increasing concentration of men at Middlebrook exacerbated the spread of camp diseases. By this point, the program of inoculation implemented in early 1777 had successfully diminished smallpox's prevalence amongst the newly raised forces making their way to New Jersey. Thus when the army did concentrate at Middlebrook, smallpox did not present a significant threat. To a greater extent than that disease, illnesses resulting from poor camp hygiene and improper food preservation, such as dysentery and typhus, manifested during May and June 1777. The newly rebuilt army remained unskilled at upholding sanitary conditions within camp, further contributing to illness. Consequently, Greene observed on May 25 that "the camp fever begins to prevail among some of the troops." The Rhode Islander linked camp illness to the presence of rancid meat in the camp, a result of poor preservation practices. To Greene, these meat-related illnesses derived in part from the army's distinctive meat-heavy diet, noting that "vegetables or any other kind of food cannot be had in such plenty as to alter the state of the habit," of feeding "principally upon animal food."⁸⁸

Camp fevers represented a significant threat to the army's operational capabilities at the outset of the active campaign season. Greene implored Washington to take measures to reduce illness in camp. For Greene, health stood as "an object of great importance," for a sick army was "a burden to themselves and the state that employed them." Just as smallpox had threatened the army during the winter, springtime illness promised to rob the country "of many useful inhabitants and the army of many brave soldiers." For a remedy, Greene drew on European castrametation knowledge gleaned from military enlightenment texts. Informed by *Mes Reveries*, the 1757 memoirs of the French Marshal Maurice de Saxe, Greene suggested the widespread use of vinegar to

ensure better preservation of meat. The major general emphasized to Washington the vital importance of that preservative liquid. He declared that “cost what it may,” the army should spare no expense in ensuring that men enjoyed “a gill if not a half pint a day,” and could obtain the item using cider, molasses, and rum.⁸⁹ Apparently swayed by this argument, Washington ordered Greene’s recommendations put into practice on May 30, ordering the commissary general to procure a supply of vinegar for the army at Middlebrook.⁹⁰

To further improve soldiers’ health within camp, the Continentals also used the local environment to augment their rations. Noting that the surrounding New Jersey countryside offered abundant and wild French sorrel, lamb’s quarters, and water cresses, Washington recommended soldiers gather these vegetables, all “very conducive to health,” and use them to make an “agreeable salad.” This would prevent scurvy as well as “all putrid disorders.”⁹¹ Beyond safe food supplies, the Rebels also needed fresh water. Here, Humphrey Bland’s *Treatise of Military Discipline* informed the steps Continentals took to prevent the spread of water-borne illness. To ensure clean water within camp, Washington ordered his brigadiers to appoint guards to watch over springs to prevent men from contaminating them by using them to wash their utensils. Men were also to remove all animal carcasses from camp and bury them deeply.⁹² General Orders stipulated that the camp slaughterhouse was to stand at least a mile to the rear of camp. Soldiers were also to see to the careful disposal of offal.⁹³ In addition, Washington issued detailed instructions for maintaining “vaults,” the army’s deposits of human waste. Camp color-men were to cover these “repositories of filth of every kind” with “green boughs” every day, and fill them in with earth, under the direction of regimental

quartermasters. By implementing these castrametation maxims from European treatises, Washington expected that the Continentals could keep the Middlebrook camp “in all respects clean, and free from everything noxious, or offensive.”⁹⁴ Through the army’s adaptation to the local environment, and officers’ employment of European knowledge, the Continentals began to produce a healthier camp.

As the Middlebrook camp took shape in mid-June, Continental officers took further steps to ensure soldiers’ health. On June 16, Washington directed his attention to improving the administration of hospitals near Middlebrook. He made the highest-ranking officer in the vicinity of army hospitals responsible, with an assisting officer, for the “good government” of medical facilities. Their duties included maintaining order among convalescing soldiers, stationing guards, and reporting cases of neglect and abuse to superior officers.⁹⁵ To augment the staffs at army hospitals at nearby Mendham and Black River, Washington ordered two additional officers to aid in administrative tasks at each site. Additionally, he requested women accompanying each regiment with sick men in the hospitals to serve, “in proportionate number,” as nurses.⁹⁶ Through this combination of inoculation, food preservation, and stringent camp sanitation practices, the growing Continental Army at Middlebrook minimized the spread of illness.

In addition to selecting a proper camp site and combatting camp pestilence, Continental commanders worked to improve order and discipline. During the first days of the Middlebrook encampment, Greene exercised direct command while Washington stayed at his headquarters in Morristown. This arrangement fulfilled the duties a camp commandant would exercise in the Prussian system. Greene’s brief time leading the army in camp demonstrated a clear awareness of the administrative attention needed to

manage a large, concentrated, regular army. On May 26 he issued instructions for brigades to assemble at the grand parade every morning, implementing a strict regimentation of daily life in camp. The following day he addressed camp security, establishing routines for camp guards, pickets, and area patrols. He also fostered comradeship among his senior commanders by having dinner with his officers. On May 27, Greene attended to camp logistics, writing to Washington to request that Commissary General Joseph Trumbull impress local sheep and cattle to supply the army. With British forces on the move in the Raritan Valley, the acting commander also ordered his men to be ready to march “at a moment’s notice” with twenty-four cartridges apiece, and detailed three cannon to serve as camp alarm signal guns. Through these everyday martial tasks, Greene set the army on a path to recovering from the previous year’s defeats and dissolution.⁹⁷

Washington officially transferred his headquarters from Morristown to Middlebrook on May 29 and issued a series of General Orders building off of Greene’s earlier directives. The new, expansive camp was to be well-secured, with fixed guards and strict adherence to regulations. With many new units drawn together for the first time, the commander-in-chief expected “punctual regard” to be paid to all orders in a fashion that had been impossible given the army’s dispersed arrangement through the winter and early spring.⁹⁸ Enforcing rigorous discipline, Washington ordered each unit stationed along the boundary of the encampment to post guards at every entrance to the complex. These guards served two purposes. First, they combatted desertion, a growing problem for the army. On May 31 courts martial had held eleven trials for desertion and another for quitting a post without permission. Second, guards prevented unauthorized

civilians from entering camp out of fears of espionage, and undermining camp discipline. Anyone in camp unable to provide a satisfactory explanation for their presence, was as per General Orders, “to be confined and reported to the nearest brigadier.”⁹⁹

Within the confines of the Middlebrook camp, the new Continental Army began to enact a training program to instill discipline and drill upon the three-year recruits flooding into northern New Jersey. Regiments in camp were to parade each day following a roll call, with absentees punished. While assembled on parade, the new levies were to “behave well in their ranks,” and remain “*silent, steady, and orderly.*” Once a day the men were to take part in drill exercises informed by their brigadier’s chosen manual, with an emphasis on marching and forming. While this process insured that all units experienced similar levels of training, the absence of a single manual shared by all units limited the effectiveness of drill.¹⁰⁰ This problem would not be rectified until the adoption of Freidrich Wilhelm von Steuben’s *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States* in 1779.

Throughout early June, Washington and his staff stepped up their disciplinary measures in an effort to fashion raw recruits into regulars. All new officers present in camp, if not attending to specific duties, were to study veterans and hone their craft. Both officers and men suffered reprimands from Washington for the “unsoldierly practice of straggling from camp.” Anyone found more than a mile outside the lines would be charged for disobedience of orders. Soldiers in camp faced strict regulation of their schedules. To ensure a prompt turnout at morning reveille, all lights in camp were to be put out by 9:00 PM. Washington assigned a provost marshal to patrol the camp and surrounding area and round up disorderly persons, curtail sutlers from selling liquor, and

enforce all other camp rules.¹⁰¹ Company musicians, whose playing Washington characterized as “being in general very bad,” were to redouble their efforts to improve. New orders on June 4 detailed specific instructions for drummers for the beating of morning reveille and evening retreat.¹⁰² Regimental officers were directed to keep an account of ammunition held by their men, while company captains were told to keep a list of their subordinates’ clothes and inspect their uniforms every Sunday.¹⁰³ Washington also reorganized his army, adding the 3rd Virginia Regiment to a new brigade while attaching the Delaware Regiment to the 2nd Maryland Brigade.¹⁰⁴ Overall, the series of orders Greene and Washington issued during late May and early June established new standards for routine activity in camp, and thereby began to instill discipline in an army containing many recent recruits. The Patriots thus overcame the disorganization that had reigned during the period of inoculation and recruitment in March, and owed some credit for their improved battlefield performance in 1777 to the reforms enacted at Middlebrook.

Beyond serving as the catalyst for improved sanitation practices and discipline in the ranks, the Middlebrook encampment also played a crucial role in Continental strategy. At the camp, Continental officers realized the concentrated army presented a potential target for the enemy. In early June, Greene ordered Major General Benjamin Lincoln to erect redoubts to cover nearby passages through the Watchung Mountains, to secure the position’s flanks and rear.¹⁰⁵ By fortifying the camp’s approaches, the army once again followed common European castrametation practices. Experts including Humphrey Bland and Lewis Lochee viewed a fortified post on strong defensive terrain as a sound strategic choice when encamping an army with an enemy force nearby.¹⁰⁶

Frederick the Great would have likewise applauded the Continentals' use of a fortified camp in rough terrain to stymie an enemy advance in a manner reminiscent of his treatment of the Austrians.

The army at Middlebrook received its first test in mid-June, as Howe concentrated 18,000 men at New Brunswick and threatened an overland march through the heart of the state. Washington and his commanders responded by further refining their defensive strategy, relying on the rough terrain of the Watchungs to anchor their position. At a June 12 council-of-war, officers recommended leaving behind two companies to garrison Morristown in the event of a British move to the south, while the main army was to hold at Middlebrook.¹⁰⁷ Here, as Washington explained to Brigadier General Benedict Arnold, "our position is strong, and with a little labor will be rendered much more so."¹⁰⁸ The Watchung Mountains to the north and east effectively blocked any potential British advance in that direction, while Middlebrook's strong natural position deterred an enemy attack on the camp. Major General John Sullivan's detachment in the Sourland Mountains promised to slow any British advance to the south and allow the Main Army at Middlebrook to fall on Howe's rear. To ensure communications between Washington and Sullivan's wing, a Continental detachment marched from Princeton to Flemington, midway between Princeton and Middlebrook, on June 17, where women and baggage were to be concentrated. By June 26, Washington had moved this detachment forward to reinforce the Main Army at Middlebrook.¹⁰⁹

The Continental Army leveraged its well-defended camp, central location, rough terrain, and militia support into a cautious strategy that stymied Howe's thrust without risking a general engagement. In addition to the threat Howe's force posed, the Patriots

also had to worry about the impending British thrust southwards from Canada under General John Burgoyne. In June 1777, Washington was more concerned with an enemy advance from New York up the Hudson in support of Burgoyne's expected northern invasion. From Middlebrook, the Continental Army could march via secure roads behind the Watchungs to reinforce detachments in the Hudson Highlands. In actuality, Howe limited his attack to a push down the Raritan Valley. On June 11, the British general concentrated his forces at New Brunswick and marched towards the Rebels' encampment. The Patriots responded by keeping their regulars concentrated at Middlebrook and harassing Howe's flanks with light troops and militia.¹¹⁰ Unable to draw the Continentals into an engagement, the British pulled back on June 19, evacuating New Brunswick and withdrawing to Amboy. Six days later, Howe made another foray into New Jersey towards Westfield, before pulling back to Staten Island. Aside from a skirmish near Metuchen Meetinghouse on June 26, no general engagement resulted from these operations. Throughout this offensive, the main body of the Continental Army remained a healthy distance from its opponent, moving only as far as Quibbletown before returning to the Middlebrook camp. When Washington described the extended affair to his brother, he remarked that he largely spent his time "in my tent, about five weeks."¹¹¹

Although in retrospect the June 1777 campaign came to be seen as a mere prelude to the grander British offensives of that year, observers at the time considered Howe's withdrawal as a signal achievement for the Continental Army. John Hancock exclaimed that should the British "be compelled to finally abandon the Jerseys" it would represent "the most explicit declaration to the whole world, that the conquest of America is not only a very distant, but unattainable object."¹¹² With New Jersey secure, the

Continental Army stood prepared to counter threats in other areas. With the army inoculated, concentrated, increasingly disciplined, and tested by the initial sparring in a new campaign season, Washington ordered his men to strike their tents and evacuate Middlebrook on July 2, 1777.¹¹³ Initially the Patriots headed northwestward towards the Hudson Highlands, before countermarching to the Delaware to contest Howe's advance on Philadelphia. New Jersey was to remain free of a large-scale military presence, Patriot or British, for a full year.

While it had lasted only five weeks, the May-June 1777 encampment at Middlebrook, coming as it did after the adoption of three-year enlistments, signaled a new step in the army's development. As General Greene boasted to John Adams in late May, "Our army is now encamped, and I hope will be very soon completely organized, fit for some important purpose."¹¹⁴ Washington penned a similarly positive report, claiming "the army is now on a permanent and honorable footing, and as the general has the credit of it very much at heart, he expects every officer" would lend "their aid to support the character of it."¹¹⁵ The first Middlebrook encampment represented a brief but important step on the Continental Army's path towards establishing itself as a viable regular force, the "respectable army" of Washington's vision. Throughout the war's first two winters, the Patriots had grappled with the problem of how to house the newly raised standing army. Gathering detached forces, absorbing recruits, and implementing new training, the Continental Army at Middlebrook began to take on a solid character. As the largest stationary concentration of Continental troops achieved since the defense of New York, the Middlebrook encampment presented new challenges of administration to Patriot leaders, evinced by Greene's concerns over "camp fever" in late May. Middlebrook

served as the venue at which officers instilled order and discipline in a force that numbered 10,000 before the camp's end. The May-June 1775 encampment thereby contributed to the preparedness of the Continentals that were to acquit themselves well at Brandywine and Germantown later that year.

Valley Forge: Towards a New Continental Art of Castrametation

The Middlebrook encampment provided an initial indoctrination into the methods of castrametation for new Continental officers and enlisted men. Improvements to order and discipline instituted at Middlebrook set the army on the path to a better showing on the battlefield. Nevertheless, Washington's army suffered several reverses during the summer and fall of 1777. The scene of fighting shifted from northern New Jersey to southeastern Pennsylvania. Sir William Howe sailed up the Chesapeake Bay and landed at Head of Elk, Maryland, in late August. From there, he planned to seize Philadelphia. Washington deployed his army to defend the Patriots' *de facto* capital but met with defeat at the Battle of Brandywine on September 11. On September 26, the British captured the city. For the next two months, Howe fought to clear his lines of communication along the Delaware River while Washington maneuvered to retake the Quaker City. The redcoats repulsed a Patriot attack on Germantown, northwest of Philadelphia, on October 4. Washington then withdrew northwards to Whitemarsh, Pennsylvania, where he remained through early December.¹¹⁶

As winter approached, the Patriots again found themselves in a familiar strategic situation, hovering outside an enemy-occupied port-city. In a departure from previous years, however, the Rebel army would not dissolve and have to be recruited from scratch,

as in previous years. It could not resort to waging partisan warfare with small detachments billeted in dispersed posts, as had been the case in northern New Jersey. The Continental Army now strongly resembled its European counterparts. For the first time it faced the question of how to establish winter quarters with a long-service army after fighting a conventional campaign.

At the end of November, Washington asked subordinates where and how the army should spend the coming winter months. The responses he received offered three options. The first, which bore the strongest influence of contemporary European practice, suggested that the army retire from the field to a line of Pennsylvania towns stretching from Bethlehem to Lancaster, with soldiers billeted in civilian homes. This would place the Patriots' positions roughly fifty miles from Howe's men. The second option proposed keeping the army in the field and maintaining a camp close to Philadelphia in the Schuylkill Valley. With no significant towns present there for shelter, soldiers would remain in tents until canvas could be supplanted by timber-built huts. The third option, similar to the first, recommended the army withdraw to Wilmington, Delaware, where it would billet in and around the town, with huts accommodating those soldiers who could find no space in homes and public buildings.¹¹⁷

These three seemingly simple solutions obscured what was actually a complicated problem. Should the army retire to winter quarters, meaning an end to large-scale operations for the year, or should it remain in the field with to continue the campaign to recover Philadelphia? As was understood at the time, retiring to winter quarters meant a withdrawal to towns and villages in the hinterland, while continuing active operations mean a more concentrated encampment closer to Philadelphia. If the army retired, could

it find sufficient space to lodge in the region's towns? Were these towns so scattered as to hinder the concentration of the army the following year, to say nothing of maintaining discipline and training over the winter? If the towns lacked sufficient housing, would huts offer a satisfactory substitute? If the army remained concentrated, what form should its shelter take, and where should the encampment be located?

The debate over where and how to spend the winter of 1777-1778 has captured several historians' attention. Benjamin Newcomb has argued that Washington balanced his generals' concerns, and, through a rational selection process, determined to keep the army in the field close to Philadelphia. This decision resulted in building an encampment along the western bank of the Schuylkill at Valley Forge.¹¹⁸ Wayne K. Bodle has complicated Newcomb's interpretation by emphasizing the role Pennsylvania politicians played in inducing Washington to place his winter camp closer to Philadelphia than he might have done otherwise.¹¹⁹ Both of these interpretations distinguish between the perceived military benefits of retiring to winter quarters to rest troops and repair equipment as opposed to the political need to keep the army in the field near Philadelphia.

As Newcomb has pointed out, Continental officers recognized that regardless of where the army wintered, finding suitable accommodations would remain a problem. If the troops were to quarter in the Pennsylvania interior, several generals doubted that Pennsylvania's towns, even those as large as Bethlehem, Allentown, Reading, and Lancaster, contained enough structures to lodge 12,000 men. The flight of Whig refugees from Philadelphia to these locations promised to exacerbate the housing shortage. Likewise, Wilmington's small size meant that it could likely shelter no more than a

fraction of the army. Wintering a permanent force of 12,000 men proved a more substantial challenge than distributing 3-4,000 short service troops into various villages, as the Continentals had in New Jersey in early 1777. Thus, most commanders recognized that even if the army opted to quarter in towns, it would need to supplement its billets with huts.¹²⁰

Throughout the December 1777 debate, Continental officers appealed to European castrametation works, military history, and recent experience to support and clarify their plans for winter shelter. Joseph Reed, Washington's former adjutant now serving as a Pennsylvania delegate to Congress, cautioned against the drain a winter campaign could have on the resources of even a well-equipped army. Reed cited as an example Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick's winter 1759 campaign against the French in the Seven Years War. While the duke's operations succeeded, they "almost destroyed the allied army by keeping the field till towards spring." Consequently, Reed advised against keeping the army concentrated in a hut encampment, since doing so expressed the assumption that operations would continue throughout the cold months.¹²¹

By contrast, Brigadier General John Cadwalader of the Pennsylvania militia pressed Washington to launch a winter campaign to recover Philadelphia. Cadwalader invoked both the recent memory of Washington's attacks at Trenton and Princeton, as well as the more remote example of Frederick the Great's December 1757 operations that culminated in the victory at Leuthen. Cadwalader believed huts would suffice as shelter for his proposed winter campaign.¹²² Nathanael Greene occupied a middle ground between Reed and Cadwalader's positions. The Rhode Islander claimed that a complete retirement into the towns of the Pennsylvania interior would undermine discipline for

soldiers and officers alike, and urged Washington to “remember Hannibal’s army in Capua.” The latter reference alluded to the encampment the Carthaginians occupied after their victory at Cannae in the Second Punic War where that army’s discipline eroded amidst wine and women.¹²³ Greene expressed hope that the army could strike a balance between the rest offered by retiring to the interior and the discipline and political capital it would cultivate by maintaining a more active winter camp.

Colonel Henry Emanuel Lutterloh, a German-born officer, drew on his European experience in formulating his response. He advised a winter retirement described as “refreshing quarters,” a phrase common to European treatises. Lutterloh justified this method by likening it to contemporary practices in use across the Atlantic.¹²⁴ The well-read Henry Knox referenced Frederick the Great’s *Instructions*, quoting the King of Prussia’s maxim that “the first object in Winter quarters is tranquility,” to further his argument that the army should not quarter so close to Philadelphia to avoid being subjected to frequent alarms. Like Greene, he hoped for a compromise solution that would not see the army abandon so much of the countryside by withdrawing to Redding or Lancaster. Putting the army thirty miles northwest of the city near the Schuylkill seemed to Knox to promise such an alternative.¹²⁵ John Sullivan, on the other hand, recommended against putting the army into huts. Sullivan, to support his argument, drew on the example of the reported “mortality among the Hessians” wintering in rudimentary structures at New Brunswick in early 1777.¹²⁶

Demonstrably, the Continental Army’s leadership of 1777 possessed a strong understanding of military history and a solid grasp of contemporary theories regarding the best practices for sheltering troops. Most had also garnered practical experience at

Boston, the Champlain Valley, the Hudson Highlands, and northern New Jersey during the war's first two years. Consequently, they associated placing the army in winter quarters with a complete retirement from the field and keeping the army concentrated in a hut encampment nearer Philadelphia with the intention of maintaining active operations. Most officers favoring a concentrated hut encampment also voiced support for a winter campaign, while those most supportive of retiring to the backcountry towns opposed late-season operations. Even Lord Stirling, whose proposal for a concentrated camp site near Tredyffrin Township closely aligned with the eventual winter camp at Valley Forge, characterized his recommendation as only a temporary expedient. While recognizing that posting the army at Tredyffrin would maximize its ability to cover the countryside, deny forage to the British at Philadelphia, and maintain communications with New Jersey, it remained "still only an encampment." Stirling recognized that placing the army in such an encampment "is not going into winter quarters, it is not procuring for the officers and men that comfort and opportunity of recruiting which they richly deserve after a long and fatiguing campaign." The New Jersey major general acknowledged, however, that proper winter quarters were "not in our power to give them anywhere," and therefore, hutting the army in the Schuylkill Valley ranked as the Patriots' best option.¹²⁷

Ultimately, Washington opted for a concentrated encampment at Valley Forge. Here the army could remain a threat to the British in Philadelphia and provide a reassuring presence to nearby civilian communities. Discipline and drill could be better effected than with the Main Army dispersed among towns, and communications better maintained with New Jersey and New England. Given the lateness of the season, neither Washington nor his subordinates entertained building barracks as in previous winters.

Instead, the Continentals would shelter in huts to be built at Valley Forge itself. The form of winter quarters departed significantly from either accepted European practices or previous experiences lodging armies in North America. Had Reading and Lancaster not been flooded with refugees, and had Congress and the Pennsylvania government not pressured Washington to protect the countryside from British depredations, it is likely the Continentals would have retired to the state's interior. Likewise, had Wilmington and the surrounding towns been large enough to accommodate most of the 12,000 Rebel soldiers operating in the region, the army may have cantoned in Delaware. Either option would have aligned well with the maxims of Frederick, Turpin de Crisse, and the whole of European military experience during the eighteenth century. While the Continental Army had emerged as a regular force in 1777, however, it waged a conflict under different circumstances than those prevailing in Europe. It had to remain mindful of civilian populations possessing fragile yet vital political sentiments. It stood answerable to a representative government. Finally, it operated in an arena lacking either the existing infrastructure for quartering or the support of a powerful fiscal-military bureaucracy as in Europe.

Given these conditions, the winter encampment at Valley Forge represented a departure from European methods and the beginning of military shelter practices suited to waging war in North America. At the heart of this new method stood humble timber structures, log huts, of which the army would build nearly two thousand in the coming months. The army in Pennsylvania resorted to huts due to the absence of significant towns for billeting in the area where it chose to winter, the proven insufficiency of tents as winter shelter, and the lateness of the season that precluded the construction of more

substantial barracks. Huts had, over the first years of the conflict, grown increasingly important to Continental castrametation. Rudimentary timber structures had supplanted more substantial shelter around New York City in 1776, and had afforded the Northern Army the bulk of its housing outside Fort Ticonderoga during the previous winter. Outside of the winter months, soldiers had also used huts on campaign when tents were unavailable.

Nevertheless, so far in the war the army had used huts only to supplement other methods of shelter rather than its chief means of quartering. Early-war huts had varied in quality and had often been made from bark, brush, and sod. They closely resembled the shanties that European armies had used at various points when lacking tents during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As Continental officers debated winter quarters in December 1777, even advocates of huts recognized that these structures by no means provided ideal shelter. Only Major General John Armstrong of the Pennsylvania militia gave full support to hutting through the winter. Provided the weather remained dry, Armstrong believed huts would be “no means incompatible with health,” and described them as “most in character for the Army.”¹²⁸ Lafayette referred to the opinions of “doctors, and American ones who know the manners and physical constitution of our soldiers,” that “nothing is so comfortable as well made huts,” but given the method’s uncommonness in Europe, he preferred a cantonment in Lancaster or Wilmington.¹²⁹ Officers more familiar with North American operations did not share this optimistic view. Sullivan characterized huts as “exceedingly unhealthy and are at best but a miserable shelter from the inclemency of the weather.”¹³⁰ Smallwood likewise supposed

the method would “impair the men’s health.”¹³¹ Yet no other option palatable to either military men or political leaders presented itself.

The Main Army did not arrive at Valley Forge and begin making quarters until December 17. Washington’s General Orders of that date drew attention to the fact that huts had hitherto provided less-than-satisfactory winter shelter. Refining these structures into decent housing would thereby require hard work and attention to detail. The commander-in-chief recognized that the army had no other option, and declared that the Continentals “must make ourselves the best shelter in our power. With activity and diligence huts may be erected that will be warm and dry.” Whatever problems wintering in huts might bring, Washington hoped the chosen arrangement would protect the countryside from the British and leave the army less vulnerable to a surprise attack than if it were divided into smaller cantonments.¹³²

The following day’s General Orders established the plan by which troops were to build their winter encampment. The commander-in-chief delegated to his subordinates the task of ensuring orderly living arrangements. Division commanders were to appoint a field-grade officer in each of their brigades to superintend the laying out of brigade camps. Each regimental commander was in turn to select an officer to oversee hut construction. The brigade superintendents held the authority to mark out where each hut in their respective camps was to be built, so that “that uniformity and order may be observed.” Colonels, with their company captains, were immediately to divide the rank-and-file into groups of twelve men, termed a mess. One mess would occupy one hut, which the men would erect themselves. Unlike the construction projects of past

campaigns, the Continentals at Valley Forge had no professional carpenters on hand to assist in building winter shelter.¹³³

Washington's General Orders of December 18 also specified the huts' dimensions and suggested appropriate building materials. Previously, soldiers had built shanties based on no specific model, but the Valley Forge huts were to each stand sixteen feet long, fourteen feet wide, and six feet tall. Logs were to constitute the huts' side walls, with clay sealing the interstices between the timbers. Each hut was to have a fireplace likewise made of logs and coated in clay. Split-oak slabs were to make the doors, which were to uniformly face company streets. To incentivize men to build their huts quickly, the mess in each regiment completing its hut first and in a "most workmanlike manner" would receive twelve dollars. Washington's officers failed to settle on a method of providing roofing for the huts. Boards made for the best covering, but would likely prove difficult to obtain in the region. Washington therefore offered a one-hundred dollar cash reward to any soldier or officer who could recommend a roofing substitute that could be made more cheaply and quickly than boards.¹³⁴

With nothing in castrametation texts to offer a blueprint, the Valley Forge plan resembled a well-ordered tent encampment, with every hut placed in precise order, aligned to produce streets within each brigade camp. Enlisted men's huts were to lay in lines, with officers' huts to the rear. Generals could enjoy a hut to themselves, while brigade staffs, regimental field officers, and regimental staff were allocated one hut each. Captains, lieutenants, and ensigns of two companies were expected to share a single hut. Washington apportioned one hut for every twelve enlisted men and non-commissioned-officers to house the rest of the army.¹³⁵

Occupants of the camp recognized the novelty of an entire army building its winter quarters at the close of a campaign season. Thomas Paine likened the soldiers building the camp to a “family of beavers,” given the troops’ frenzied construction. He described the camp as a “curious collection of buildings, in the true rustic order.”¹³⁶ A Connecticut surgeon described the camp as a “log city, part of which is as regular as Philadelphia.”¹³⁷ A Hessian serving in Philadelphia, Major Carl Leopold Bauermeister described Washington’s position as “a stationary camp.” The apparent permanence of that camp, compared to the European method, captured the Hessian major’s attention as he highlighted the soldiers who “have been encouraged with cash rewards to build solid huts.”¹³⁸ Brigadier General Jedediah Huntington took a particularly dismissive view of the decision to winter in huts at Valley Forge. He complained to his brother Joshua in early December that “the general seems resolved to keep us together if possible. Whether it is for the best or not time will discover.” Huntington believed the army stood in need of “great repairs,” and declared himself “sorry we have not better quarters.” The brigadier general did not think the post at Valley Forge would deter British foraging operations.¹³⁹ That same month he remarked to his father, “I have gone to build me a house in the woods. What do you think of the army’s making two thousand log houses in all the regularity of an encampment?”¹⁴⁰

Huntington’s comment revealed that the Valley Forge encampment had produced a built form for the Continental’s winter quarters that differed from those of contemporary armies. Indeed, the Patriot army had adopted a structure largely unseen in European military practice for centuries. Lewis Lochee, a military enlightenment writer whose 1778 *Essay on Castrametation* synthesized various European treatises on the

subject, considered log huts to be of only marginal utility. Lochee attributed huts to Roman practice, distinguishing the tent encampments Roman legions used while on summer campaign with the more substantial huts employed during colder months, the *castra hiberna*. Lochee relegated the use of log huts to history, remarking “the Greeks and Romans once made use of both tents and huts; but as they declined in military spirit, they gradually neglected that practice, and quartered their troops in towns and villages.” In contemporary European warfare, armies used huts only while engaged in an active campaign late in the year. Such structures provided more protection than cloth tents, but greater concentration and less permanence than dispersed winter quarters. Lochee described these structures as having thatched roofs made of straw or brush, and when hastily built were often dug into the earth or composed of sod for cover. Armies generally avoided remaining in huts through the winter. Such buildings erected late in the season often featured damp interiors, which were, according to Lochee, “of course, unhealthy for the soldiers.”¹⁴¹

Standing as Valley Forge did as a new development in the art of castrametation, the encampment suffered from numerous flaws in its placement, construction, and administration. Washington’s General Orders of December 17 and December 18 provided an outline for the layout of winter camps that would prove worthy of reuse in subsequent winters. Translating the plans into reality, however, proved difficult for an army whose officers and men alike had never taken part in such an endeavor. A shortage of axes and other building tools retarded the huts’ construction even though timber stood in abundance around Valley Forge. Although hut construction began around December 20, written accounts of the camp indicate that the bulk of the army had not moved into

their shelters until late January. Consequently, for their first month at Valley Forge many men endured declining temperatures with only tents as shelter.¹⁴²

The army's hurry to build huts, inexperience, absence of tools, and a lack of oversight on the part of the officer corps led to uneven construction quality. The roofing issue remained unsolved through the winter, with huts exhibiting coverings of turf, wooden planks, or even tent canvas. Whatever the material, roofs commonly leaked. Door and chimney placements within huts varied widely. Archaeological evidence indicates that many units chose to excavate deep foundations for their huts to add extra insulation from the elements. Doing so left hut interiors vulnerable to flooding and mud seepage during the spring.¹⁴³

Sanitation within the Valley Forge huts suffered due to their poor construction, placement, and general inexperience with maintaining health and discipline in such a large, concentrated, and prolonged camp. An inexperienced and untutored officer corps also ignored many of the maxims of Cuthbertson and Bland for maintaining healthy camps. Washington admonished his men for their "want and neglect" of latrines that had left an "intolerable smell" in some brigades in April 1778. The dirty conditions necessitated men clear "filth and dirt," that had accumulated in front of, between, and behind the huts.¹⁴⁴ Camp hygiene declined as winter transitioned to spring. When warmer weather arrived, Washington ordered the chinking removed from between the logs that made up the huts' walls, in order to ventilate the interiors. Orders for burning musket cartridges inside were meant to clear the foul air as well. By late spring, camp occupants had left Valley Forge, in the words of historian Jacqueline Thibaut, "overcrowded, damp, and garbage-laden." These conditions led to the plethora of disease

and ailments Continentals suffered in early 1778. Historians have commonly blamed the maladies that swept Continental ranks in early 1778 as resulting from inadequate medical care, poor clothing, and periodic hunger brought on by administrative changes in the quarter-master's department. The poorly constructed and arranged built-environment at Valley Forge, however, undoubtedly contributed to this health crisis as well. Scholars estimate up to 3,000 soldiers perished at Valley Forge mostly from disease resulting from poor camp conditions.¹⁴⁵ Indeed, by late spring the encampment itself appeared uninhabitable to Washington, who ordered the army to march into the nearby countryside and build a tent encampment for shelter.¹⁴⁶ The Continentals proceeded to a new site, half a mile away, to escape, in the words of one major of the Pennsylvania Line, "the disagreeable smell occasioned by our long stay."¹⁴⁷

Smallpox also threatened Continental ranks at Valley Forge, though to a lesser extent than it had in northern New Jersey in early 1777. Between 3,000 and 4,000 recruits arriving in camp in early 1778 had not had the illness. While the majority of the Continentals had been inoculated and would not have been at risk, the same could not be said for Pennsylvania civilians. In January, Washington ordered the inoculation of new arrivals. This process again reduced the number of Continental effectives until the treated men recovered. Ultimately, the army avoided another serious smallpox outbreak.¹⁴⁸

In addition to illness, the army at Valley Forge suffered from severe supply shortages. Scholars have commonly attributed these conditions to poor administration in the quartermasters department, coupled with bad weather. The placement of the encampment itself also contributed to these shortages. As historian John Shy has pointed

out, the inadequacy of North American transportation networks and shortage of human and animal labor to facilitate transportation likely contributed significantly to supply problems, particularly during the winter months when weather hindered movement over dirt roads. In the rush to put the army under cover in December 1777, logistical considerations played a small role in selecting the encampment site. Placing the troops in a concentrated winter cantonment in an inaccessible locale thereby exacerbated the supply shortages brought on by the administrative problems.¹⁴⁹

The cold months did not witness a complete cessation of hostilities. Although Washington's main body wintered at Valley Forge, the commander-in-chief placed detachments in an arc stretching from Wilmington, Delaware, to Trenton, New Jersey. This arrangement covered the southeastern Pennsylvania countryside. Continental patrols intercepted British foraging parties and deterred the redcoats from venturing far into the interior from Philadelphia. The Patriot outposts also deterred Pennsylvania civilians from trading with the enemy and gathered intelligence.¹⁵⁰

The combination of poor sanitation, inadequate shelter, and supply interruptions at Valley Forge rendered the Continental Army as disease ridden in the spring of 1778 as it had been a year earlier during the height of the smallpox epidemic. The proportion of sick Continentals peaked in February at 35 percent.¹⁵¹ The lack of adequate hospital facilities in the region aggravated the suffering of the sick, and prolonged the time before they could return to active duty.¹⁵² Even in June 1778, 27 percent of the army remained unfit for duty.¹⁵³ Based on these statistics, the Valley Forge encampment hardly qualified as the refreshing quarters that a regular army expected during the winter months. Whatever improvements in discipline and drill von Steuben's training regimen may have

instilled in the ranks during early 1778, the army entered the active campaign season with more than a quarter of its men unavailable for combat. Over the course of the following months, Washington's men fought a bitter but indecisive engagement at Monmouth, but otherwise achieved little.

Overall, the Valley Forge encampment stands as both a significant innovation in castrametation and a partial failure. The Continental Army pioneered a new method of wintering troops, and maintained their hold on the countryside. Nevertheless, conditions in the log-hut city that winter stood at odds with the goal of providing soldiers with comfortable and healthy winter quarters. While the huts build at Valley Forge undoubtedly represented an improvement over the shanties used earlier in the war, their leaky roofs and flooded interiors made for unhealthy and unpleasant lodging. While the army did emerge from the camp well-organized and better disciplined as a result of the beginnings of von Steuben's training program, given the hardships experienced at the log-hut city along the Schuylkill, Continental officers remained unsure whether the benefits of this new method of castrametation outweighed its detriments.

Conclusion

The Continental Army that emerged from the Valley Forge winter demonstrated marked difference from the force that had gathered in northern New Jersey a year earlier. Due to Washington's inoculation program, smallpox no longer presented a menace to soldiers and the civilian communities with whom the army interacted. As a result of the June 1777 camp at Middlebrook, officers and men had garnered experience in camp routine, improving administration, sanitation, and drill. Combined with Congress's

exertions in acquiring tents, the army embarked on the campaigns of 1777 and 1778 with adequate field shelter for the first time. Finally at Valley Forge, Washington's army had pioneered a new method of winter quarters, the log-hut city, one that afforded shelter to a standing army even when barracks and billets were unavailable. In sum, the year had witnessed Washington and his subordinates adapt quartering techniques to suit the new standing army waging war in the North American environment. As the long sick lists at Valley Forge testified, however, the Continentals' task remained incomplete. In late 1778, the Continentals would once more look to the question of how to produce adequate winter shelter when they returned to northern New Jersey.

Chapter 4 Notes

¹ Robert K. Wright, *The Continental Army*, (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1986), 91-98.

² Thomas Rodney to Caesar Rodney, January 14, 1777, in George Herbert Ryden ed., *Letters to and From Caesar Rodney* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1933), 154-155; Thomas Rodney, "Diary of Captain Thomas Rodney 1776-1777," Caesar A. Rodney, ed., *Papers of the Historical Society of Delaware*, 42 vols. (Wilmington: The Historical Society of Delaware, 1888), 8: 38.

³ James Read to Susanna Read, January 8, 1777, Andre de Coppet Collection, Box 28, Folder 6, Princeton University Firestone Library.

⁴ James Read to Susanna Read, January 14, 1777, Andre de Coppet Collection, Box 28, Folder 6, Princeton University Firestone Library.

⁵ Ashbel Green, *The Life of Ashbel Green*, (New York: R. Carter, 1849), 90.

⁶ James McMichael, "Diary of Lieutenant James McMichael, of the Pennsylvania Line, 1776-1778," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 16 (July 1892): 142.

⁸ Rodney, "Diary," 41-42.

⁹ Stirling to Caesar Rodney, January 16, 1777, in Ryden, *Rodney Letters*, 156.

¹⁰ George Clinton to Colonel Nathan Sparhawk, January 7, 1777, in Hugh Hastings, ed., *The Public Papers of George Clinton, First Governor of New York*, 10 vols. (New York: Wynkoop, Hallenback, and Crawford, 1899-1914), 1: 537.

¹¹ Margaret Morris, *Private Journal Kept During the Revolutionary War* (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 28.

¹² General Orders issued at Trenton, January, 26, January, 27, January, 28, February 6 and February 9, 1777; Caesar Rodney to Stirling, February 2, 1777; all in Ryden, *Rodney Letters*, 160-61, 164-65, 173-74.

¹³ General Orders issued at Trenton, January 19, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 157.

¹⁴ Washington to Caesar Rodney, February 18, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 180.

¹⁵ McMichael, "Diary," 11.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Ann M. Becker, "Smallpox in Washington's Army: Strategic Implications of Disease During the American Revolution," *Journal of Military History* 68 (April 2004): 395.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 384.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 402-14.

²¹ David Avery Diary, Entries for June, July, and August, 1776, Connecticut Historical Society; Becker, "Smallpox in Washington's Army," 402-14.

²² Charles H. Lesser, *Sinews of Independence: Monthly Strength Reports of the Continental Army* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), xxix-xxx. Lesser records 34.9 percent sick for December 1776. Records are missing for the first three months of 1777, but returns for April showed only 21.7 percent sick.

²³ Elizabeth A. Fenn, *Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775-1782* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001), 92-93.

²⁴ Washington to Robert Hanson Harrison, January 20, 1777, in W.W. Abbot et al., eds., *The Papers of George Washington: Revolutionary War Series*, 25 vols. to date (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1987-), 8: 116.

²⁵ Washington to John Cochran, January 20, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 112.

²⁶ Shippen to Washington, January 25, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 156.

²⁷ Washington to Gates, January 28, 1777; Washington to Shippen, January 28, 1778, both in *Ibid.*, 172, 174.

²⁸ Cochrane and Shippen to Washington, January 3, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 208

²⁹ For the presence of smallpox among New England troops, see Schuyler to Washington, February 5, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 243.

³⁰ Washington to Gates, February 5-6, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 248.

³¹ Washington to Hancock, February 5, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 249-53.

³² Washington to Shippen, February 6, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 264.

³³ Becker, "Smallpox in Washington's Army," 424.

³⁴ Continental Congress Medical Committee to Washington, February 13, 1777, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 8: 323; Hugh Thrusfield, "Smallpox in the American War of Independence," *Annals of Medical History* 3 (1940): 316-17.

³⁵ Morris, "*Journal*," 28.

³⁶ Sullivan to Washington, February 9, 1777, *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 8: 294.

³⁷ Citizens of Hanover to Washington, February 12, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 317. While this petition is attributed to Hanover Pennsylvania, its content, as well as the signatures present, indicate that it originated from the community of Hanover in Morris County, New Jersey.

³⁸ Green, *Life of Ashbel Green*, 91-93.

³⁹ Jeremiah Greenman, *Diary of a Common Soldier in the American Revolution, 1775-1783: An Annotated Edition to the Military Journal of Jeremiah Greenman*, Robert Bray and Paul Bushman, eds. (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1978), 73.

⁴⁰ Maxwell to Washington, February 17, 1777, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 8: 352.

⁴¹ Washington to Dickinson, February 18, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 356.

⁴² Washington to Maxwell, February 18, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 357.

⁴³ Washington to George Baylor, March 28, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 9: 1.

⁴⁴ Washington to Brigadier Generals Samuel Holden Parsons, Enoch Poor, and James Mitchell Varnum, March 29, 1777; Washington to Jonathan Trumbull, March 29, 1777, both in *Ibid.*, 19, 21-22.

⁴⁵ Varnum to Washington, April 4, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 41-42.

⁴⁶ Washington to Nicholas Cooke, April 3, 1777; Washington to Varnum, April 4, 1777, both in *Ibid.*, 52-53, 57.

⁴⁷ Varnum to Washington, April 13, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 153-55.

⁴⁸ Parsons to Washington, April 15, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 172.

⁴⁹ Washington to Samuel Blachley Webb, April 7, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 84.

⁵⁰ Executive Committee to John Hancock, February 22, 1777, in Paul H. Smith, ed., *Letters of Delegates to Congress, 1774-1789*, 26 vols. (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1976-2000), 6: 343.

⁵¹ William Whipple to Josiah Bartlett, February 22, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 347-48.

⁵² Washington to Jonathan Trumbull, March 6, 1777, in *PGW, Revolutionary War Series*, 8: 531-32.

⁵³ Return of American forces in New Jersey, March 15, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 576.

⁵⁴ John Adams to Abigail Adams, February 20, 1777, in Smith, *Letters of Delegates to Congress*, 6: 326.

⁵⁵ Thomas Davis at Morristown to John Page, April 26, 1777, Andre de Coppet Collection, Box 4 Folder 9, Princeton University Firestone Library.

⁵⁶ Jonathan Trumbull to Washington, April 16, 1777, in *PGW, Revolutionary War Series*, 9: 183.

⁵⁷ Washington to Parsons, June 17, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 10: 62.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ Greenman, *Diary*, 72.

⁶⁰ General Orders, May 26, 1777, Robert Kirkwood, *The Journal and Order Book of Captain Robert Kirkwood of the Delaware Regiment of the Continental Line*, Joseph Brown Turner, ed., (Wilmington: The Historical Society of Delaware, 1910), 69.

⁶¹ General Orders, April 1, 1777, in *PGW, Revolutionary War Series*, 9: 123-24.

⁶² Greenman, *Diary*, 73.

⁶³ General Orders, April 10, 1777, in *PGW, Revolutionary War Series*, 9: 109.

⁶⁴ General Orders, April 1, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 224.

⁶⁵ General Orders, April 25, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 263-64.

⁶⁶ Morris, *Journal*, 28.

⁶⁷ Richard Henry Lee to Washington, April 10, 1777, in Smith, *Letters of Delegates to Congress*, 6: 567.

⁶⁸ Schulyer to Washington, May 18, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 7: 90.

⁶⁹ McMichael, "Diary," 144.

⁷⁰ Mann Page to John Page, April 9, 1777, in Smith, *Letters of Delegates to Congress*, 6: 559-60; Israel Putnam to Congress, April 8, 1777, Papers of the Continental Congress, item 159, folders 57-58, National Archives, Washington, DC.

⁷¹ Committee of Congress to Washington April 10, 1777, in Smith, *Letters of Delegates to Congress*, 6: 566.

⁷² Washington to Heard, April 19, 1777; Washington to Lincoln, April 19, 1777; Washington to Lincoln, April 20, 1777, all in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 9: 210, 211, 219-20.

⁷³ Washington to Stephen, April 20, 1777; Washington to Heard, April 23, 1777, both in *Ibid.*, 223-24, 244.

⁷⁴ Washington to Livingston, April 29, 1777, *Ibid.*, 302.

⁷⁵ Washington to Hancock, May 1, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 492-93.

⁷⁶ Greene to Washington, May 24, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 516-17.

⁷⁷ Green to Washington, May 25, 1777, in Richard K. Showman, Dennis R. Conrad, and Roger N. Parks eds. *The Papers of Nathanael Greene*, 13 vols. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1976-2005), 2: 92-93.

⁷⁸ Mifflin to Washington, May 27, 1777, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 9: 543.

⁷⁹ Washington to Mifflin, May 31, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 574.

⁸⁰ Arnold to Washington, June 25, 1776, in *Ibid.*, 5: 97.

⁸¹ Michael Barbieri, "Winter Soldiering in the Champlain Valley" *Journal of the American Revolution*, October 19, 2015. <https://allthingsliberty.com/2015/10/winter-soldiering-in-the-lake-champlain-valley/> (retrieved December 16, 2016).

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ Gates to Washington, May 13, 1777, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 9: 410-11.

⁸⁴ Gates to Washington, May 24, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 514.

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- ⁸⁵ Washington to Gates, May 15, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 429.
- ⁸⁶ Board of War to Horatio Gates, June 4, 1777, in Smith, *Letters of the Delegates of Congress*, 7: 168.
- ⁸⁷ Elbridge Gerry to Thomas Gerry, June 15, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 201.
- ⁸⁸ Greene to Washington, May 25, 1777, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 9: 524-25.
- ⁸⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁹⁰ General Orders, May 30, 1777; in *Ibid.*, 559-60.
- ⁹¹ General Orders, June 9, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 652.
- ⁹² General Orders, June 3, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 597.
- ⁹³ General Orders, June 4, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 602-03.
- ⁹⁴ General Orders, June 1, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 588-89.
- ⁹⁵ General Orders, June 16, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 10: 47-48.
- ⁹⁶ General Orders, June 17, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 58-59.
- ⁹⁷ General Orders, May 26, 1777; Greene to Washington, May 27, 1777, both in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 2: 94, 93-98.
- ⁹⁸ General Orders, May 29, 1777, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 9: 551-52.
- ⁹⁹ General Orders, May 31, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 567-69.
- ¹⁰⁰ General Orders, June 1, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 577.
- ¹⁰¹ General Orders, June 1, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 578-79.
- ¹⁰² General Orders, June 4, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 602-3.
- ¹⁰³ General Orders, June 9, 1777 in *Ibid.*, 652.
- ¹⁰⁴ Charles Pope to Caesar Rodney, May 15, 1777, in Ryden, *Rodney Letters*, 191.
- ¹⁰⁵ Greene to Lincoln, June 1, 1777, in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 2: 102.

¹⁰⁶ See, for example, Lewis Lochee, *An Essay on Castrametation* (London: T. Cadell, 1778), 58.

¹⁰⁷ Council-of-War, June 12, 1777, in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 2: 106-7.

¹⁰⁸ Washington to Arnold, June 17, 1777, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 10: 58-59.

¹⁰⁹ Brigade Orders, June 18, 1777, in Turner, *Journal and Order Book of Robert Kirkwood*, 86; General Orders, June 26, 1777, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 10: 90.

¹¹⁰ For a strategic overview, see Washington to Hancock, June 20, 1777; Washington to Hancock, June 22, 1777, both in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 84-86, 104-5.

¹¹¹ Washington to John Augustine Washington, June 29, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 149.

¹¹² Hancock to Washington, June 24, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 118-19.

¹¹³ General Orders, July 2, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 166-67.

¹¹⁴ Greene to John Adams, May 28, 1777, in Showman, et. al., *Green Papers*, 2: 98-99.

¹¹⁵ General Orders, June 7, 1777, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 9: 630-31.

¹¹⁶ Wayne K. Bodle, *The Valley Forge Winter: Civilians and Soldiers in War* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), 31-54.

¹¹⁷ General Orders, November 30, 1777, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 12: 444-45. Responding to Washington's query were John Armstrong, Louis Duportail, Nathanael Greene, William Irvine, Johann de Kalb, Henry Knox, the Marquis de Lafayette, William Maxwell, Peter Muhlenberg, Enoch Poor, Casimir Pulaski, Charles Scott, William Smallwood, Lord Stirling, John Sullivan, James Varnum, Anthony Wayne, George Weedon, and William Woodford. Henry Emanuel Lutterloh, John Cadwalader, and Joseph Reed also offered their input.

¹¹⁸ Benjamin H. Newcomb, "Washington's Generals and the Decision to Camp at Valley Forge," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 117 (October 1993): 313.

¹¹⁹ Wayne K. Bodle, "Generals and 'Gentlemen': Pennsylvania Politics and the Decision for Valley Forge," *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 62 (Winter 1995): 60-64.

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- ¹²⁰ Newcomb, "Washington's Generals," 319-21.
- ¹²¹ Reed to Washington, December 1, 1777, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 12: 477-81.
- ¹²² Cadwalader to Washington, December 3, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 507-10.
- ¹²³ Greene to Washington, December 1, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 459-63.
- ¹²⁴ Lutterloh to Washington, December 1, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 473-74.
- ¹²⁵ Knox to Washington, December 1, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 465-66.
- ¹²⁶ Sullivan to Washington, December 1, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 485-87.
- ¹²⁷ Stirling to Washington, December 1, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 483-85.
- ¹²⁸ Armstrong to Washington, December 1, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 536-38.
- ¹²⁹ Lafayette to Washington, December 1, 1777 in *Ibid.*, 466-68.
- ¹³⁰ Sullivan to Washington, December 1, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 485.
- ¹³¹ Smallwood to Washington, December 1, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 482-83.
- ¹³² General Orders, December 17, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 620-21.
- ¹³³ General Orders, December 18, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 626-28.
- ¹³⁴ *Ibid.*
- ¹³⁵ *Ibid.*
- ¹³⁶ "Military Operations Near Philadelphia in the Campaign of 1777-1778. Described in a Letter from Thomas Paine to Dr. Franklin," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 2 (1878): 294.
- ¹³⁷ Ebenezer Crosby to anonymous recipient, April 14, 1778, quoted in Jacqueline Thibaut, *In the True Rustic Order: Material Aspects of the Valley Forge Encampment, 1777-1778* (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1980), 58.
- ¹³⁸ Carl Leopold von Bauermeister to von Jungkenn, January 20, 1778, Bernhard A. Uhlendorf and Edna Vosper, eds., *Letters from Major Bauermeister to Colonel von Jungkenn Written During the Philadelphia Campaign, 1777-1778* (Philadelphia:

Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1935), 42; Bauermesiter to von Jungkenn, June 15, 1778, *Ibid.*, 62.

¹³⁹ Jedediah to Joshua Huntington, December 20, 1777, in *Collections of the Connecticut Historical Society*, 31 vols. (Hartford, Connecticut Historical Society, 1923), 20: 386.

¹⁴⁰ Jedediah Huntington to Andrew Huntington, December 20, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 389.

¹⁴¹ Lochee, *Essay on Castrametation*, 6.

¹⁴² Thibaut, *True Rustic Order*, 67.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 61-62.

¹⁴⁴ General Orders, April 14, 1778, in *PGW, Revolutionary War Series*, 16: 508.

¹⁴⁵ John B. Trussell, Jr., *Birthplace of an Army: A Study of the Valley Forge Winter Encampment* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical Commission, 1976), 40-41.

¹⁴⁶ Thibaut, *True Rustic Order*, 58.

¹⁴⁷ William Johnston to "Baldy," June 15, 1778, William Johnston Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

¹⁴⁸ Fenn, *Pox Americana*, 98-99.

¹⁴⁹ John Shy, "Logistical Crisis and the American Revolution: A Hypothesis," in John A. Lynn, ed., *Feeding Mars: Logistics in Western Warfare from the Middle Ages to the Present* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993), 161-79; Bodle, *Valley Forge Winter*, 103, 125.

¹⁵⁰ Bodle, *Valley Forge Winter*, 140-41, 208-09.

¹⁵¹ Lesser, *Sinews*, xxxi.

¹⁵² Trussell, *Birthplace of an Army*, 42.

¹⁵³ Lesser, *Sinews*, xxxi.

CHAPTER 5

TOWARDS A NEW ART OF CASTRAMETATION: THE MIDDLEBROOK

WINTER OF 1778-1779

The year 1778 witnessed a shift in the seat of war back to New York and New Jersey. Following French intervention, British forces evacuated Philadelphia in June 1778 and relocated their headquarters to New York City. An indecisive season of maneuvers followed the stalemated Battle of Monmouth on June 28. In October, the bulk of Washington's Main Army found itself in the Hudson Highlands and northern New Jersey. Rebel and Crown forces occupied the same areas late in that year as they had in early 1777. Moving forward the overall strategic situation in the region remained little changed until 1781. The British-held port city lay at the center of the operational zone, with a large garrison placing the surrounding area under the threat of attack. The Hudson River provided an avenue of advance for Royal forces that threatened to cut communications between New England and the remainder of the colonies. The Patriot fortress at West Point, New York, stood guard over the Hudson as the river passed through the narrows of the Hudson Highlands. While Continental forces sought to safeguard Whig populations in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, protecting West Point and deterring a British offensive up the Hudson remained the army's primary strategic goal from 1778 to 1781.¹

In late 1778, the Continentals would again need to exchange their tents for soldier lodging. Once more, they took position in a region that lacked towns large enough to billet an army that had grown to 16,000 effectives during the summer. The log-hut city at

Valley Forge had provided a potentially viable means of quartering men. Given that encampment's novelty, supply difficulties, and squalid conditions, adopting a similar method for the coming winter did not appear a forgone conclusion to most Continental officers. Yet the ongoing danger posed by the British in New York necessitated a continued Patriot presence in the region. Congressional pressure for Washington to take offensive action in 1779 also meant that the army would need to pass the winter well rested and prepared for the rigors of the next year's campaign. Finding adequate winter shelter therefore stood as imperative to Continental strategy.

This chapter examines the decisions that led the Patriot army to establish a log-hut city in New Jersey for its winter quarters. Following a prolonged debate among the Main Army's generals, Washington opted to lodge the bulk of his army in huttled encampments. Despite the misgivings of several of his subordinates, he reasoned that huts afforded the army its best option for winter housing in the region. Younger generals and officers with recent European experience voiced the strongest support for the log-hut city, playing the decisive role in shaking the army free from its previous preference for traditional methods. Concurrently, the army developed a surer understanding of the logistics of winter quarters. Major General Nathanael Greene, acting as quartermaster general since March, deserved much of the credit for this improvement. Greene's sober assessment of his department's ability to sustain the provisioning of camp shaped Washington's decision for how to arrange the army's winter dispositions. So too did Greene's observations regarding where terrain suitable for building large camp sites could be found. Based largely on Greene's recommendations, the commander-in-chief

placed the majority of the army, seven infantry brigades and the artillery, at Middlebrook in New Jersey.

The Middlebrook encampment proved pivotal in establishing the log-hut city as the army's preferred form of quarters. Over the course of the 1778-1779 winter, Washington and his staff implemented new conventions for hut designs and camp layouts, establishing firm principles for the construction of a sound log-hut city. Throughout the winter and spring, increasingly experienced Continental officers and their men employed European maxims for camp hygiene at the log-hut city. This improved soldiers' health and comfort. Due to the greater attention Patriot generals paid to logistical considerations when siting the camp, the rank-and-file at Middlebrook also enjoyed more consistent supplies than they had experienced at Valley Forge. Compared to the spring of 1778, the army emerged from winter quarters in 1779 healthy, refreshed, and ready for the campaign season. Middlebrook's success put to rest further debates over how the army should shelter when stationary. While further refinements remained necessary, after 1779, Continental quartering policy rested upon the foundation of the log-hut city.

The 1778 Quartering Debate

In 1778, Washington addressed the question of winter quarters at a much earlier date than the previous year. Given the difficulties encountered in deciding where and how to spend the winter in 1777, the Continental commander first queried his officers about the subject in mid-October. He issued a circular to seven of his subordinates on October 14, 1778, requesting their opinions regarding how the army should arrange its

forces for the coming winter. Washington asked first for recommendations for what dispositions the army should take. Respondents were to consider “the security of the army itself--its subsistence and accommodation-protection of the Country--the support of our important posts.” Washington asked whether the army should remain concentrated during the winter, or divided into small cantonments, how soon it should enter quarters, and how to best secure its provisions and forage.² He supplemented his original circular with a council-of-war on October 16, once again querying his officers for suggestions regarding winter dispositions.³ The commander-in-chief received responses from Major Generals Lord Stirling, Horatio Gates, Nathanael Greene, Johann de Kalb, Alexander McDougall, Israel Putnam, and Baron Freidrich von Steuben, as well as Brigadier Generals James Clinton, Henry Knox, Samuel Holden Parsons, William Maxwell, Peter Muhlenberg, William Smallwood, Anthony Wayne, and William Woodford.

The respondents had logged disparate experiences with Continental winter quarters. Of the brigadiers, only Clinton and Parsons had not participated in the Valley Forge debate in December 1777. By contrast, more than half of the senior officers surveyed, Stirling, Gates, McDougall, Putnam, and von Steuben, had not been present for the same discussion. Of those, only von Steuben had garnered any experience at the encampment while the others had remained in New York for the winter of 1777-1778. Consequently, Washington was to receive input from several generals unfamiliar with the log-hut city. Also, significantly absent from the 1778 consultations were any militia generals. Likewise, Washington did not formally solicit advice from any state or national civilian politicians, although one congressman, Gouverneur Morris, did submit a plan for winter quarters. New Jersey’s Governor William Livingston also tendered a request for

Continental troops, but submitted no formal plan. Unlike 1777, the decision for winter quarters in 1778 was to be exclusively the decision of Continental officers.

Washington asked each subordinate to weigh multiple considerations. As in 1777, when the general's primary concerns had centered on the availability of lodging and the need to protect civilians, in 1778 he included "accommodation," and "protection of the country," in the list of criteria for his subordinates. Washington also instructed his generals to ponder other factors not deliberated prior to Valley Forge. These included logistical feasibility and the possibility of acting in conjunction with either a potential French expeditionary force or John Sullivan's independent command in Rhode Island.⁴ The emphasis on how winter quarters might be supplied represented the most important development from the pre-Valley Forge debate, and logistics featured prominently in most of the responses Washington received.

Just as in late 1777, a debate emerged among the generals over what form of shelter the army should seek for the winter, as well as where their men should go. Continental generals stood at odds on several issues. Estimations of the army's logistical capabilities varied from bullish to pessimistic, as did suppositions regarding the British Army's offensive potential. Furthermore, they disagreed over the crucial questions of where and how the army should quarter for the winter. The suspicion and, in some cases, hostility, some commanders harbored towards the log-hut city reveals their doubts in that method after its use at Valley Forge. The respondents divided into multiple camps: those that supported a concentrated encampment along the Hudson River, those that rejected a camp in the Hudson Highlands but otherwise accepted the idea of a concentrated

encampment, and those that favored dispersing the army into cantonments in towns and villages.

Much of the opposition to the log-hut city arose from officers who had not been at present at Valley Forge. This clique centered on Major General Horatio Gates. Gates had led the Northern Army to victory at Saratoga, New York, in October 1777 and remained in that theater through the winter. He therefore had not experienced Valley Forge. Gates explicitly rejected the notion of returning to a log-hut city. He recognized that in December 1777 Washington's men "did build a town for their Winter Quarters" out of necessity, but believed that current circumstances did not require a return to such an exigency. He remained uncertain that soldiers "would cheerfully do the same thing this year." Reports of the sufferings of soldiers at Valley Forge likely shaped Gates' adverse opinion of Valley Forge. Service in the Northern Army likewise harbored only negative memories of the poorly-build huts constructed outside of Fort Ticonderoga in the 1776-1777 winter. By contrast, those Continentals that had not marched after Saratoga join Washington at Valley Forge quietly retired to towns and barracks in New York. Gates believed the Main Army should follow a similar course for the coming winter. The victor of Saratoga suggested that only small garrisons necessary to man the Hudson Highlands forts and defend New Jersey be kept near New York. Barracks and other buildings erected in and around these forts would, in Gates' estimation, to provide ample housing. The rest of the army could spend in the winter in billets and barracks scattered throughout the Middle States. Gates' recommendations for winter received endorsements from Enoch Poor and John Paterson, two commanders with experience in the northern theater.⁵

Gates' opposition to wintering in the manner of Valley Forge may have derived from his personal rivalry with Washington. Over the previous winter, he had emerged as a potential alternative to Washington for leadership of the Continental Army, and his growing rift with the commander-in-chief likely shaped his contrarian views during the 1778 quartering debate. Gates also expressed less concern regarding the enemy's capabilities. He took a dim view of the Crown's potential for offensive operations around New York given that a large number of redcoats and Hessians had recently departed the city to reinforce garrisons in Florida and the West Indies.⁶

Aside from Gates and his followers, several officers who had experienced Valley Forge also opposed recreating the log-hut city. Nathanael Greene, Lord Stirling, and William Maxwell all expressed preferences for other methods of sheltering troops. Maxwell put forward the most distended encampment plan of any of the generals. He advised placing cantonments "from the North (Hudson) River to the Susquehanna," wherever was "handy to provisions and forage."⁷ This plan focused on ease of subsistence and made up for a lack of suitable large settlements in the area with an expansive geographic dispersal. By retiring to comfortable quarters in remote towns, Maxwell's plan also shared the closest commonality with European methods. Stirling, who had initially viewed the Valley Forge quarters as only a temporary encampment, proposed cantoning the army in towns throughout New Jersey including Burlington, Trenton, Princeton, New Brunswick, Rahway, Elizabethtown, Newark, and Hackensack. These towns each might house a brigade in existing barracks or public buildings, he hoped, with the remaining soldiers accommodated by "some hutting."⁸ Stirling's plan resembled the proposals that had garnered much support prior to Valley Forge.

Greene likewise clung to more established models for wintering the army. In early October, prior to Washington's council-of-war, the Rhode Islander had surveyed the Continentals' options between quartering men in "small towns and the neighboring houses to those villages," or building huts as at Valley Forge.⁹ The quartermaster general argued in favor of billeting the army in towns, believing that the difficulties in gathering building materials would make it "utterly impossible" to "barrack the whole army."¹⁰ His estimation of the time and resources needed to house the army indicates that he envisioned any return to huts as requiring an upgrade in building materials and design, reflecting the sentiments of most of the commanders who had served at Valley Forge. Greene thus preferred quartering the army in towns.

The officers opposed to the return to the log-hut city demonstrated an outlook derived from a limited understanding of European castrametation. In their preferences for billets and barracks, they revealed the influence of the orthodox maxims outlined by authors such as Turpin de Crisse, Bland, and Cuthbertson. These officers' predilections for such methods reflected their backgrounds. Gates had garnered experience as a brigade major in the British Army during the Seven Years War. Stirling had served as a provisioning agent and aide-de-camp to Massachusetts Governor William Shirley during that conflict. Greene had exhibited a partiality for European regularization throughout the war. The results of the experiment with new quartering techniques in 1777-1778 had done nothing to diminish these generals' preference for traditional European approaches to shelter.

Commanders with more recent experience in the wars of continental Europe displayed a more nuanced understanding of castrametation. In contrast to their American

peers, both Johann de Kalb and Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben favored hutting the army. Both officers had served in Germany during the Seven Years War. This theater had witnessed a proliferation of fortified camps that had sparked new interest in castrametation in the second half of the eighteenth century. Consequently, de Kalb and von Steuben would have likely known that prolonged encampments were developing into an increasingly frequent quartering option. While European armies did not yet use timber-built camps for winter quarters, the two German officers seemingly recognized that the Continentals could adapt such installations for winter shelter. In de Kalb's response to Washington's council-of-war, he opposed a dispersed cantonment that would have been the most common European method. Instead, he favored a compact arrangement with troops hutted at their positions to ensure order and discipline.¹¹ Von Steuben objected to billeting for practical purposes, arguing that the region lacked any town "considerable enough to quarter a brigade." He also recognized that dispersing the army would undermine its order and discipline. Consequently, the drillmaster preferred to keep the army in a compact position near West Point. There, he felt the Continentals could endure the cold season provided they improved the quality of their huts from the previous year. Von Steuben called for "good barracks – covered with plank and not with earth."¹² Although he referred his proposed shelters as barracks, as timber structures built in the field rather than in towns or fortresses they represented an improved version of the Valley Forge huts. Of the American officers, Henry Knox's views most closely paralleled the two foreign generals. While Knox had not served in European campaigns, the well-read artilleryman had evoked Frederick the Great in the previous year's quartering debate, indicating he may have better understood developments in European

castrametation than some of his peers. Like de Kalb and von Steuben, Knox supported a return to log huts, provided they were of better quality than those build in the previous year.¹³

The strongest support for the log-hut city came from the brigadier generals who had served with the Main Army in Pennsylvania the preceding year. In contrast to their superiors, these officers did not stay tethered to orthodox European maxims, nor did they indicate an awareness of more recent developments on the continent. Instead, the army's more junior commanders showed confidence in their soldiers' abilities to build their shelter for themselves. Most of the brigadiers had directly overseen their units' hut construction the previous year. In their responses to Washington's queries, they highlighted several of the problems encountered at Valley Forge and shared possible solutions. Muhlenberg, Smallwood, and Hand all voiced support for building another log-hut city, provided the army began construction as soon as possible. Anthony Wayne discerned that some units had experienced more success than others in constructing their huts at Valley Forge, and that these successes could be copied by the whole army. He argued the whole army should build huts "such as were made by the Pennsylvania & Jersey troops during the last winter at Valley Forge-by which means an immense expense will be saved to the Continent." The Pennsylvanian thereby recognized that the region's abundant forests and the ample labor force the army availed made the log-hut city an option that could be built cheaply and quickly using local resources. Wayne's proposal to copy the most successful hut designs used at Valley Forge stands as the first of what would become a hallmark of the Continentals' approach to castrametation: the gleaning

of successful practices from individual units combined with European practices to create a new synthesis of methods specifically tailored for a North American regular army.

While the debate over the proper form of housing fell into dichotomy between huts and billets, the question over where to build a potential encampment elicited a more complex series of answers. Gates, his subordinates, and Maxwell submitted only plans for dispersed cantonments in the countryside. The remainder of the officers surveyed, while all agreeing that the army should erect at least one major camp, disagreed over where camps should be placed. Defensibility and cohesion stood out as paramount concerns for the majority of Washington's subordinates. Four brigadier generals who had served in Pennsylvania the previous year, Hand, Muhlenberg, Smallwood, and Wayne, advocated deployments that placed the majority of the army in the Hudson Highlands, with a chain of detachments stretching from Connecticut to New Jersey to secure either flank. The importance of West Point and the Hudson Highlands, as well as the strategic similarities between the Philadelphia theater a year earlier and the army's current situation, shaped most of the generals' responses. In addition, the potential appearance of a French fleet in the area made a tighter arrangement of forces attractive, as this would ease the task of concentrating the army for a potential attack on New York.

This clique outlined broadly similar plans for the winter, all placing emphasis on the Hudson River near Fishkill. All of the respondents viewed the log-hut city as primarily a position upon which the army could anchor the defense of the region. They shared a fear of their quarters coming under attack and therefore sought out locales that promised to obstruct any British assault. Peter Muhlenberg, for example, stressed the two "Grand Objects," of cooperating with the French fleet and guarding the passages through

the Hudson Highlands. He favored a limited dispersal of forces, keeping the brigades close enough that “the whole might be able to join in three or four days if it should be found necessary.” He suggested the largest portion of the army winter at Fishkill on the Hudson’s east bank, “a very secure post,” at which the mountainous terrain of the Hudson Highlands would impede any British advance. Smaller brigade-sized detachments would guard New Jersey and Connecticut.¹⁴ Wayne responded with similar views, telling Washington that he was “solemnly opposed to a division of your army into cantonments - - the dangerous consequences attending such a measure are too obvious to require any comment.” Wayne repeated the refrain of the need to protect the Hudson, and suggested Kings Ferry as a possible site. Brigadier General Samuel Holden Parsons’ proposal likewise placed the majority of the army near Fishkill, with smaller detachments covering West Point and Smith’s Clove along the Hudson, as well as Danbury in Connecticut.¹⁵ William Smallwood and Edward Hand’s answers largely paralleled their brother generals, though each admitted to a lack of local geographic knowledge and offered no more than an outline for dispositions.¹⁶

The Continental Army’s European officers provided more thoroughly articulated plans than many of the brigadiers, but mostly shared the latter’s emphasis on the Hudson Highlands. Experience in Europe had shown that commanders who failed to secure their quarters lay vulnerable to an embarrassing defeat. Major General von Steuben respected the power of the British forces remaining in New York, and argued against a dispersal of Continental troops. He wrote that “to scatter our forces with a view of protecting all points, will put it out of our power to protect any--and we shall run the risk of being beat in detail.” Von Steuben also opposed shifting the main body to Connecticut or New

Jersey at the expense of uncovering the Hudson. He put forth the most concentrated arrangement of any of Washington's subordinates, with thirteen brigades remaining along the Hudson, three in Connecticut at Danbury, and only a small force of infantry under Lord Stirling to cover New Jersey, supported by the light cavalry and militia.¹⁷ Johann de Kalb echoed von Steuben's preference for a concentration of force along the Hudson. He proposed to send only a single brigade to Elizabethtown in New Jersey and no forces to Connecticut. Instead, de Kalb's plan called for an even divide between the eastern and western sides of the Hudson, believing the river's freezing would permit close coordination between the two wings during the winter.

Logistical and Political Considerations

Neither the foreign generals nor the majority of the brigadiers addressed the potential logistical problems the army might face in their proposals. These officers shared this oversight with most contemporary military experts. European treatises of the day largely ignored matters of supply, particularly the logistics involved in provisioning winter quarters. Enlightenment-era warfare increasingly featured plentiful forage, well-organized bureaucracies, and well integrated road and river networks that made for generally abundant provisions, reducing generals' need to trouble themselves with such matters. The Continental Army possessed none of these advantages. In North America, government, transportation, and agricultural surpluses all failed to meet the needs of a growing regular army.

In late 1778, several of Washington's subordinates recognized the logistical problems inherent in supplying a large, stationary army through the winter. Brigadier

General John Nixon criticized the logistical feasibility of a concentrated deployment on the Hudson. Instead, he suggested dividing the army into two “grand Divisions,” on either side of the Hudson, easing supply burdens and covering more ground.¹⁸ Alexander McDougall likewise envisioned a winter deployment split between New York and New Jersey. Reporting to Governor Clinton that Washington stood “at a loss how to dispose of the army,” McDougall related the belief prevalent at headquarters that New York lacked sufficient provisions to adequately feed the majority of the army should it quarter in the Hudson Highlands. McDougall therefore advised placing one-third of the Main Army in northern New Jersey, with an additional 20 percent to be sent there if the British continued to reduce their New York garrison.

Logistical and defensive concerns stood in opposition to one another. To ease supply burdens, the army needed to reduce its concentrations and move some brigades closer to their sources of provisions. To do so, however, would leave individual wings of the army more vulnerable to attack, particularly if they wintered in locales possessing less advantageous terrain. Essentially, the army could facilitate its supply only by sacrificing security. McDougall recognized this dilemma as he pondered potential winter dispositions. Despite his confidence that a diminished British presence in the region would permit a dispersal of the Main Army, McDougall nevertheless referred to the plan as “a dangerous experiment,” when he solicited the governor’s comment.¹⁹ In a letter to Nathanael Greene, McDougall cautioned against stripping New York of its defenders, arguing that Fishkill, Peekskill, Crompond, and Kings Ferry should contain as many men as could be accommodated in the local barracks and houses. Such a deployment would better protect supplies stored in the Hudson Highlands, ease the burden of the

Connecticut wing of the army in guarding the eastern shore of the Hudson, and suppress illicit trade and Loyalist activity along the river.²⁰ McDougall acknowledged some of the logistical difficulties a deployment in the Hudson Highlands might entail. Yet he remained concerned over guarding territory and parrying a British attack, however unlikely.

Three of Washington's most experienced commanders, Brigadier General Henry Knox, and Major Generals Lord Stirling and Nathanael Greene, provided even stronger arguments in favor of placing the army in logistically-sustainable winter quarters. Each shared similar justifications for their opposition to a concentration in the Hudson Highlands. First, the region's rough terrain made possible its defense by a small force. Second, the area lacked the forage needed to sustain Continental wagon trains. Knox preferred sending the bulk of the army to Connecticut to secure that state's defenses and facilitate the army's supply. While he acknowledged the logistical problems that a concentration entailed, he believed by taking "a proper position," these issues could be alleviated.

More clearly than most of his peers, Knox articulated the logistics of his proposed site, suggesting Danbury, Connecticut; Fishkill, New York; and "some place immediately in the rear of the army," as locales for the erection of magazines to succor the winter encampment. Knox recognized that many foodstuffs would arrive from the south and west, and highlighted "the goodness of the roads below the mountains through the Jerseys" as a crucial line of communications. Describing northern New Jersey as a "country abounding with forage," Knox felt supply trains routed through the state would have little difficulty sustaining an army concentrated in eastern Connecticut. In regards

to the supplies needed to erect a winter encampment, he expressed confidence that a location offering sufficient timber and suitable ground for a cantonment “might be found near Ridgefield,” in Connecticut.²¹ Subsequent events revealed, however, that Knox had overestimated New Jersey’s capacity to provide forage.

Logistics also featured prominently in Lord Stirling’s proposal. The Rebel earl argued that a concentrated encampment in the Hudson Highlands would be impossible to provision. Unlike Knox, Stirling suggested the army should winter west of the Hudson, as he believed that based on “the state of cartage & forage” that “it is absolutely impractical to maintain the army in flower & grain in any situation on the east side of Hudson’s River.” In an inversion of Knox’s arrangements, Stirling’s plan placed three or four brigades on the left wing in Connecticut, with only a single brigade to guard West Point and the Hudson Highlands. The remainder of the army would canton in New Jersey towns dispersed from Hackensack to Burlington to ease its subsistence. The units that the towns could not accommodate would encamp “at the foot of the (Watchung) mountain at Scotch Plains or Middlebrook.” Stores would be sent to a “very safe” position behind the Watchungs, either Morristown or Pluckemin.²² Stirling’s proposal thereby recognized the defensive potential of northern New Jersey’s terrain, albeit only for supply depots.

The clearest understanding of the Continental Army’s logistical problems emanated from Quartermaster General Nathanael Greene. Greene wrote to Washington in October 1778 to outline the army’s prospects for the winter, distinguishing between the options of a concentrated encampment, as at Valley Forge, or a dispersal of forces. The former promised stronger defensibility, improved discipline, and streamlined foraging,

echoing Knox's suggestions. Greene therefore favored, in theory, a "plan for holding the army in a collected state on (the east) side of the North (Hudson) River." He recognized, in contrast to Knox, that forces in Boston and Rhode Island would also draw upon supplies available in New England, while victuals from the Middle States would have to cross the Hudson. Consequently, an encampment in western Connecticut would likely endure inadequate provisioning. Furthermore, a winter post east of the Hudson invited a British attack up the river that could cut off the Continentals from their mid-Atlantic sources of supply. Therefore, Greene suggested leaving smaller garrisons near West Point and in Connecticut, while shifting the bulk of the army to northern New Jersey, closer to its breadbasket in Pennsylvania and Maryland.²³

Within New Jersey, Greene proffered two options for winter dispositions: one in Bergen County near New York City, and the other further removed in the vicinity of Middlebrook near where the army had concentrated in June 1777. Both sites presented attractive locales due the former's proximity to West Point and the latter's position closer to the terminus of waterborne supply up the Delaware at Trenton. Between these two choices, Greene favored a return to Middlebrook over erecting an encampment in Bergen County. While Bergen would allow closer coordination with the detachments at West Point and Danbury, it would also increase the strain on the army's logistical tail that stretched westward to Pennsylvania. These considerations led Greene to endorse Middlebrook rather than the more northerly site. Highlighting the importance of animals to the army's arrangement, Greene noted a Bergen County encampment would mean "all the forage upon the upper and lower communication will be wanted for the cattle employed in transporting stores eastward." Teams victualing a Bergen position, forty

miles further from Trenton than Middlebrook, would consume a substantially greater amount of forage.²⁴ New England's inability to sustain local forces and a recent crop failure in New Jersey necessitated food supplies be shipped to the region from further afield.

By late October, General Washington had received input on the form of potential winter quarters from a dozen subordinates. No clear consensus presented itself. In each of these formulations, the generals varied in their concerns for comfort of shelter and ease of supply, and defensibility. The Continental commanders remained divided, however, over how these objects could be attained. On October 29, Washington himself offered his views on winter arrangements. In a letter to Greene, the Virginian considered placing Continental brigades near Danbury, Connecticut, in the Hudson Highlands, and at Middlebrook in New Jersey. These proposed sites reflected a blending of the various suggestions Washington had received during October. Nevertheless, he did not endorse returning the army to huts. If the British diminished their New York garrison, he entertained the possibility of quartering the army deeper into the interior, at Albany, Trenton, and Burlington, where "very good barracks," already existed and there was "adjacent country abounding in wheat and mills to manufacture it." Washington thereby displayed a preference for orthodox European methods favored by many of his senior commanders. Such an arrangement would also greatly reduce the army's reliance on supply trains as the dispersed troops could subsist locally. Should the British stay in New York in strength, Washington indicated the Hudson Highlands would receive the bulk of his army. The commander-in-chief had not yet reached a formal decision regarding its form of housing or its winter dispositions by early November.²⁵

Ultimately, the quartermaster's department played the decisive role in determining where the army would quarter for the winter. In Greene's case for dispositions, logistics trumped all other concerns. Greene justified his views to McDougall by claiming "an active, vigilant general can guard against every kind of evil but that of want of provision and forage."²⁶ Greene's subordinates in the Quartermaster's Department reinforced their superior's emphasis on logistics. In early November 1778, Washington had ordered foragemaster Colonel Clement Biddle to study whether an offensive against New York was feasible given the availability of forage in the region. Biddle responded by presenting a grim picture of the state's forage stocks. He declared that the 12,000 men then under arms would need "to be fed with provisions transported at a great distance. The teams requisite for this purpose will consume a great quantity of forage." To maintain the army's supplies, he estimated "upwards of 5,000 horses to be fed that are necessary to move the army." Additional animal teams conducting routine camp activities would also draw forage. Biddle did not believe forage existed in great enough quantities to sustain such an operation, declaring "it may be attended with destructive consequences" to entertain an offensive against New York without proper forage supplies.²⁷

In Biddle's appraisal, New Jersey could barely sustain the Main Army in its current position on the Hudson, and the army's animal forage needs bore responsibility for this distress. Throughout the late summer and fall, teams had hauled supplies from the south and west through New Jersey to the Hudson Highlands. In their passing through the state, these teams consumed local forage stocks. By late 1778, they further tapped into army supplies by consuming stores drawn from nearby states. According to

Biddle, a “great part of the grain which was consumed by teams in that state (New Jersey) was brought from Pennsylvania and the southern states to Trenton.” Winter ice promised to suspend transport on the Delaware, meaning few provisions at Trenton would be restocked prior to the army’s entering into winter quarters. Concentrating the bulk of the army for an offensive against New York, or a winter encampment, would, in Biddle’s view, most likely exhaust forage supplies and render the army immobile and in danger of famine.²⁸

Other members of the quartermaster’s department expressed similar pessimism. Deputy Quartermaster Colonel James Burnside lamented that teams passing from Pennsylvania to the Main Army’s position on the Hudson could go no further than his post at Morristown for there was “no forage to carry them on,” to King’s Ferry and Fishkill.²⁹ Writing in early November, when a major Hudson Highlands encampment appeared likely, Burnside outlined a proposal for supplying a northern site. Teams would travel from New Brunswick to Springfield, Acquackanonck, and on to Kings Ferry, a route that would leave the army’s horses “better supplied with hay and pasture.”³⁰ Teams passing through the region along a more westerly, and secure route through Morristown, suffered from a lack of forage, forcing Burnside to halt several trains at Morristown as the scarcity and expense of forage in Morris County prohibited their movement further north.³¹ Burnside claimed that the shortages that immobilized teams transiting through Morristown did not arise from natural deficiencies, but an inability to purchase hay, flower, and Indian corn at the prices New Jersey farmers demanded. Describing the forage scarcity as “artificial,” he believed supplies could be “had all winter,” provided the quartermaster’s department could purchase the article in sufficient quantities. In early

November however, New Jersey farmers appeared to him “determined to keep ahead of us.”³²

Whether the army had actually depleted the available forage supply, as Biddle argued, or simply lacked the finances to purchase that article, as Burnside contended, forage promised to remain scarce through the upcoming winter. The Main Army’s situation in late 1778 resembled that of a modern army operating at a distance from its railhead. Late-industrial armies reliant upon automotive transportation at times found themselves operating so far from rail or water-borne supply hubs that additional trucks were needed to refuel those hauling gasoline, food, and ammunition to frontline forces. Similarly, the Continental Army operating in the context of water and animal transport of the agrarian age, relied upon the forage readily afforded by the surrounding environment. Placing substantial forces further from its supply hub at Trenton significantly increased the consumption of available forage. Under the constraints of the natural world, the Continental Army could only ensure consistent supplies by encamping as close as possible to the Delaware River, while also remaining within New York’s operational sphere. Middlebrook, in Greene’s view, provided just such a locale.³³

A month after first querying his officers, the commander-in-chief reached a decision on how the army should lodge. In mid-November, Washington settled upon log huts the army’s quartering methods for the coming winter. Despite the opposition of Gates’s clique, Greene’s suspicions, and his own misgivings, Washington decided hut encampments, rather than cantonments or barracks, made for the best winter shelter. In a letter to Israel Putnam, commanding the left wing of the Main Army to remain east of the Hudson, Washington articulated the benefits of huts. Compared to making quarters in

private homes, a log hut city promised “to be as little burdensome as possible to the inhabitants of the county,” while also offering a compact deployment that would improve security, discipline, and administration.³⁴ Reflecting a shift in Continental doctrine towards a wholesale acceptance of huts, Washington expressed his “desire that they should hut themselves as they did last winter at Valley Forge, wherever they can.”³⁵ In a letter to Congress shortly before retiring to winter quarters, Washington wrote “the troops must again have recourse to the expedient of hutting, as they did last year.” Better supplied and in a less dangerous strategic juncture, however, he hoped his men would “be in a more comfortable situation than they were in the preceding winter.”³⁶ The brigadiers’ advocacy of the log-hut city had brought about a significant shift in Washington’s thinking. Thus in late 1778, the Continental Army had taken its first steps towards institutionalizing a new doctrine of castrametation.

With huts decided upon, Connecticut, the Hudson Highlands, and Middlebrook appeared likely to receive Continental brigades. The question remained as to where the army should place its next log-hut cities. At Valley Forge, this issue had received little attention. The army settled onto defensible high ground west of the Schuylkill with little consideration of how the ground would affect the army’s ability to build, fuel, and maintain its camp. European castrametation texts highlighted the importance of access to fresh water, dry ground, and timber when placing temporary camps, and the Continentals extended these maxims to apply to winter quarters as well.

Wood, crucial for European camps as a fuel source, was to be doubly important to the Continental Army intent upon building timber shelters. In Anthony Wayne’s October proposal for winter quarters, he had recognized that environmental factors such as access

to fresh water and timber, would dictate where to camp. Advocating a position in the Hudson Highlands, he suggested that if such essentials could not be found at Kings Ferry, a post between there and Fishkill would suffice.³⁷ Beyond wood, if the army intended to remain stationary at camp for up to six months, it would also need well-drained ground upon which to build its huts. This ground also needed to be sufficiently unbroken to allow brigades to erect their shelters in a neat, orderly manner to facilitate assembly and discipline. During late October, the Quartermaster's Department sought out a site suitable to housing large portions of the Main Army. Availability of timber, dry ground, fresh water, and enough open space for hut sites and parade grounds guided this hunt for encampment locales. Searches in the Hudson Highlands revealed the difficulty of meeting these parameters while also remaining in defensible terrain and close to supplies. Greene and Putnam surveyed the ground in the vicinity of Kings Ferry, New York, during October and found "but one tract of woodland of sufficient extent to hut the army collectively."³⁸ The rough country around Fishkill offered only enough room to encamp single brigades, and the broken ground appeared to offer few prospects for exercise or maneuver.

Timber also presented a problem. Mostly divided into small farms, the Hudson Highlands lacked substantial woodlots beyond those small holdings of the individual farmers. According to Greene, if the soldiers encamped along the Hudson, "their situation in the Highlands will be little better than in a gaol."³⁹ The region's environmental unsuitability for an encampment fueled Greene's reservations towards provisioning the Main Army east of the Hudson. Given the logistical problem of supplying an army in the Hudson Highlands, as well as the difficulties in finding a

suitable camp site there, Middlebrook stood as the obvious choice for the largest encampment. This site not only lay close to sources of forage, but enjoyed favorable local environmental conditions. In mid-October, Greene described the region as “plentiful country, naturally strong and difficult to access and surrounded with a great plenty of wood.”⁴⁰ These environmental factors facilitated Washington’s decision to quarter the bulk of the Main Army along the Raritan in late 1778.

The commander-in-chief’s plan for the winter of 1778-1779 ultimately incorporated elements of Stirling’s, Knox’s, and Greene’s suggestions, though it bore the closest resemblance to the latter’s plan. To satisfy West Point’s defensive requirements, four Massachusetts brigades encamped in the New York Highlands under Alexander McDougal. Numbering 3,100 men, including militia detachments, the Massachusetts units did not pose the logistical problems Greene believed encamping the whole army at West Point would have entailed. McDougall’s limited contingent likewise did not need as much open ground upon which to situate a camp, though the New York general encountered problems in securing shelter for even this small force given the nature of the terrain. Nearby, the North Carolina Brigade cantoned at Smith’s Clove in support of West Point. Together these units secured the passes into the Hudson Highlands. Two Connecticut and one New Hampshire brigades under General Putnam quartered in a log-hut city near Redding, Connecticut, to solidify defenses in that state. Putnam’s wing thereby fulfilled the suggestions of several of Washington’s subordinates, most prominently Knox, to place substantial forces east of the Hudson. Reflecting a blend of Greene and Stirling’s proposals, seven brigades from Virginia, Maryland (including the Delaware regiment), and Pennsylvania occupied the main encampment at Middlebrook.

The artillery went to nearby Pluckemin. Concern for the army's lines of communications with West Point led to the North Carolina Brigade's redeployment to Paramus, New Jersey, while a mixed brigade under Edward Hand garrisoned Minisink near the New York-New Jersey border. The New Jersey Brigade provided forward outposts for the main camp at Middlebrook, with regiments cantoned in and around Elizabethtown. The limited availability of fodder for the army's vital supply trains necessitated the cavalry's dispersion, with regiments detached as far as Winchester Virginia, Lancaster Pennsylvania, and Derham Connecticut. Only Lieutenant Colonel Henry Lee's Legion stayed near the Main Army, wintering in southern New Jersey.⁴¹

Washington justified his reasoning for his dispositions as a balance of logistical and strategic concerns. His concentrations guarded the key routs into the Hudson Highlands and afforded the troops safety from British attack. The distribution of forces promised ease of supply and minimal burdens on local civilians. Explaining his arrangements to Congress, Washington claimed "to have kept the troops in a collected state would have increased infinitely the expense and difficulty of subsisting them." Conversely, "to have divided them into smaller cantonments, would have made it far less practicable to maintain order and discipline among them." Further dispersal would have also constrained his ability to contest a British advance, or to concentrate to launch his own attack should the opportunity arise.⁴² While, the route up the Hudson stood as the Continentals' defensive priority, the Hudson Valley lay at too great a distance from the army's primary supply sources to make for a viable winter position for the majority of the force.

In contrast to the Valley Forge winter, civilian leaders meddled little in the plans for the army's winter quarters around New York in late 1778. While congressional delegates voiced to Washington their concerns over the southern theater and expressed interest in an operation against Canada, they deferred to Washington's authority on the matter of quarters. Nevertheless, civilian leaders did make multiple requests to Washington for troops to guard Patriot communities. These requests from both national and state leaders forced Washington to contend with the complications brought on by the decision to winter the army along the Raritan. Although the selection of Middlebrook promised to ease army's logistical plight, the location invited strategic problems. Because the cantonment itself lay at the base of the Watchung Mountains on the outskirts of the New Jersey Highlands, it lacked the inherent defensibility of the Hudson Highlands to the north. To maintain a secure position, as well as to streamline training and discipline, the army could not send substantial detachments to non-critical locations. Washington therefore denied Congressional appeals for reinforcements. He claimed he could not spare more men, "without leaving this cantonment in so weak a state as to be liable to an insult during the winter."⁴³

New Jersey's citizens also felt the need for protection in the fall of 1778. On October 12, New Jersey Governor William Livingston wrote to Stirling requesting that detachments to be sent to New Brunswick, where "the inhabitants of this city are extremely anxious to have a guard placed here."⁴⁴ Livingston similarly pressed Washington on November 7 on behalf of Bergen County. Considering "that a part of the army is expected to winter in this state," Livingston and the New Jersey Executive Council felt confident Washington would honor their pleas to "station a significant

number” of Continentals in the threatened county. The governor deferred to the general’s authority, however, making clear that he preferred Patriot regulars winter in Bergen County only if this arrangement did “not interfere with the plan you may think necessary to adopt for posting your troops in this state.”⁴⁵ Washington wrote back on November 18 outlining his dispositions around New York. While the North Carolina Brigade would provide some security at Paramus, the commander-in-chief made clear that lower Bergen County “must from its situation remain exposed to the enemy.”⁴⁶ Already delicately balancing his army’s defensive and logistical needs, Washington refused to let civilian concerns weaken his arrangement of troops.

Undismayed, the New Jersey governor attempted to wrench Continentals from Washington once more the following month, this time for Monmouth County. Writing on December 14, Livingston proposed that “a few Continental troops might be posted in that county to great advantage.” Not only would a Continental detachment aid the “loyal citizens” in suppressing Monmouth’s active loyalist population, but also interrupt trade with New York and ease subsistence. Livingston felt that cavalry in particular would “be better accommodated in those parts than almost anywhere else.”⁴⁷ In a follow-up letter on December 15, the governor clarified his plan for Monmouth County and restated his entreaty, attaching a petition from the county’s Whig residents in support. With the local militia “worn out & dispirited,” Livingston wanted 400 Continentals detached to Middletown, Middletown Point, and Shrewsbury. He hoped these men would help to shore-up the local population and restrict illicit trade with New York.⁴⁸ As the governor had in his November letter regarding Bergen County, Livingston deferred to Washington.

He reiterated that a detachment should winter in Monmouth County only if this fit with the commander-in-chief's overall plan.

Washington, despite these repeated urgings, again rejected Livingston's requests for aid. While sympathizing with the governor's concerns for protecting Patriot communities and hindering illicit trade, the general found he could make no detachment to Monmouth under his plan of cantonment. Although Monmouth County possessed attractive pastures for the cavalry, the Continental dragoons had already gone into quarters elsewhere by mid-December. Washington also felt that the prospect of a winter of active partisan-fighting in coastal New Jersey promised to wear down the Patriot troopers whose "absolute rest from ordinary fatigue is indispensable," to the following campaign. As for the infantry, considering that the majority of the Main Army planned to winter in New Jersey, the commander-in-chief claimed "the safety of its inhabitants has been a particular consideration," in his distribution of forces. It was, however "impossible to include every place." Beyond the North Carolina Brigade at Paramus and Maxwell's New Jerseyans at Elizabethtown, Washington resisted any further move to break up his cantonments. "Should I venture on any further detachments from this part of the army," he argued, "it might very much endanger the whole." In addition to endangering the army's supply stores, small, isolated cantonments might find themselves vulnerable to sudden British attack. A reduced main body of Continentals would, the general explained, be powerless to "give any essential service to the state at large or a serious opposition to the enemy."⁴⁹ Livingston accepted Washington's judgment without protest.⁵⁰

European military maxims shaped Washington's reluctance to make detachments for political reasons. Writers such as Frederick the Great and Turpin de Crisse criticized commanders who allowed their winter quarters to suffer a surprise attack. For purposes of supply and security, Washington had already broken the Main Army into smaller components than he had in southeastern Pennsylvania. The forces posted to the Hudson Highlands, however, enjoyed the protection of the local rough terrain, while those in Connecticut stood at the furthest distance from New York. Both the North Carolina Brigade at Paramus and the New Jerseyans at Elizabethown could fall back to more defensible positions if threatened, or await reinforcements from Middlebrook. Troops sent to lower Bergen County, or dispersed amongst various Monmouth County towns, appeared too isolated and vulnerable in Washington's view at the outset of the winter. As the season progressed, however, and the New York garrison remained passive, he softened his stance and agreed to post a lone Pennsylvania regiment to Monmouth County to suppress trade with New York.⁵¹ This additional protection covered the New Jersey countryside until early May, when Washington withdrew both the Pennsylvania detachment from Monmouth and Maxwell's brigade from Elizabethtown in preparation for Sullivan's campaign against the Iroquois.⁵²

Overall, military considerations of rest, security, and ease of supply overwhelmingly guided the arrangement of Patriot forces for the winter. The majority of the army held positions well-removed from the enemy, thereby facilitating their ability to pass the winter unencumbered by the rigors of outpost duty. Washington clearly intended the 1778-1779 winter to provide quarters of refreshment on the European model. Beyond keeping most brigades out of contact with the enemy, success in the endeavor depended

on refining the army's approach to building and administering its camps. From December 1778 through June 1779, Continental generals and line officers worked to craft new innovations in castrametation.

Improvements to Camp Administration: 1778-1779

Washington's winter deployments saw the army arrayed outside of Britain's New York stronghold and pursuing a cautious strategy that emphasized maintaining the army's cohesion and readiness. Developments in castrametation thereby took on a new importance for the Continentals. The first improvement surfaced before the army began building their shelters. In late November, Washington dispatched Nathanael Greene to find specific locales near Middlebrook that possessed dry ground, access to fresh water, and ample timber.⁵³ As Greene had suggested Middlebrook due to the abundance of these resources in the region, finding suitable camp sites proved a straightforward endeavor. By early December, the quartermaster general nominated forward two prospective encampment sites that both lay in the vicinity of Middlebrook, which Washington then inspected himself on December 5.⁵⁴ Two days later, he reached his final determination.⁵⁵ Greene described the preferred site as "directly back of Bound Brook below the mountain."⁵⁶ Here on the slopes of First Watchung Mountain, the Virginia and Maryland Lines were to build their huts. The Pennsylvania Line, arriving in mid-December, camped across the Raritan at that river's confluence with the Millstone. A profusion of timber, the most important article for building a log-hut city, stood nearby. A contemporary newspaper advertisement described the countryside near the Virginians' encampment as "most-excellent timberland," while the vicinity of the

artillery park at nearby Pluckemin featured 8,000 acres of timberland.⁵⁷ Given this plentiful timber supply, the defensive potential of the local hills, and proximity to supply lines, Middlebrook made for an ideal site for a prolonged encampment adhering the army's new castrametation standards.

If the Patriots' winter quarters were to provide a recuperative environment, officers and men needed to improve upon the quality of their shelters. As no other army had built a log-hut city, contemporary treatises had nothing to offer regarding proper designs or construction methods. Shanties like the ones described in Bennett Cuthbertson's treatise had failed to adequately shelter Rebel troops earlier in the war. Instead, Washington turned to the standardized model he had prescribed at Valley Forge. Despite the haphazard arrangement those huts had taken, Washington had observed sufficient examples of successful shelters during that winter to convince him of log huts' overall viability. At the outset of the Middlebrook encampment, the commander-in-chief observed, "There were several (huts) last winter at Valley Forge, which by the care of the officers were not only comfortable but commodious, and in which the men lived exceedingly well and preserved their health."⁵⁸ Producing successful encampments at Middlebrook depended on synthesizing and disseminating sound hut-building practices.

Washington's first step to improve conditions in the army's winter camps came in the form of new guidelines for hut design and placement. Without a published text to serve as a guide, he implemented new construction regulations directly from headquarters. Through General Orders, each regiment received instructions, developed by Greene, on how to build their huts in a manner that would minimize the worst failings of the Valley Forge shelters. These problems included leaky roofs and dirty interiors.

General Orders released on December 14 pointed out that “much of the sickness among the troops seems to have been occasioned by the improper method adopted in forming many of the huts last winter; some being sunk in the ground and others covered with earth.” New protocols recognized the best practices among troops quartered at Valley Forge, namely the Pennsylvania and New Jersey lines, and imparted them to the army at large. Washington’s new orders prohibited earthen roofs and permitted only boards, slabs or shingles for overhead coverings. They also banned the practice of sinking huts into the earth. The huts at Middlebrook and afterwards were to be sunk only deep enough to ensure a level floor. Plans for hut interiors also received an upgrade, with soldiers’ bunks and storage raised off the ground to preserve arms and equipment from damage.⁵⁹

Beyond improvements to hut design, soldiers’ health and comfort also relied on the army’s ability to build its huts quickly. At Valley Forge, the Continentals had only begun erecting their camp in late December, with snow already on the ground and weather turning cold. A lack of tools had further retarded hut construction, forcing most soldiers to remain in their tents into January. Doing so both harmed men’s health and wore out the Patriots’ tentage. In late 1778, officers frequently emphasized the need to get the army under cover quickly in their writings. As Captain Samuel Shaw of the 3rd Continental Artillery remembered of Valley Forge, “it was a considerable exertion for the remnant of an army, exhausted and worn down by the severity of a long and unsuccessful campaign, to sit down in a wood, and in the latter end of December, to build themselves houses.”⁶⁰ For 1778-1779, Shaw declared “we shall all hands have to go to work, as the whole are to be hutted in the same manner as last year; and I hope we shall make quick

way in the business, as Jack Frost is a very powerful stimulus to people in such a case.”⁶¹ Similarly, Washington’s aide-de-camp, Colonel John Laurens, recalling Valley Forge, informed his father “All that I dread is the disadvantage of getting our troops late into winter quarters.”⁶² Writing in early December, Nathanael Greene hoped “the business of hutting will be over in the course of eight or ten days, providing the officers exert themselves.” Nevertheless, the general worried that poor leadership on the officers’ part might delay the huts’ completion.⁶³ Lower down the chain of command, some men continued to harbor negative opinions of huts based on the experience of the previous winter. In late November, Lieutenant Colonel Henry Dearborn of the 1st New Hampshire Regiment noted that to his “great mortification found we were ordered to hut once more.”⁶⁴

To ensure both rapid and solid construction, the Continentals required access to large numbers of timber-working tools. At Valley Forge, the army had lacked the axes and handsaws needed to build huts. In late 1778, circumstances improved as the Main Army now operated amid a chain of magazines stretching from Trenton northwards to the Hudson Highlands and on into Connecticut, from which the men could draw tools. The weeks leading up to the start of camp witnessed a flurry of orders to local deputy quartermasters in search of tools. At the end of November, Colonel Jacob Weiss, deputy quartermaster at Morristown, advised his counterpart in New York, Colonel Udnay Hay, to forward entrenchment tools for 3,000 men to Danbury to expedite camp construction for Israel Putnam’s command.⁶⁵ Upon Greene’s arrival at Middlebrook prior to the commencement of camp construction, Weiss demanded the delivery of up to twenty-five “cross cut saws” from Colonel James Abeel, the commissary for camp equipage at

Morristown.⁶⁶ On December 16, the camp still required broad axes, adzes, carpenters' hammers, and up to fifteen saws.⁶⁷ Soldiers apparently damaged or dulled their axes quickly in the process of building huts. Weiss declared on December 23 that "mine go fast," and he had "not above three or four hundred on hand."⁶⁸ Six days later, the army "had not one left."⁶⁹

Despite better access to tools, the speed of hut construction remained uneven throughout the army. The protracted debate over where and how to quarter delayed the beginning of camp construction until early December. This was only a few weeks earlier in the season than the previous year's last-minute decision to winter at Valley Forge. Early-arriving units, such as Washington's guard, reported that they had left their tents for huts as early as December 16. The Pennsylvanians, who only reached Middlebrook in mid-December, remained, according to their commander Anthony Wayne, "exposed to wind and weather in their old tents" as late as December 28.⁷⁰ Lieutenant Colonel Josiah Harmar of the 3rd Pennsylvania Regiment recorded that his unit began building their huts on December 19. Despite the delays imposed by snowy weather, the 3rd Pennsylvania finished its enlisted men's huts by January 1.⁷¹ Captain Walter Finney of the 6th Pennsylvania testified to similar progress, with the rank-and-file as well as most officers in their huts by January 6.⁷² The Maryland brigades, which had spent the winter of 1777-1778 at Wilmington rather than the main hut complex at Valley Forge, lagged behind their more experienced comrades.⁷³ Officers' huts took longer to complete than the rank-and-file's. Army doctor James Thacher did not occupy his hut until early February.⁷⁴ When huts remained incomplete, Washington's men resorted to finding quarters in civilian communities, as indicated in a February 1779 General Order announcing that

non-commissioned officers and soldiers “quartered upon the inhabitants are immediately to join their respective regiments in camp and none in future to lodge out of it.”⁷⁵

All along the Main Army’s positions around New York, men experienced uneven progress in their hut construction through December and January. Speed depended on how early a unit arrived in camp, the suitability of the ground to which it was assigned, access to tools, and experience. Despite the fact that Alexander McDougall’s command in the Hudson Highlands reaching its camp sites earlier than the brigades sent to Middlebrook, they encountered the greatest delays in hut-building. John Nixon’s brigade, which had arrived and started erecting its shelters at the beginning of December, made slow progress due to tool shortages. Two regiments in Ebenezer Learned’s brigade at Fishkill found themselves shivering in their tents in mid-December.⁷⁶ Even at the end of December, McDougall expected his men remained several days away from completing their huts.⁷⁷ Whereas the Continentals at Middlebrook averaged two weeks to complete enlisted men’s huts, McDougall’s soldiers took the entirety of December to finish their lodging. Unsuitable terrain, deficient timber supplies, and inadequate stocks of tools bore responsibilities for these difficulties. These holdups validated Greene’s belief that it would have been problematic to hut the whole army in that region given its rough terrain.

In contrast to the New York Highlands, Henry Dearborn recorded rapid progress in Connecticut. There, the New Hampshire Brigade lodged in tents in early December while the search ensued for suitable ground on which to hut. Dearborn’s comrades began to lay out their camp grounds on December 3 and hut construction began the following day. While Dearborn’s regiment had to weather a storm in tents on December 10, he reported that hut construction continued “very busy,” on December 12. The final

construction phase, completion of roofs, took place on December 15, with men actually entering their shelters between December 16 and 19. On December 24, Dearborn reported, "Our men are well clothed & well huted."⁷⁸ Unlike the installations on the Hudson, the Connecticut log-hut city at Redding benefitted from better terrain and more abundant timber.⁷⁹

While some units may have remained slow in building their shelters, throughout the Main Army the quality of these structures improved from the previous year. Continental officers proved rigorous in keeping their men disciplined during the crucial building phase of December 1778 and January 1779. The task of ensuring sound camp construction fell to an increasingly experienced corps of line officers. The 1st Pennsylvania Regiment, for example, appointed a captain to have "direction of the huts," charging him to be "careful to see them built of the same size and as nearly alike as possible."⁸⁰ The 6th Pennsylvania's commander ordered officers to make daily reports of their men's progress.⁸¹ A similar process unfolded at the Connecticut camp, where regimental quartermasters marked out the ground intended for huts, while each regiment appointed an officer to superintend hut-building.⁸²

Under their officers' guidance, soldiers succeeded in realizing the recently mandated hut designs. Soldiers at Middlebrook remarked on huts' quality and uniformity. James Thacher described the construction of his hut at Middlebrook. It was built of logs notched together and it had mud and clay plastering filling in the gaps between logs. These structures departed from the Valley Forge designs, and adhered to Washington's newly implemented guidelines. Thacher's hut possessed a roof "formed of similar pieces of timber, and covered with hewn slabs," rather than the sod coverings of

the previous year. A stone hearth topped by a log chimney covered in clay plaster now provided warmth. Thacher and his men also cut into the hut windows and doors attached to wooden hinges, another improvement over Valley Forge.⁸³ While the huts may not have gone up as fast as Continental commanders desired, their solid roofs and improved foundations ensured that they would provide adequate protection from the elements. Stirling reported to Washington in late December that “although it has been cold in extreme the army is in great health and good spirits.” Hutting proceeded as well as could be expected given the weather.⁸⁴

Reflecting the importance of huts as the Continentals’ main form of shelter, the standardized dimensions for the structures disseminated throughout the army during the winter of 1778-1779. Washington’s subordinates in both the Hudson Highlands and Connecticut implemented his new regulations for building camps. In New York, McDougall outlined plans for huts to sit uniformly in line along hillsides, facing southwest to benefit from maximum exposure to the sun.⁸⁵ On the army’s left wing in Connecticut, Brigadier General Samuel Holden Parsons described dimensions and construction methods for the huts going up at Redding that were similar to those at Middlebrook. Like Thacher, Parsons highlighted the additions of “proper roofs” made of wooden shingles. At a more intimate level, Sergeant John Hawkins of the 2nd Canadian Regiment, also encamped in Connecticut, observed huts with uniformly arranged doors, chimneys, and windows.⁸⁶ Archeological studies indicate the Connecticut encampments, in accordance with Washington’s orders, ended the practice of sinking huts below the frost line.⁸⁷

In addition to improving the huts' designs, the Continentals also arranged them more effectively within camp. The army adapted contemporary practices for tent camps, with two parallel lines of shelters for enlisted men and separate rows for officers. The well-ordered hut rows in Connecticut reminded Brigadier General Parsons of the army's "present mode of camping." Sergeant Hawkins related that comrades erected their huts in orderly rows, with a "regular lane or alley," between each hut.⁸⁸ At Middlebrook, the 6th Pennsylvania Regiment had turned its attention by January 10 other aspects of camp construction. The Pennsylvanians cleaned streets between huts and rendered the "ends of houses" were "trimmed in a neat manner." Lieutenant Colonel Josiah Harmar of the 6th Pennsylvania Regiment described an orderly plan of encampment with enlisted men's huts placed at regular four-yard intervals. A street eight-yards wide separated the hut lines, with officers quartered separately 127 feet in the rear of the privates.⁸⁹

The Continentals in New Jersey constructed more than their own huts. At Pluckemin, five miles north of the main Middlebrook encampment, soldiers of Knox's Continental artillery worked to complete an assemblage of buildings intended to house the army's cannons, artillery staff, and the military stores department. Ultimately, this site provided quarters for twenty-two artillery companies, two artificers' companies, and a company of armorers, an estimated 1,000 men. Soldiers labored from December through February to build the Pluckemin site. The artillery complex included enlisted men's barracks, separate officers' quarters, a guard house, powder laboratory, armorer's shop, storage facility, and an "academy building" intended for instructing officers. Unlike the Continental Army's earlier attempts at barracks building, the Pluckemin structures went up with no interruptions and proved to be sturdy. The artillerists finished the

academy by February 18, when the building hosted a large social gathering to celebrate the anniversary of the French alliance. The existence of such an imposing structure demonstrated a marked growth in organization and building skill compared to the assemblage of leaky huts that had quartered most of the army at Valley Forge.⁹⁰

Notwithstanding the consideration Continental generals had devoted to selecting sites where their men could quarter comfortably, the portion of Washington's army stationed in the rougher terrain of the Hudson Highlands encountered several problems in arranging its shelter during the 1778-1779 winter. Major General Alexander McDougall, the detachment's commander, found that the broken terrain along the Hudson lacked suitable hut sites for his four brigades. He therefore planned to send Colonel Henry Jackson's Additional Continental Regiment twelve miles northward to billet in Poughkeepsie. McDougall expected that public buildings at this new location would suffice to cover most of the regiment, with the rest put up in civilian homes until huts could be completed accommodate them. McDougall's proposal to shift this regiment encountered political opposition from New York Governor George Clinton. Clinton took a direct interest in the matter because Poughkeepsie currently served as the seat for the state's legislature. In Clinton's view, the "little town" was so full of refugees that there scarcely remained sufficient housing for the lawmakers. The presence of even the officers of one regiment would displace the legislature and state employees. Furthermore, the governor feared that the presence of a Continental regiment "in the center of the state" would depress the morale of refugees displaced by fighting along New York's lightly defended frontier. He therefore refused to support McDougall's proposal unless "furnished with better reasons for it than I have yet heard."⁹¹

McDougall responded by revealing that he had been informed that Poughkeepsie contained enough public buildings, boards, and timber to shelter two hundred men. The general emphasized that billeting in public buildings and building huts would abrogate any need to quarter soldiers in private homes. McDougall's officers stood "willing to make the utmost exertions to prevent giving the least public trouble to the town." He hoped that at the beginning of February the regiment could return to the Highlands and occupy a cantonment currently used by a Massachusetts militia regiment due to return home at that date. Given the housing difficulties the men remaining in the Hudson Highlands faced, Poughkeepsie still struck McDougall as the best option. To further his case, he added a fiery diatribe venting against the army's inability to find support from its civilian hosts. He claimed that he sought only to billet his men using no more than a "bare house room for them for a few days." If the inhabitants would not give what they could spare, however, while officers and soldiers remained exposed to the season's inclement weather, then "they do not deserve to be free." He also aired his frustration with the three states the Continental Army called home that winter, complaining "Connecticut won't have us but in the hour of danger. New York is reluctant we should have any repose. New Jersey complain they have had too much of us. Where, my dear sir, are we to go?"

As for Clinton's concerns regarding the frontiers, McDougall expressed his sympathy for his displaced countrymen but pointed out that he did not have the authority to detach men from his command. Furthermore, he lacked the manpower to adequately secure his own department and reinforce other areas, asking sarcastically "can I defend the Highlands and the rear frontiers at the same time?" Finally, with the memory of the

previous winter entrenched in the army's institutional memory, McDougall resisted any act that would consign his men to "the most dreary valley in the Highlands." He feared they would "share the fate of their unfortunate brethren last winter at Valley Forge." Likening his condition to that of the Israelites in Egypt, ordered to make brick without straw, McDougall concluded by declaring "it's the last winter I shall be imprisoned in the Highlands to be a drudge for others."⁹²

Governor Clinton, perhaps moved by McDougall's indignant tone, responded by offering a compromise. He agreed that part of Jackson's regiment might be able to quarter at the Poughkeepsie barracks if the soldiers already present there moved to a gaol in nearby Amenia. They could also guard the prisoners confined there. Jackson's officers could, Clinton believed, billet in homes to the south of Poughkeepsie. This would remove the need to place them in huts, which he believed would be difficult to build.⁹³ McDougall's response on December 28 indicated he would be amenable to housing his men in homes south of Poughkeepsie, but believed it would be too difficult to send a detachment to Amenia. In contrast, reports indicated that sufficient provisions existed in and around Poughkeepsie to supply a small regiment through the winter.⁹⁴ Ultimately, Jackson's Regiment moved to Poughkeepsie for winter quarters in early January and caused few problems. Clinton reported to McDougall in early February that "the troops stationed at this place have behaved in the most orderly manner," having repaired the barracks and assembled a sufficient quantity of firewood to make their quarters "very comfortable." The well-covered men appeared "extremely loath to leave" their winter quarters.⁹⁵

McDougall's spat with Clinton highlighted the civil-military tensions that manifested whenever the army quartered near civilian populations. Furthermore, the general's inability to find sufficient ground on which to quarter a single regiment in a region that contained only four brigades further confirmed Greene's suspicion that the rough terrain of the Hudson Highlands would not afford adequate shelter for the whole army. A sizable, well-placed log-hut city abrogated many of these concerns. In contrast to the army in the Hudson Highlands, the main body at Middlebrook encountered only minor setbacks in providing quarters for a much larger force, none of which arose from political frictions. The encampment in New Jersey remained remote from civilian population centers or the state government's seat. Washington maintained a mostly cordial relationship with Governor Livingston. Furthermore, the rolling terrain of northern Somerset County proved less restrictive to shelter building than the narrow valleys along the Hudson. Only when spring recruitment swelled the Continentals' ranks at Middlebrook did Patriot officers encounter complications in their housing arrangements. In the Maryland brigades, new arrivals built huts in front of and beside the existing encampment with little regard for maintaining uniformity. Doing so upset the order and cohesion of camp. Brigadier General William Smallwood, commanding the Maryland Line, condemned the "disorder those huts generally produce." He recognized that the indiscipline and inexperience of the recruits showed in the disordered built environment they erected. Continental commanders viewed such disorder as a threat to the overall discipline of the camp and enacted preventative measures. In what would become a standard disciplinary measure within the Main Army, Smallwood ordered any new hut that did not conform to the camp's plan to be pulled down and rebuilt.⁹⁶

The improved quality of huts facilitated healthier and more comfortable conditions within camp during the depths of the winter. To ensure soldiers' remained well, officers also had to maintain good sanitation within camp. Enhancements to hygiene at Middlebrook derived from both better camp designs as well as improved administration by Continental officers. Shortly after construction began on the Middlebrook huts, Washington ordered further refinements to the camp's layout. The commander-in-chief borrowed from techniques of European castrametation outlined by Bland and Cuthbertson for tent camps or barracks and applied them to the log-hut city. General Orders directed soldiers to dig drainage ditches in front of every hut, to "secure troops from any inundation of water and much contribute to the health and convenience of the whole camp."⁹⁷ As soldiers finished their huts, officers commanded their men to dig their vaults and necessaries a minimum of 120 yards downhill from their living quarters. This measure ensured melting snow or heavy rains would not spread human waste into living quarters.⁹⁸ In New York, McDougall pointed out to his officers that maintaining a clean camp was "absolutely necessary for their [soldiers'] health, and your honor." To provide for a sanitary camp, he issued orders to "dig deep necessary vaults," as soon as troops began to build their camps and before the ground froze further, making it impossible to dig these vital tools of camp hygiene.⁹⁹

The arrival of warm weather in April 1779 led to further invectives against uncleanliness. With the "hot season," approaching, Washington sought to prevent the putrid conditions of the Valley Forge camp. He admonished soldiers for "the smell in front of the parade ground," which was "so very offensive, and if not soon prevented, must be attended with very bad consequences." Soldiers were to clear animal bones from

the ground around their huts and bury them in vaults “sunk at a proper distance” from camp. Soldiers’ new duties also included covering vaults at least three times each week.¹⁰⁰ Other routine activities found men sweeping clean the streets between their huts to “leave no part of the brigade neglected.”¹⁰¹ This springtime emphasis on cleanliness reflected contemporary beliefs that soldiers suffered greater health problems during transitional climate periods. Doctor Benjamin Rush had assured Washington in May 1777 that illness spread through the ranks most commonly in the spring and fall, rather than the “uniform heats of summer or colds of winter.”¹⁰² Washington also reminded his men to properly cook their food. Indicative of the growing expectations the commander-in-chief had for his officer corps, he emphasized that brigade commanders bore ultimate responsibility for the health and cleanliness of their men.¹⁰³

The soldiers at Middlebrook spent the 1778-1779 winter well rested, in addition to healthy and comfortable. The bulk of the Main Army conserved its strength while removed from contact with the enemy. The seven brigades stationed in the Raritan Valley maintained upon only local patrols throughout the winter, engaging in no combat with the British. In his memoirs, General Sir Henry Clinton, the British commander-in-chief in North America, judged Washington’s camp at Middlebrook “too strong” to contemplate attacking.¹⁰⁴ Crown forces consequently spent the winter ensconced in and around the city of New York. The dense settlement of the area under British control meant numerous houses and public buildings stood available to shelter much of Clinton’s army in the typical European fashion for winter quarters. The prolonged occupation of the region also gave the redcoats and Hessians ample time to construct sturdy barracks to

supplement their billets. Outlying detachments relied on rustic huts, but nothing resembling the log-hut city took shape within British lines.¹⁰⁵

Given the sedentary dispositions of both armies, only the forward-deployed North Carolina and New Jersey brigades experienced any fighting in early 1779. In particular, Maxwell's New Jerseyans in Essex County bore responsibility for outpost duty throughout the winter. Even here, a British raid on Elizabethtown on February 25 stood as the only significant skirmish to occur during the winter. Nevertheless, the New Jersey regiments suffered from exhaustion and interruptions to training due to the rigors of outpost duty. In March, Colonel Israel Shreeve, commanding the 2nd New Jersey Regiment billeting in Newark, complained that his goal to emerge from the winter with his men well organized and better disciplined was "now destroyed," because he had been ordered to detach several companies to cover outlying villages.¹⁰⁶ Maxwell, Shreeve's superior, likewise felt that keeping the brigade on forward deployment deprived it of the opportunities for discipline and refreshment that winter should have afforded, complaining "duty has really been hard here."¹⁰⁷ The sufferings of the New Jersey Brigade indicate how the rest of the army may have been negatively affected had it been broken up into smaller cantonments in New Jersey's towns and villages. Instead, the regiments concentrated at Middlebrook avoided any such hardships.

Compared to Valley Forge, the Main Army at Middlebrook also passed the winter with fewer supply shortages. The improved food supply did not result from any positive change in the nation's overall fiscal circumstances. Currency depreciation accelerated in late 1778, reducing the army's ability to purchase supplies for cash and eroding confidence in the government's ability to pay back its creditors. Periodically, the camp

at Middlebrook did encounter logistical disruptions. In January 1779, General Smallwood complained of the shortages of provisions, liquor, and particularly forage.¹⁰⁸ In early February, these shortages reached a critical point, as stocks of flour in camp dwindled to a four day's supply. Within a week, however, both flour and beef arrived at Middlebrook in abundance.¹⁰⁹ Blame for these interruptions lay with the poor state of the nation's roads that were easily blocked by rapid changes in weather conditions. When frost hardened road surfaces, wagons made it to camp unimpeded, but when sudden thaws turned roads to mud, soldiers could expect delays to supply trains.¹¹⁰ Mostly mild weather through much of early 1778 ensured that road conditions rarely reached the point of impassibility. Aside from the brief flour scarcity in February, Washington's winter quarters never suffered from significant scarcities.

Beyond the weather, credit for the relative bounty Continentals enjoyed lay with the careful thought Greene and his department had given to the selection of winter camp sites that could be adequately provisioned. The course of the winter vindicated Greene's arguments for the benefits of posting the army closer to its supply hub at Trenton. In a country possessing deficient internal transportation networks, the Fighting Quaker realized that a shift of even a few dozen miles closer to sources of food had a sizable impact. Fewer miles traveled meant less grain and grass consumed by supply teams, thereby conserving an article that remained scarce well into 1779. Throughout the Middlebrook winter, forage continued to preoccupy the army's senior commanders. To further reduce consumption, Washington ordered all nonessential horses from camp and directed his officers to make special requests to Greene for permission to keep personal horses.¹¹¹ With the cavalry also sent away, this kept to a minimum the number of horses

that needed feeding in New Jersey. Nevertheless, the prospect of forage shortages lingered throughout the spring.¹¹² With New Jersey's fields exhausted by the previous year's campaign, the Continentals relied instead upon grain transported from Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware to feed teams through the winter. By late spring, New Jersey's pastures had recovered slightly, though there remained barely enough grain and hay in the state to subsist the horses with the army. In June, foragemaster Colonel Clement Biddle resorted to scouring the state's last known reserves of hay in Essex and Middlesex counties to provide teams with food for the start of the coming campaign. Once these stocks gave out, Biddle feared he would have to allow horses to subsist in civilians' pastures, with or without their permission. Washington gave his tacit assent to the latter measure.¹¹³

Ultimately, Biddle managed to keep the animal teams fed, thereby preserving the mobility of the army's supply trains. Conserving forage consumption during the winter had ensured that sufficient stocks remained in late spring when the army transitioned to active operations. Biddle's emergency procurements in May and June subsequently kept wagons in motion when the army marched northwards to West Point, where it remained for most of the summer. Not until grass grew and grain ripened in the late July did forage return in relative abundance.¹¹⁴ The anxiety that Patriot officers expressed over forage deficiencies throughout 1778 and 1779 highlighted the indispensability of that article to maintaining supply trains. Given the difficulties the army encountered even in the summer of 1779, it is likely that concentrating a larger portion of the Main Army in the Hudson Highlands for winter quarters would have produced a logistical calamity similar to the 1777-1778 winter. At Valley Forge, the army had, to its detriment, largely ignored

logistics in locating its quarters. At Middlebrook, the Rebels reaped the benefits of a well-fed camp thanks to Greene's careful assessments of the country's ability to supply the soldiers. Greene had effectively pioneered a new understanding of the logistics of supplying winter encampments that no European writers had discovered in their works.

Overall, the Continentals emerged from winter quarters in better condition than the previous year. As a result of soldiers' and officers' efforts, the army exhibited better health than at the end of the Valley Forge encampment, abrogating any need to abandon Middlebrook for a more sanitary environment. Officers who had resided at both winter camps remarked on the improved quality of their quarters and the sound health of their soldiers. In a March letter to Lafayette, Washington claimed his men were "better clad and more healthy than they have ever been since the formation of the army."¹¹⁵ These were not simply the self-congratulatory observations of the commander-in-chief. Doctor Samuel Adams, stationed with the artillery at Pluckemin, declared "our army is remarkably healthy" in May 1779.¹¹⁶

Elsewhere in the army's arc of camps around New York, similar conditions prevailed. At Redding, Brigadier General Jedediah Huntington happily reported to his father in mid-March that "a remarkable degree of health prevails in this division," which had not lost a man in the four months since entering winter quarters.¹¹⁷ Chaplain David Avery, stationed with Colonel Henry Sherburne's Additional Regiment in the Hudson Highlands, recorded the soldiers wintering at Peekskill to be "in good health."¹¹⁸ Compared to the previous year at Valley Forge, when one in three Patriot soldiers came down with illness, the Continental Army emerged from winter quarters in the spring of 1779 with only 9.4 percent of its manpower on the sick lists.¹¹⁹

Observers took note of the encampments themselves, which exuded a new orderliness. James Thacher wrote of Middlebrook: “The huts are arranged in straight lines forming a regular uniform compact village.”¹²⁰ Anthony Wayne commented that among his Pennsylvanians’ “regularity is equal to any on the continent. Its internal police is at least as regular as that of Philadelphia.” Contrasting Middlebrook with Valley Forge, Wayne assured Washington, “We are much improved in city building.”¹²¹ The Virginian responded to Wayne positively, remarking the Pennsylvanians’ “barracks appear to be well constructed for the accommodation of the troops, and judiciously disposed.”¹²² The healthy and neat appearance Washington extolled manifested in the uniformity of the divisional camps. Given the army’s success at constructing and maintaining its winter quarters, Wayne expected the Continentals to pass the cold months “as healthy and as regular an army as ever made a winter’s campaign.”¹²³ Overall, the huts erected in New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut, improved greatly upon the tribulations the army had experienced a year earlier. Officers emerged from the encampment more confident in the army’s ability to build and maintain winter shelter effectively.

The Continentals’ success in surviving the winter of 1778-1779 paid dividends in late spring. Sir Henry Clinton launched a thrust up the Hudson in early June that spurred Washington’s army to life. Uninhibited by the disease and squalor experienced a year prior, the Continentals swiftly responded to the British offensive. Orders to Lord Stirling initiated preparations to break camp on June 1. By the evening of the third, the Main Army’s brigades rested north of Morristown.¹²⁴ Leaving winter quarters served as a symbolic marker for the commencement of the active campaign season, indicating to

officers and men the end of the stationary routine of camp life and the start to rigorous operations. On June 3, 1779, as the Main Army departed Middlebrook and marched towards West Point, Washington signified this transition with his General Orders. The grandiose paroles “American” and “Arms,” appealed to the Continentals’ pride, while the countersign “Successful Campaign,” made clear the commander-in-chief’s expectations for the coming season and offered the men encouragement.¹²⁵ Similarly at Redding, General Putnam took the occasion of the end of winter quarters to inform his soldiers of “his entire approbation of their regular and soldier like conduct, and wishes them (wherever they happen to be out) a successful and glorious campaign.”¹²⁶

Indicating the importance of log-hut cities to the army’s positional strategy around New York, the 1778-1779 infrastructure stayed in use through the summer and fall. After the Main Army vacated Middlebrook in June 1779, Washington ordered the sick left behind to be tended in the huts, or removed to the now empty artillery compound at Pluckemin.¹²⁷ Using these military structures alleviated civilian agitation. Earlier use of inhabitants’ barns and outbuildings as hospitals had caused, according to Governor Livingston, “great damage & inconvenience.” Somerset County residents petitioned Livingston to appeal to Washington to have sick troops moved to nearby “empty public buildings,” including the Pluckemin site.¹²⁸ Huts constructed that winter survived months of occupation, and Continental commanders sought to reuse the structures the following winter. Major General Alexander McDougall, planning the 1779-1780 winter quarters for the Main Army’s detachments in New York and Connecticut, remarked the huts used by John Nixon’s brigade the previous winter in the Hudson Highlands “may be easily repaired,” and employed for shelter once more.¹²⁹

The ongoing use of these structures after the bulk of the army departed revealed the most important result of the adoption of the log-hut city, permanence. The buildings the Continental Army erected during the 1778-1779 winter would continue to find employment as winter shelter, hospitals, and storehouses throughout the remainder of the war. Changes in Continental strategy made the presence of such installations imperative. In January 1779, Nathanael Greene explained to Washington what he viewed to be the “principle objects” of the next campaign. He stressed the importance of taking “a position favorable for subsisting the army with ease and at the least expense,” along with an offensive against the Iroquois and an attack on New York.” In his view, maintaining the army in New Jersey best satisfied the first criterion.¹³⁰ Due to the army’s discerning selection of sites upon which to build its quarters, the Continentals now had military infrastructure standing in areas that events had proven could be easily supplied and secured. Faced with declining operational mobility in the New York region, keeping the army at cantonments for half the year presented an increasingly attractive option.

Conclusion

Over the course of the 1778-1779 winter, the Continental Army developed a new doctrine of castrametation. The clearest manifestation of this doctrine came in the built form of the log-hut city, which departed so drastically from contemporary methods of winter quarters. By implementing new standards of construction and gleaning European maxims for camp sanitation and applying them to winter quarters, the army overcame the worst failings of the Valley Forge hut city. The Continental Army also developed a

clearer understanding of the logistics of supplying winter quarters, particularly in its attention to how roads, proximity to supply hubs, and availability of forage limited where the army could and could not easily quarter. The Patriots had also honed a better appreciation for what landscapes could best support a prolonged, stationary camp. Officers with more experience, better-disciplined enlisted men, and the attentiveness of senior commanders ensured that the army put into practice the combination of old maxims and new ideas that comprised Continental thinking on castrametation. In the late spring of 1779, the Patriot cause reaped the rewards of these efforts, as the Continentals entered the new campaign healthy, confident, and mobile.

Continental castrametation differed from European methods of making winter quarters in one key respect: European armies retired to barracks, fortresses, and towns that had been built-up over the course of preceding decades and centuries. In contrast, Patriot troops in 1778 built the “cities” to which they took refuge from the ground up at the winter’s outset. At Valley Forge, Continental officers had viewed the log-hut city as a temporary expedient, better understood as a late-season fortified camp in the field rather than a proper winter quarters. During the 1778-1779 winter, Washington’s officers and men at Middlebrook, the Hudson Highlands, and Redding refined the log-hut city into a fully workable method of quartering soldiers between campaigns. From 1779 onwards, the Continental Army could retire to a substantial infrastructure in the interior around New York. In this manner, log-hut cities functioned like towns and fortresses did in European quartering schemes. Lacking large towns removed from the enemy in which they could quarter their men, the Continentals had built their own. The following year,

the army further refined this practice amidst worsening weather and financial conditions and a more aggressive opponent.

Chapter 5 Notes

¹ For the changing character of the northern war after 1778, see Mark Kwasny, *Washington's Partisan War* (Kent, OH: Kent State Press, 1996), 225.

² Washington's "Circular to Seven General Officers," October 14, 1778, in W.W. Abbott et. al., eds., *The Papers of George Washington: Revolutionary War Series*, 25 vols. to date, (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1987-), 17: 373.

³ Council-of-War, October, 16 1778, in *Ibid.*, 399.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Gates to Washington, October 19, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 460.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ William Maxwell to Washington, October 21, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 506-11.

⁸ Lord Stirling to Washington, October 26, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 592-93.

⁹ Greene to Washington, October, 1, 1778, in Richard K. Showman, Dennis R. Conrad, and Roger N. Parks eds. *The Papers of Nathanael Greene*, 13 vols. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1976-2005), 3: 5.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ De Kalb to Washington, October, 18, 1778, in *PGW*, *Revolutionary War Series*, 17: 452.

¹² Von Steuben to Washington, October 18, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 450.

¹³ Henry Knox to Washington, October 19, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 465-67.

¹⁴ Muhlenberg to Washington, October 16, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 408-9.

¹⁵ Parsons to Washington, October 17, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 424-25.

¹⁶ Smallwood to Washington, October 17, 1778; Hand to Washington, October 18, 1778, both in *Ibid.*, 428-429, 439-40.

¹⁷ Von Steuben to Washington, October 18, 1779; de Kalb to Washington, October 19, 1779, both in *Ibid.*, 450, 463-65.

¹⁸ Nixon to Washington, October 19, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 468-69.

¹⁹ McDougall to George Clinton, November 5, 1778, in Hugh Hastings ed., *The Public Papers of George Clinton, First Governor of New York*, 10 vols. (New York: Wynkoop, Hallenback, and Crawford, 1899-1914), 4: 248.

²⁰ McDougall to Greene, November 12, 1778, in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 3: 64-65.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Stirling to Washington, October 26, 1778, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 17: 592-93; Paul David Nelson, *The Life of William Alexander, Lord Stirling* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1987), 137.

²³ Greene to Washington, October 8, 1778, in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 3: 4.

²⁴ Greene to Washington, October 18, 1778, in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 3: 13.

²⁵ Washington to Greene, October 29, 1778, in Ibid., 32.

²⁶ Greene to McDougall, November 8, 1778, in Ibid., 48.

²⁷ Clement Biddle to Greene, November 19, 1778, in Ibid., 76.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ James Burnside to Major Peter Gordon, November 8, 1779, James Burnside Letterbook, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA. Hereafter cited as HSP.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Burnside to Moore Furman, November 13, 1778, in Ibid.

³² Burnside to Charles Stewart, November 15, 1778, in Ibid.

³³ For the logistical problems of twentieth-century armies, see Martin van Creveld, *Supplying War: Logistics from Wallenstein to Patton* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 203-30.

³⁴ Washington to Putnam, November 25, 1778, in John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799*, 39 vols. (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1931-1954), 13: 324.

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- ³⁵ Ibid.
- ³⁶ Washington to Congress, November 27, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 352.
- ³⁷ Wayne to Washington, October 18, 1778, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 17: 452-53.
- ³⁸ Greene to Washington. October 24, 1778, in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 3: 13.
- ³⁹ Ibid.
- ⁴⁰ Greene to Washington, October 18, 1778, *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 17: 436.
- ⁴¹ Washington to Congress, November 27, 1778, in Fitzpatrick, *Writings of Washington*, 13: 350-52; Washington to Greene, December 4, 1778, in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 3: 32; Charles Lesser, *Sinews of Independence, Monthly Strength Reports of the Continental Army* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1976), 100-01.
- ⁴² Washington to Congress, November 27, 1778, in Fitzpatrick, *Writings of Washington*, 13: 350-52.
- ⁴³ Washington to the Board of War, December 20, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 437-38.
- ⁴⁴ Livingston to Stirling October 12, 1778, in Carl E. Prince and Dennis P. Ryan eds., *The Papers of William Livingston*, 5 vols. (Trenton: New Jersey Historical Commission, 1980), 2: 462-63.
- ⁴⁵ Livingston to Washington, November 7, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 474-75.
- ⁴⁶ Washington to Livingston, November 24, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 490.
- ⁴⁷ Livingston to Washington, December 14, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 510.
- ⁴⁸ Livingston to Washington, December 15, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 512.
- ⁴⁹ Washington to Livingston, December 16, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 513-14.
- ⁵⁰ Livingston to Washington, December 21, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 518.
- ⁵¹ Livingston to Washington, February 8, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 3: 34.
- ⁵² Washington to Livingston, March 4, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 68.

⁵³ Greene to Washington, November 30, 1778, in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 3: 91.

⁵⁴ Robert H. Harrison to Greene, December 5, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 105.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Greene to Moore Furman, December 2, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 94-95.

⁵⁷ *New Jersey Gazette*, October 20, 1779.

⁵⁸ Washington to Putnam, November 25, 1778, in Fitzpatrick, *Writings of Washington*, 13: 324.

⁵⁹ General Orders, December 14, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 395.

⁶⁰ Samuel Shaw, *The Journals of Major Samuel Shaw*, Josiah Quincy, ed. (Boston: Crosby and Nichols, 1847), 52.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² John Laurens to Henry Laurens, October 23, 1778, in Philip Hamer, G. C. Rogers Jr., David R. Chestnut, and C.C. Taylor, eds., *The Papers of Henry Laurens*, 16 vols. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1968-2004), 14: 445.

⁶³ Greene to Charles Petit, December 12, 1778, in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 3: 112.

⁶⁴ Henry Dearborn, *Revolutionary War Journals of Henry Dearborn, 1775-1783*, Lloyd Brown and Howard Peckham, eds. (New York: Da Capo, 1939), 140.

⁶⁵ Jacob Weiss to Udnay Hay, November 30, 1778, in Jacob Weiss, *Jacob Weiss Letterbook*, Melville J. Boyer, ed. (Allentown, PA: Lehigh County Historical Society, 1956), 48.

⁶⁶ Jacob Weiss to James Abeel, December 2, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 49.

⁶⁷ Jacob Weiss to James Abeel, December 16, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 52-53.

⁶⁸ Jacob Weiss to James Abeel, December 23, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 55-56.

⁶⁹ Cornelius Ten Broeck to James Abeel, December 29, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 56.

⁷⁰ Elijah Fisher, *Elijah Fisher's Journal while in the War For Independence and Continued Two Years after He Came to Maine, 1775-1784* (Augusta, ME: Badger and

Manley, 1880), 11; Wayne to Joseph Reed, December 28, 1778, cited in Carl Prince, *Middlebrook: The American Eagle's Nest* (Somerville, NJ: Somerset Press, 1958), 46.

⁷¹ Josiah Harmar Diary, January 1, 1779, Lyman Draper Manuscripts, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, Wisconsin.

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⁷³ Stirling to Washington, December 28, 1778, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 18: 523.

⁷⁴ James Thacher, *A Military Journal during the American Revolutionary War, from 1775 to 1783; Describing Interesting Events and Transactions of this Period; with Numerous Historical Sketches of Several General Officers* (Boston: Cottons & Barnard, 1827), 156.

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⁷⁷ McDougall to Clinton, December 31, 1778, *Ibid.*, 438-40.

⁷⁸ Dearborn, *Revolutionary War Journals*, 140, 142, 150.

⁷⁹ David A. Poirier, "Camp Reading: Logistics of a Revolutionary War Winter Encampment," *Northeast Historical Archaeology* 5 (1976): 50-52.

⁸⁰ Regimental Orders, First Pennsylvania Regiment, December 16, 1778, in *Pennsylvania Archives 2nd Series*, 9: 393.

⁸¹ General Orders for January 4 and January 10, Jacob Brower's 6th Pennsylvania Regiment Orderly Book, Society of the Cincinnati, Washington, DC.

⁸² Charles S. Hall, ed., *Life and Letters of Samuel Holden Parsons: Major-General in the Continental Army and Chief Judge of the Northwestern Territory, 1737-1789* (Binghamton, NY: Otsenigo, 1905), 204.

⁸³ Thacher, *Journal*, 155-56.

⁸⁴ Stirling to Washington, December 28, 1778, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 18: 523.

⁸⁵ Alexander McDougall, Orders to Jackson's Regiment, December 13, 1778, in Hastings, *Clinton Papers*, 4: 378-80.

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⁸⁷ Daniel Curson, "Archaeology of an Enlisted Man's Hut at Putnam Memorial State Park," *Bulletin of the Archaeological Society of Connecticut* 63, (2001), 56-58; Poirier, "Camp Reading," 44.

⁸⁸ John Hawkins Diary, January 1779, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

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⁹¹ Clinton to McDougall, December 15, 1778, in Hastings, *Clinton Papers*, 4: 382-83.

⁹² McDougall to George Clinton, December 15, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 383-87.

⁹³ Clinton to McDougall, December 15, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 387-89.

⁹⁴ McDougall to George Clinton, December 28, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 430-33.

⁹⁵ Clinton to McDougall, 2.3, 1779, *Ibid.* in, 541-42.

⁹⁶ Brigade Orders, April 1, 1779, William Smallwood's Orderly Book, HSP; Prince, *Middlebrook*, 46.

⁹⁷ General Orders, December 24, 1778, in Fitzpatrick, *Writings of Washington*, 13: 453.

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¹⁰⁰ General Orders, First Pennsylvania Regiment, April 5, 1779, in *Pennsylvania Archives*, 2nd Series, 11: 431.

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¹⁰⁶ Shreve to Washington, March 22, 1779, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 19: 571.

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¹⁰⁹ Prince, *Middlebrook*, 28.

¹¹⁰ Stirling to Washington, January 3, 1779, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 18: 561.

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¹¹² See for example, Putnam to Washington, May 7, 1779; Washington to McDougall, June 11, 1779, both in *Ibid.*, 20: 368; 21: 34.

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¹¹⁴ Greene to Biddle, July 28, 1779, in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 4: 273.

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¹¹⁹ Lesser, *Sinews*, xxxi.

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¹²¹ Wayne to Washington, January 20, 1779, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 19: 47.

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¹²⁶ Israel Putnam, General Orders May 26, 1779, quoted in Charles Burr Todd, *History of Redding Connecticut*, (New York: John Gray Press, 1880), 79.

¹²⁷ Washington to the Director of the Military Hospitals, June 3, 1779, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 21: 33.

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¹³⁰ Greene to Washington, January 5, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 18: 570.

CHAPTER 6

MORRISTOWN 1779-1780: THE LOG-HUT CITY TESTED

Despite the Main Army's success in quartering at Middlebrook, late 1779 brought new challenges to Washington's Continentals. Foremost among these, the British garrison in New York adopted a more aggressive posture compared to the previous year. In addition, expiring enlistments, desertion, and the dispatch of brigades to reinforce the beleaguered Southern Theater resulted in a decline in Patriot manpower in New Jersey. Consequently, General Washington privileged concentration and defensibility when seeking a site for winter quarters in late 1779. Washington sought to quarter his troops at a greater distance from New York, in rougher terrain, than he had the previous year. This decision contrasted with the emphasis on ease of supply that had prevailed a year earlier. After a prolonged search, the army wintered in a more remote locale at Jockey Hollow, outside of Morristown.

Finding this concentrated force suitable hut sites and establishing an orderly and salubrious camp presented added difficulties for Continental officers. Supplying so large a camp in an inaccessible location tested Major General Nathanael Greene and his staff in the quartermaster's department. Fierce winter weather, including prolonged cold and record snowfalls, intensified the miseries of officers and men alike. Finally, Washington's army faced greater operational demands in 1780 than in past years. The British garrison in New York launched frequent raids into New Jersey during the depths of the winter, probing Washington's outposts in northeastern New Jersey. These attacks culminated in a British offensive targeting Morristown during June 1780. The log-hut

city's remote location behind the Watchung Mountains and the vigilance of forward outposts ensured the security of the cantonment. In two attempts, the British reached only the town of Springfield, twelve miles short of the encampment. Given the Rebel army's lack of mobility at this juncture, had the British reached Patriot quarters they would have likely destroyed valuable equipment and housing infrastructure.

The 1779-1780 winter demonstrated the strengths of the new Continental system of castrametation, as well as its limitations. Greene's staff proved adept at finding suitable hut sites, even on the rough ground west of the Watchungs. Washington's men remembered the improvements to hut designs and camp layouts implemented at Middlebrook and refined them even more. The Morristown log-hut city stood as the army's most orderly and sanitary to date. Lodged in a defensible location, the Continentals had remained secure from the enemy. Continental officers encountered less success, however, in provisioning this encampment. Wagon shortages, a lack of hard currency, and impassable roads plagued the quartermaster's department throughout the winter. Emergency requisitions of civilian crops staved off famine, but the generals never again attempted to concentrate so many men in one place for winter. Nor did they subsequently use the Morristown site as their primary quarters. Smaller bodies of Patriot troops did, however, reside in the hut complex for the following two winters. The infrastructure remained sound, while the position had proven a secure one. For an army increasingly low on manpower, these stood as vital criteria.

Selecting a Winter Camp Site

By the autumn of 1779, the Continental Army had established significant infrastructure in northern New Jersey to support its operations around New York. Artificers and hospital staff occupied the huts at Middlebrook and barracks at Pluckemin after the army's departure in June. Morristown held military storehouses under the oversight of the deputy quartermaster for camp equipage, Colonel James Abeel. The Continentals had also established magazines along the route from Trenton, New Jersey, to West Point, New York. These contained the hay and grain that fed wagon teams traveling from the Delaware River to the Main Army's concentrations in the Hudson Highlands. Throughout September and October, Washington held position along the Hudson near West Point, awaiting the potential arrival of French reinforcements under Charles Hector, Comte D'Estaing. If the French fleet arrived before winter, the commander-in-chief hoped to launch an attack on New York. The infrastructure built in northern New Jersey would support this offensive. In late September, Washington ordered flat-bottom boats, instrumental for an assault on Manhattan, to be repaired and stored at Middlebrook.¹

If the attack did not take place, Washington preferred New Jersey for winter quarters. Through early autumn, the commander-in-chief continued to view ease-of-supply as the most important criterion in determining the location to which his troops retired. Secondly, he sought locations affording ample resources for hut construction, dry ground, and terrain that his men could adequately fortify. The eastern slopes of the Watchungs north of the Raritan River had satisfied all of these conditions with the Middlebrook site. In the fall of 1779, it appeared this area would do so once more. In

September and October, the Continental commander favored Scotch Plains, ten miles east of the 1778-1779 huts. This site shared many of Middlebrook's benefits. There the army could build a fortified camp in the Watchungs's foothills and enjoy easy communications with Trenton and the other storehouses in the region.²

The previous two winter encampments had highlighted the importance of retiring to winter quarters as early as possible. Major General Greene demonstrated greater attentiveness to these preparations as his second winter as quartermaster general approached. In late September, he issued orders for 200,000 feet of boards for huts to be delivered to the likely winter quarters site at Scotch Plains. Greene also solicited boards for the army detachment that would presumably winter in Connecticut.³ A month later, he instructed Colonel Clement Biddle, his deputy in charge of forage, to seek out potential camp sites near Scotch Plains and neighboring Quibbletown.⁴ In past winters, the army had suffered hardships because it had delayed constructing its huts until well into December. Greene seemed intent on avoiding these errors in late 1779.

Through the early autumn, senior Continental commanders appeared to have firmly established their preliminary arrangements for winter quarters. This portended a smooth retirement from active operations. Events in late October and early November altered these circumstances, however, forcing Washington to reevaluate his criteria for winter dispositions. A party of 400 infantry and 100 cavalry of Lieutenant Colonel John Graves Simcoe's Queen's Rangers, a Loyalist unit, raided New Jersey in late October. They landed at Perth Amboy on October 27 and marched on Somerset Court House, in the vicinity of Middlebrook. Simcoe's force reached the log-hut city, where they set fire to artificers' huts, burned seventy tons of hay and fourteen bushels of grain, and

destroyed eighteen boats as well as other equipment. During the Rangers' withdrawal they encountered spirited resistance from the New Jersey militia, resulting in Simcoe's capture.⁵

While the overall damage had been light, Simcoe's raid nevertheless revealed the vulnerability of Patriot posts in the Raritan Valley. Unlike the Hudson Highlands, the approaches to Middlebrook benefitted from no natural barriers. Only fifteen miles of flat terrain separated Middlebrook from Perth Amboy, where the British had shown they could land with impunity. The October raid now raised the question of whether the army would have enough warning to mount a proper defense should it decide to camp east of the Watchungs. Local Patriot leaders recognized this area's vulnerability immediately after the raid. On October 29, Colonel Moore Furman, deputy quartermaster at Trenton, voiced fears for forage kept at Scotch Plains and requested a guard for stores at nearby Quibbletown.⁶ Clement Biddle echoed these sentiments a day later, complaining that forage stocks "cannot be removed to advantage till we have some covered post to remove to."⁷ Reverend James Caldwell, a prominent New Jersey Whig, requested the deployment of the New Jersey Brigade to protect supply stores, particularly "the magazines of hay at and near Quibbletown," which were "of vast importance."⁸ Apprehension over the security for the Quibbletown-Scotch Plains region cast doubt over that area's viability for winter quarters in the face of the suddenly aggressive New York garrison.

In 1779, the commander-in-chief demonstrated confidence in the log-hut city. Unlike the previous two years, Washington did not ask his generals for suggestions of where and how to quarter for the winter. Responsibility for selecting healthy and

logistically-feasible camp sites rested with Washington and Nathanael Greene. The method of shelter, the log-hut city, no longer stood in doubt after the success at Middlebrook. Nevertheless, the commander-in-chief did receive advice from one subordinate. Writing to Washington on November 2, 1779, Major General Arthur St. Clair of Pennsylvania presented his overview of the Patriots' strategic situation. He emphasized two objectives largely unchanged since the previous year, "securing West Point and covering Jersey in such a manner as to preserve an easy communication with Pennsylvania."⁹ For West Point, St. Clair suggested posting nearly 4,000 troops in and around the fortification to cover the Hudson, with the remainder sent to New Jersey. The Pennsylvanian foresaw potential vulnerabilities resulting from expiring enlistments that might reduce the Main Army to fewer than 6,000 men. After Simcoe's raid, St. Clair also worried that a winter attack on the army's quarters could lead to catastrophe. If posted "in the vicinity of the enemy," this diminished force would be "liable to have their quarters beat up." If induced to retreat to a new position in the middle of winter, the army would be left "exposed to the loss of their baggage and artillery" as well as their horses.¹⁰ Thus a remote encampment appeared as the army's best option.

Yet a more inaccessible location presented its own set of problems. St. Clair observed that placing the army at a greater distance from New York City would expose New Jersey to further British raids. Sending most of the army to West Point would completely expose its lines of communication through New Jersey. Doing so would also force Patriot supply trains to travel through "a rough country where forage is not abundant." New York's distance from the army's primary sources of supply to the west and south again nullified the possibility of a more secure encampment in the Hudson

Highlands. Pointing out the army's dilemma, St. Clair lamented that "difficulties present themselves on all sides." As a compromise, he proposed winter quarters within a few hours march of the Watchung Mountains, "a barrier of considerable importance." This barrier would provide security for the cantoned army while still affording it a position in close proximity to its principal supply sources.

Washington reconsidered his planned site for the army's winter quarters in light of the circumstances St. Clair had outlined. European writers, including Turpin de Crisse and Frederick the Great, had praised the benefits of using terrain to secure an encampment. These concepts and St. Clair's advice bore their mark on Washington's new plan for winter quarters. Rather than use the Watchung's eastern slopes as a foundation for a fortified camp, he chose instead to treat them as an impediment to any potential enemy advance. An encampment west of the range would place two parallel ridges between the British in New York and the Rebels' log-hut city. While not high, only one gap existed, east of Chatham. This topography would limit the avenues of approach available to any British attack. Observation posts along the ridgeline would give ample warning. West of the Watchungs lay the broken ground of the New Jersey Highlands. This terrain promised to further inhibit an aggressor and provide a stronger position in which to erect a camp. Morristown, the site of Washington's headquarters in early 1777, lay at the heart of this region. Consequently, in early November, the commander-in-chief now preferred this town, rather than Scotch Plains.¹¹

Wintering west of the Watchungs would exchange ease of defense for ease of supply. To its debit, a Morristown camp would extend supply lines to Trenton another fifteen miles from what they had been at Middlebrook. Washington's proposal thereby

gambled that the quartermaster's department could maintain roads and stock forage in sufficient quantities to keep wagon trains moving to camp throughout the winter. Major General Greene did not object to Morristown in early November, and made arrangements for the construction of another log-hut city. The Rhode Islander ordered Colonel Moore Furman to send boards towards Morristown, though the general admitted on November 3 that Washington had "not positively fixed upon" a new place for the winter encampment.¹² Concurrently, Washington deployed Maxwell's brigade to the Westfield area to secure the stores still in Quibbletown, while Clement Biddle began to evacuate supplies to the west of the Watchungs.¹³

Throughout November, Greene and his subordinates scouted for potential sites for winter quarters in the Morristown area. On November 4, the quartermaster general directed Colonel James Abeel to seek out places at which to hut the army within ten miles of Morristown. Greene's order revealed his understanding of how the environment affected castrametation decisions. Abeel was to note the "water, wood, and make of ground," for each locale in his survey, the state of the roads in the area, and the presence of houses in which officers might quarter. Greene made abundant timber the most important criterion, as it had been the previous year. Overall, the quartermaster general sought a camp site that promised sufficient construction and fuel resources, healthy environs, and logistical feasibility.¹⁴

Finding suitable sites for winter quarters west of the Watchungs presented a challenge to Greene and his officers. The terrain around Morristown lacked appropriately dry, level ground needed to erect a large log-hut city. The rugged landscapes of the New Jersey Highlands shared many of the same features of New York's

Hudson Highlands. Greene had rejected the latter as a viable site for a large encampment the previous year. Now, he had to rush to find an adequate position for the army with the onset of winter only a few weeks away. In a twist of environmental irony, the same geographic features that made northwestern New Jersey so appealing as a remote and easily-defended location also made it unsatisfactory for building and supplying a large camp. Natural features including ridgelines, lakes, and swamps broke up the terrain. Much of the ground was too damp, ridges were too steep, and woodlands too small and dispersed to be useful to the army.¹⁵ At Canoe Brook, east of Morristown, Greene discovered “a great quantity of wood,” however, he found that the “ground is so wet and swampy that it is totally unfit for an encampment.”¹⁶

Human land-use patterns also proved unhelpful. Of the territory in eastern Morris County, Greene lamented “all this country is divided into small farms each of which has only a small wood lot.”¹⁷ Greene had discerned an important difference in the development of the region around Morristown compared to the vicinity of Middlebrook that had hosted the army the previous year. Most of Morris County’s population hailed from New England. Morris residents shared New Englanders’ tendencies towards small landholdings that left the county with few large woodlots. The rough and rocky glacial hills of the New Jersey Highlands further contributed to this variegated configuration of landholding. Individual farms included the small woodlots Greene observed, but their expansive distribution promised to inconvenience the army in its search for lumber. Conversely, Middlebrook lay closer to the Raritan Valley which had long served as a source of cordwood for New York.¹⁸

Reports from Greene's staff revealed the importance these officers placed on landscapes and resources in determining positions suitable for a log-hut city. Abeel, joined by Major General Lord Stirling, a resident of nearby Basking Ridge, initially favored a locale between the parallel ridges of the Watchungs. Greene rejected this proposal, however, due to an inadequate local wood supply. Clement Biddle again advocated the vicinity of Scotch Plains because of an abundance of hay nearby, but his superior dismissed the area since it lay exposed to a British attack.¹⁹ Another survey by Abeel further north found a favorable site near Morristown. Abeel described the region as "well covered with timber & pretty well watered the ground is dry & if the tract is large enough I believe will be the best I have as yet seen."²⁰ Not content to leave the search to his subordinates, Greene toured the Parsippany region north of Morristown. He dedicated two days to this survey, but his efforts and those of his staff had yielded no conclusive solutions by the middle of the month.²¹

Reconciling the conflicting criteria of defensibility and ease of supply also vexed the Continentals. Greene summed up the conundrum to Washington in a November 14 letter, stating "it is not always in the power of a general to take a position most favorable to his wishes on account of provision & forage, or to place himself in the most advantageous point of view, for covering the country and securing his capital posts." As Greene had in 1778, he reiterated that all other troubles aside, "there is no contending with hunger." If Washington continued to oppose building a log-hut city east of the Watchungs, then Morristown represented the army's best option.²² Nevertheless, the commander-in-chief vacillated between logistical and defensive considerations. He lamented to Major General Alexander McDougall that he found "it rather difficult to fix

upon a line of winter cantonments that will answer the double purposes of security and subsistence.”²³

Washington’s worries over the prospect of a British attack on his winter quarters likely derived from his own experience during the war. At Trenton in December 1776, Washington had destroyed an isolated Hessian garrison cantoned in that town. A year later at Germantown, he had launched a daring attack on British forces camped outside of Philadelphia. European military experience included examples of commanders who had suffered embarrassment when an enemy had unexpectedly assaulted their quarters, such as when the French drove the Habsburgs from northern Italy in April 1706.²⁴ Washington’s own reading of Turpin de Crisse admonished commanders for allowing their quarters to suffer assault. Having benefitted from strikes on vulnerable posts earlier in the war, Washington now hoped to minimize the danger of such a disaster befalling his army in late 1779.

Yet experience had also demonstrated the importance of sound supply lines to winter quarters. Washington’s army had not suffered a direct attack at Valley Forge, but had endured severe provision shortages. During the 1778-1779 winter, the British had only lightly probed Continental outposts in New Jersey. As the Middlebrook camp had been sited specifically for its proximity to sources of supply, soldiers there had also enjoyed more reliable victualing than at Valley Forge. Now the army faced a winter of forage shortages and currency inflation, while a strong enemy threatened nearby. Morristown seemed to offer the best compromise solution to this dilemma. The rough terrain around that town, however, did not readily offer ground suitable for building a log-hut city. Consequently, in mid-November, the Continentals stood at an impasse.

In the second half of November, Greene's staff continued to scour northern New Jersey for acceptable camp sites. The lack of decent ground for hutting added a third dimension to the debate between supply and security. Ordered again to scout specific ground for huts on November 17, Greene responded to Washington "It is very difficult to find a piece of ground with all the requisites for hutting the army to advantage." He despaired "of getting a position perfectly to my liking, or that will be entirely satisfactory to your excellency."²⁵ Greene shifted his focus to locales east of the Watchungs, despite his superior's concerns for the defensibility of a camp in that area. In late November, Greene's subordinates presented a potential position at Acquackanonk. This site lay twenty miles east of Morristown at the foot of the Watchungs along the Passaic River. Greene's scouts believed this place could accommodate the entire army. Acquackanonk appeared ideally suited to the army's castrametation criteria. The report to Greene described a "great plenty wood," and dry, sandy ground that would drain easily. Greene noted its greater distance from the supply hub at Trenton would "increase our transportation a little," but otherwise found few quibbles. The neighboring land featured "a plentiful country of forage," as well as an abundance of homes for officers' billets. The locale would also place the army closer to the strategically vital Hudson Highlands and West Point.²⁶

Greene's strong support for Acquackanonk indicated his preference for a position that would facilitate hutting. In a November 23 letter to Washington, he contrasted the Acquackanonk site with an area that he was reconnoitering near Basking Ridge. The latter stood closer to Morristown and west of the Watchungs; however, Greene explained that the Basking Ridge site offered no opportunity to hut troops together except for an

area featuring ground “spongy and cold.” A possible position further south at Stony Hill offered even fewer prospects. Overall, Acquackanonk possessed the greatest quantities of wood and water and the best ground for hutting the army together, while also placing the Continentals closer to West Point. Satisfactory local forage compensated for the sacrificed proximity to Trenton. Greene declared Acquackanonk “pleases me much the best.” The quartermaster offered on November 23 to halt the army’s march in Parsippany to divert them to the Passaic, should Washington opt for that locale.²⁷

With November entering its final week, the need to stow tents and being hut construction before winter’s onset made a final quartering decision imperative. While Morristown’s vicinity offered the best balance of security and logistical feasibility, so far the surrounding landscapes had not revealed any sties acceptable for building a log-hut city. Acquackanonk, by contrast, seemed to satisfy all of the camp-building criteria, at the cost of security and distance from Trenton. In a follow-up report on November 27, however, Greene tempered his enthusiasm for Acquackanonk. He feared an army wintering there would be unable to cover communications with Trenton, or the supplies gathered near Scotch Plains.

Concurrently, Brigadier General Anthony Wayne added a third contender. The Pennsylvanian, who had shown a keen understanding of the resources needed for hut-building at Middlebrook, viewed a site far to the south in the Sourland Mountains in Somerset County. According to Wayne this position equaled Acquackanonk as a place as “preferable to any we can fix upon.” Wayne contrasted the two sites, one “very favorable to West Point,” the other only fifteen miles from Trenton, highlighting the strategic and logistical sides of the dilemma facing the Continentals. Quartering at Acquackanonk

would extend supply lines from the south and uncover the middle of New Jersey, already revealed to be vulnerable by Simcoe's October raid. Conversely, wintering in the Sourlands would leave the army well supplied but far from West Point. Additionally, the southerly site lacked the rugged defensibility of Morristown and would expose much of the northern part of the state to attack.

Ultimately, Greene's staff solved the quartering predicament by finding a suitable camp site near Morristown. Drawing on a report from Colonel Abeel, Greene told Washington on November 27 that between Morristown and Mendham a "very good position may be had at Jockey Hollow." The locale possessed a few disadvantages, specifically hilly terrain that would break the cantonment into individual brigade camps. To Jockey Hollow's credit, abundant wood and fresh water supplies would satisfy the army's needs. Greene felt the ground would "be pretty dry." Rough terrain and distance from New York promised to impede any attack on the cantonment. The Rhode Islander recognized, however, that with a location in the mountains, "the transportation will be more heavy and difficult to keep up." Jockey Hollow fulfilled Washington's desire for security, while remaining close enough to both West Point and central New Jersey to cover those positions.²⁸

Logistical and strategic concerns led the commander-in-chief to reject Acquackanonk and select Jockey Hollow. Just as in 1778-1779, distance from the supply hub at Trenton remained a crucial factor. Washington's aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Colonel Tench Tilghman, wrote to Greene on November 25 to share the commander-in-chief's opinion on the potential site on the Passaic. Washington felt that "the increase of transportation seems the greatest objection" to Acquackanonk. The army would likely

not “have such an accumulation of stores between Trenton and the encampment as will tempt the enemy to penetrate the uncovered country upon our right.”²⁹ Camp security also remained crucial. In a November 27 meeting with Greene, Colonel Alexander Hamilton, another of Washington’s aides-de-camp, opined that the Acquackanonk position at the foot of the Watchungs would be too exposed to attack for a winter encampment. Conversely, the Jockey Hollow site would render difficult a British approach march and hinder their communications should the enemy contrive an attack on the Continentals while in winter quarters.³⁰ Washington wrote to Greene on November 30 to declare his final choice for Jockey Hollow. Concerns for the army’s safety undergirded his decision. The need to detach forces to the South and the pending expiration of enlistments induced the Continental commander to “seek a more remote position than we would otherwise have done.” Washington perceived the strategic picture from his vantage point as commander-in-chief, which transcended a specific focus on logistics. On November 30, Washington ordered Greene to begin laying out ground for the encampment.³¹

The month-long debate over where to winter in November 1779 indicated the importance quarters held in Continental strategy. General Washington sought to retire to positions that would leave his army well-supplied, secure, and healthy. To do so required not only the balancing of defensive and logistical considerations, but also finding ground that afforded camp-building necessities in locations that satisfied the above criteria. Continental castrametation by late 1779 therefore relied on synthesizing information on forage, roads, forests, mountain barriers, swamps and hillsides.

Ultimately, the First and Second Pennsylvania, First and Second Connecticut, and First and Second Maryland brigades, as well as the New York brigade and mixed brigades under Brigadier Generals Edward Hand and John Stark, camped at Jockey Hollow. As Greene had predicted, the broken terrain forced these units to camp separately, with up to a mile of broken ground separating some brigades. As distance from New York minimized the risk of a surprise British attack, the Continental generals opted to leave the camp unfortified. The Pennsylvanians occupied the northwestern corner of the camp, with the New Yorkers, Marylanders, and Hand's command at the camp's center along the road to Morristown. The Connecticut brigades lay to the east, while Stark's men camped on the eastern slope of Mt. Kemble. William Maxwell's New Jersey Brigade built its huts one mile south of the main encampment at Ayre's Forge. Three Massachusetts brigades wintered in the Hudson Highlands. The New Hampshire brigade returned to Connecticut.³²

Perfecting the Art of Camp-building

Home to ten brigades, the Jockey Hollow log-hut city represented the army's largest winter concentration since Valley Forge. Once again, the Continentals began work on their quarters later into the season than they might have liked due to the delays the November search had imposed. At Jockey Hollow, however, soldiers labored with more experience and greater confidence in hut-building than at Valley Forge or Middlebrook. After the previous winter's successes, timber cabins unquestionably afforded the army its best option for shelter when properly built. The Rebels now accepted constructing log cities as standard practice for winter quarters. Colonel

Alexander Scammell described the rise of the encampment at Jockey Hollow as a “doctrine of huttification.”³³ Perhaps comparing the huts to the temporary late-season quarters in European warfare, Major General Johan de Kalb referred to the Jockey Hollow shelters as “shanties.” Nevertheless, he considered the practice commonplace by the time of the Morristown encampment, speaking of “winter-quarters in the woods, *as usual.*”³⁴

For the first time, some of the castrametation knowledge gained during the war was now codified in print. Baron Wilhelm von Steuben’s *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States*, first published in the spring of 1779, represented the Continentals’ first military manual. While primarily remembered as drill book, it also included sections detailing the arrangement of shelters and placement of latrines in camp. Officers no longer had to refer to older treatises or rely on daily directives issued from headquarters. Von Steuben outlined the duties intrinsic to planning the army’s camps in a manner similar to European manuals. The quartermaster was to establish a “line of encampment” and mark out the grounds upon which brigades were to camp. Brigade quartermasters were to then select grounds for subordinate regiments. Regimental quartermasters followed by determining sites for individual companies, kitchens, and other ancillary buildings. Von Steuben’s regulations mentioned only tents, but the duties outlined for marking out camps carried over to winter quarters as well.³⁵

The commander-in-chief and the quartermaster general provided direction for matters not included in the army’s new manual. Guidelines for the overall layout of the log-hut city, as well as protocols for hut designs, remained under Washington’s and

Greene's purview. The Continental leaders further refined the log-hut city, striving for greater order in camp layouts. Just as Washington and his staff had discerned and disseminated the best practices for hut construction after Valley Forge, at Morristown they adopted a plan for arranging huts drawing from successes at the previous winter encampment. For 1779-1780, Washington ordered Greene to develop a plan for hutting the army based off of the most successful arrangements used at Middlebrook, those of the Pennsylvania Line. Washington suggested "the form of the Pennsylvania huts and the mode of placing them at Raritan last winter, may be established as a model."³⁶ The arrangement called for regiments to build twenty-four huts, each to house twelve men. To adapt to the rough terrain at Jockey Hollow, huts were to be arranged in two, three, or four rows depending on the lay of the land. Company streets twelve to twenty feet wide separated each row, while within each row huts were grouped in pairs separated by "walkways" eighteen to twenty-four feet wide.³⁷ Imitating the grid pattern of their home state's great city, the Pennsylvanians' encampment replaced the scattered huts and tents of earlier cantonments with a plan that exuded military order, efficiency, and discipline. At Morristown, Washington expected to implement the Pennsylvanians' mode of cantonment across the entire army.

With specific camp sites laid out, brigade and regimental staffs oversaw their units' construction of huts. General Orders reiterated von Steuben's maxims for tent encampments by detailing quartermasters or superintendents to "attend to the limits of the ground laid off for their respective brigades." Individual regiments then set about the task of hut construction.³⁸ Von Steuben's 1779 reforms outlined the supervisory duties for regimental officers and non-commissioned officers, and at Morristown their

attentiveness towards hut construction reflected the army's increasing administrative skill.³⁹ Huts were to be built, according to General Orders, "agreeably to the order already issued, for uniformity and regularity," with each brigade appointing an officers to ensure the huts met expectations.⁴⁰ With regimental officers guiding hut construction, brigade commanders concerned themselves with the details of their units' camp layouts. Edward Hand, for example, believed his brigade required more huts to accommodate its men than plans called for. The brigadier general wrote to Nathanael Greene inquiring "whether to erect four rows of huts instead of three, or extend our front."⁴¹ The Pennsylvania Line demonstrated a willingness to modify the original camp plan. When St. Clair's troops arrived, they found the hut sites the quartermaster's surveyors had laid out sat inconveniently far from the nearest woodlot. The Pennsylvanians therefore extended their line to place the huts closer to timber supplies, delaying construction by a day.⁴² No longer preoccupied with questions of how or where their men were to shelter, commanders now focused on the minute details of camp construction to ensure convenient yet orderly layouts.

Washington implemented stringent measures to discipline units who failed to properly erect their shelters. He borrowed from methods first put in place by Maryland Brigadier General William Smallwood at Middlebrook. The commander-in-chief decreed to Nathanael Greene that "the dimensions of the soldiers' barracks to be given out and not departed from in the least particular, under pain of having those pulled down which differ from the model."⁴³ To disseminate these encampment regulations and disciplinary measures throughout the entire army, Greene suggested to Washington that "it will be necessary in order to have your Excellency's instructions complied with, to

have it inserted in General Orders,” rather than in specific instructions to individual units.⁴⁴ Washington followed his subordinate’s advice, informing the army in a General Order two days later that “any hut not exactly conforming to the plan,” was to come down.⁴⁵ Such disciplinary measures filtered throughout the Main Army by the winter of 1779-1780. Ensign Benjamin Gilbert of the 5th Massachusetts Regiment recorded “we pulled down our chimney and began to build anew,” while constructing a hut near West Point in late 1779.⁴⁶ At Morristown, soldiers in the New Jersey Brigade tore down a deficient hut in advance of an inspection tour.⁴⁷ Beyond punishment, the army also offered rewards to soldiers for sound hut construction. At Valley Forge, officers had offered cash bonuses for the huts completed most rapidly and most solidly built in each regiment.⁴⁸ In contrast the New Jersey encampments did away with monetary awards, either due to the depreciation of currency or its lack of motivation for enlisted men. Instead, soldiers completing their huts the fastest and within specifications received two gallons of whiskey as a reward. Those who built their hut closest to the prescribed model received four gallons.⁴⁹

Beyond threats and incentives, commanders also sought to improve the speed of hut construction by devoting as much manpower as possible to the task. Orders for the 2nd New York Regiment on December 7, 1779, stipulated that “the whole Reg{iment} is to be employed in building huts by companies.” Only a minimal guard and a work party of one sergeant and eight men who were to build the colonel’s hut were spared. Work was to begin at 8:00 AM and continue until sundown, weather permitting.⁵⁰ Snow and cold hindered hut construction at Morristown despite the threats, incentives, and devotion of manpower to construction. Rain and snow alternated through the first weeks of

December. Colder temperatures and heavy snow followed. Major General Johann de Kalb complained, “The severe frost greatly retards our work and does not even permit us to complete our chimneys.”⁵¹ Stark’s Brigade positioned on the rough slopes of Mt. Kemble on the camp’s eastern edge encountered the greatest delays in hut building. Doctor James Thacher, serving in that brigade, observed in late December 1779 that the men still lay in blankets on clearings removed of snow.⁵² Officers in Thacher’s unit remained in their tents until mid-February. By then the surgeon occupied a one-room hut with three other officers, “furnished with our lodging cabins and crowded with our baggage.”⁵³ Colonel Ebenezer Huntington, acting commander of Webb’s Additional Regiment in Stark’s Brigade, feared the “extreme cold in tents,” his regiment would have to endure until it finished its huts. He believed his men would not complete their task until mid-January.⁵⁴

Other units enjoyed better progress. The Keystone State soldiers had already proven themselves able hut-builders at Valley Forge and Middlebrook. These veterans therefore proceeded in erecting their shelters with little difficulty. St. Clair’s men began their huts’ chimneys on December 5 and pitched their tents around the hearths until they finished the rest of the structures. The rank-and-file occupied their huts by December 10, but foul weather during the remainder of the month impeded the construction of officers’ huts. Captain Walter Finney only moved into his on December 29.⁵⁵ Officers in the smaller New York Brigade moved into their huts on December 22, two weeks after construction began.⁵⁶ The commander-in-chief’s guard once again finished its huts in under a week.⁵⁷

Elsewhere in the Main Army's camps, Continental units recorded moderate improvements in their speed in constructing huts. Captain Daniel Livermore of the 3rd New Hampshire Regiment, wintering in Danbury, Connecticut, remarked that his unit spent three days in early December clearing forests and "laying the foundations of the huts." By December 6 the New Hampshiremen's huts ascended "rapidly." Captain Livermore noted construction of his personal hut began the following day. As a line officer wintering far from Main Army headquarters he apparently took liberties with prescribed hut dimensions. Livermore recorded a twenty-two-foot by twelve-foot foundation for his hut that greatly exceeded the fourteen feet by sixteen feet size set as the army's standard.⁵⁸ If Livermore abided by the orders that officers should only begin their huts' construction when the soldiers' had finished their own shelters, then his troops had apparently completed their huts quickly.

Although severe weather hindered camp construction and added to soldiers' miseries, Washington's men benefitted from easily accessible fuel and building supplies. The hills and forests Greene selected had escaped extensive development. James Thacher described the region as a "wilderness, about three miles from Morristown."⁵⁹ Conversely, the army's center contingent along the Hudson lagged behind their brethren at Jockey Hollow. Major General William Heath, commanding the force in the Hudson Highlands, reported that even on January 25 some troops remained in their tents. The local environment contributed to this delay. Unlike the Morristown area, the West Point vicinity lacked nearby quantities of timber. Heath lamented that the garrison was "obliged to be on almost constant fatigue, dragging materials for their barracks, and all

their fuel on hand sleds more than a mile.” Washington’s men in New Jersey, in contrast, could easily cut their wood from the forest that surrounded their hut complex.⁶⁰

Despite deplorable weather conditions, martial pride endured and sustained units through the process of construction and habitation. Regiments invested great attention to detail in building their shelters. Ensign Jeremiah Greenman’s Rhode Island comrades, part of Hand’s Brigade at Jockey Hollow, worked through the end of February 1780 “fixing our hut to make it as complete as we can considering our situation.”⁶¹ Upon the completion of a brigade’s huts, Washington ordered each unit to build a parade ground in front of the shelters. Men were to then clear intervening ground to open “proper communications between one brigade and another.”⁶²

Through the Morristown winter, Continental officers strove to maintain cohesion within the log-hut city. The Maryland Line’s departed for the southern theater in April 1780. Brigadier General William Maxwell’s New Jersey Brigade, hitherto encamped a mile south of Jockey Hollow, moved promptly to occupy the Marylanders’ empty huts at the center of the main encampment. Indicative of the army’s greater administrative attentiveness, Maxwell appointed eight non-commissioned officers and thirty-two privates as an advanced detail to guard the huts and ensure their preparedness for the brigade’s arrival.⁶³ Despite the vacancies left by these moves, unused huts did not immediately fall into disrepair. By 1780, Continental leaders no longer saw these structures as quick expedients for winter quarters that would deteriorate by spring, as in earlier colonial and European experience. Instead, officers preserved their shelters for future use, evolving the winter encampment into a semi-permanent installation. Maxwell forbade “the destroying any of the huts in our present encampment,” with a punishment

of twenty lashes for any soldier found “destroying or carrying away any part of the huts.”⁶⁴

In the face of harsh weather, the Main Army at Morristown endured the winter of 1779-1780 securely ensconced in its best-ordered log-hut city to date. An anonymous sketch of Stark’s Brigade’s encampment at Jockey Hollow indicated that soldiers generally followed the new guidelines for camp construction. The drawing reflected the emphasis on uniformity in design and orderly layout. It depicted two neat rows of huts at the lowest level, presumably those of the enlisted men. Ensigns’ and lieutenants’ huts stood at greater intervals on a third row, with captains’ huts occupying a fourth row.⁶⁵

Archaeological work at Jockey Hollow has largely confirmed the accuracy of the sketch, indicating that the army closely adhered to guidelines for building huts and laying out the encampment. Archaeologists studying the 1st Connecticut Brigade’s encampment found the remains of huts arrayed in two parallel lines of thirty-four structures each. This number corresponded with the brigade’s listed strength of roughly 900 men in early 1780. Material remains also indicated most huts conformed to the fourteen by sixteen foot dimensions regulations prescribed. Officers apparently had more latitude in the construction of their own dwellings. Both soldiers and officers placed doors and chimneys in various locations. Soldiers adhered to Washington’s stipulation that they sink the shelters into the ground only far enough to provide for level floors. While no other brigade sites have received archaeologists’ attention, the material evidence studied at Jockey Hollow stands in stark contrast to the haphazard layout observed at Valley Forge.⁶⁶

In addition to sound construction and orderly arrangement, sanitation stood as a paramount concern at the Morristown encampment. Beyond the improvements made at Middlebrook, the severe weather experienced through the 1779-1780 winter necessitated further refinements to Continental Army castrametation to ensure good health. In a General Order dated February 16, 1780, Washington established methods for dealing with snow accumulation and minimizing the threat of flooding during thaws. Troops were to take “particular care” to remove snow from huts built on hillsides. Trenches “dug round” each hut would ensure proper drainage. The Continentals had at Middlebrook adopted hillside hut sites and drainage trenches and banned the practice of sinking huts into the ground. The mild weather conditions of the 1778-1779 winter however, had not necessitated widespread snow-removal or strained drainage systems. The frequent snowfalls witnessed at Morristown made such measures vital. Otherwise, Washington expected “soldiers will sleep amidst continual damp, and their health will consequently be injured.”⁶⁷

As winter transitioned to spring the army at Morristown worked to maintain a clean camp amidst melting snows and rising temperatures. With most huts now featuring doors and windows, Washington ordered them to be opened “every fair day” beginning in March 1780. Soldiers’ bedding and straw were to be “frequently aired.”⁶⁸ Line officers enforced sanitation regulations. In Moses Hazen’s 1st Canadian Regiment, subalterns led non-commissioned officers in inspection details monitoring cleanliness in camp. They ensured that filth was “removed from the huts and utensils” were kept “perfectly clean.”⁶⁹ Sherburne’s Additional Regiment appointed an officer in March to oversee the removal of filth from the brigade guard hut.⁷⁰ That same month the artillery brigade appointed

their acting quartermaster as a temporary superintendent to supervise cleaning the artillery park. The gunners carried “all the filth, dirt, and brush” accumulated between their huts fifty feet beyond their camp perimeter and set it ablaze.⁷¹

Such measures proved effective. The Morristown encampment, despite its size and concentration, did not host any of the problems of illness that had plagued the Continentals at Valley Forge two years earlier. The percentage of sick rank-and-file remained in the 9-11 percent range for the duration of the winter, essentially where it had rested since the sanitary reforms implemented at Middlebrook had taken hold.⁷²

The Logistical Crisis of 1780

Provisioning the 1779-1780 winter encampment presented greater difficulties than the previous year. Unlike Middlebrook, Jockey Hollow suffered food shortages that led to periods of deprivation. Through the first six months of 1780, Washington, Greene, and their subordinates struggled to alleviate starvation conditions in camp lest the army disband. The 1780 provisions crisis tested the viability of the log-hut city more than finding suitable camp sites or maintaining camp hygiene.

Much of the responsibility for shortages lay with issues external to the Continentals' scheme for winter quarters. Scholarly consensus holds that the collapse of the Continental logistical system in late 1779 originated from fiscal, administrative, and environmental sources. Of these, fiscal problems held the majority of the blame. By 1779, the Continental dollar that Congress had printed to finance its war effort had inflated to near worthlessness. Inflation had begun to diminish the army's purchasing power earlier in the war, but the fiscal crisis became acute by late 1779.⁷³

Inflation impaired the army's ability to buy food and forage, as well as to hire civilian wagon teams. Participants in the 1779-1780 camp highlighted the ruinous effects of currency depreciation in their writings. James Thacher complained in December 1779 that "the people in the country are unwilling to sell the produce of their farms for this depreciated currency."⁷⁴ The inflated currency inhibited the army's ability to purchase supplies from the local inhabitants, who often times outright refused to accept the Continental dollar as legal tender.⁷⁵ Alexander Scammell contrasted the army's perseverance in the face of hardship with Congress's perceived ineffectiveness, declaring "if Congress can contrive a method to appreciate currency as quickly as we can build huts, our affairs would soon assume a promising aspect."⁷⁶ Nathanael Greene summed up the army's financial situation, observing "provisions are scarce indeed, not from any scarcity in the country, but from want of money to purchase it."⁷⁷

The Continentals at Morristown had the misfortune of going into quarters at a moment when climate conspired with finance to further curtail the army's ability to obtain adequate supplies. Through November, drought conditions prevailed in northern New Jersey and southern New York, leaving rivers and streams too dry to drive mills' water wheels to grind grain. Consequently, the Continental Army suffered a 25 percent decrease in its flour ration in November, nearly a month before the first significant snowfalls. Wetter weather to the south helped magazines in and around Trenton to maintain full stocks of flour, but the Continentals alleviated their grain crisis only by emptying these storehouses in early December. Forage levels did not fall as low as they did in early 1779. Nevertheless, they threatened to give out should the army continue to cart supplies over long distances.⁷⁸ Washington informed Congress of the army's distress

in mid-December, declaring “I find our prospects are infinitely worse than they have been at any period of the War, and that unless some expedient can be instantly adopted a dissolution of the army for want of subsistence is unavoidable.” The flour shortage had left part of the army without bread for several days. Washington explained that whereas the Continentals had previously suffered interruptions in supply due to administrative mishaps, the current crisis originated from “the absolute emptiness of our magazines everywhere and the total want of money or credit to replenish them.”⁷⁹

Congress assisted the army by appealing to Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, and Virginia to immediately send forward their quotas of flour and wheat originally intended for the spring campaign. Delaware and New Jersey’s quotas of 10,000 and 8,000 barrels, respectively, were to be sent immediately. The other states were to follow shortly afterwards. New Jersey’s government enacted a law on December 25 to streamline procurement within its borders by appointing a single superintendent of purchases to oversee the acquisition of food and forage. New Jersey also established a system of county contractors to make the purchases and extended a ban on the private hoarding of provisions until April 1. Maryland enacted similar measures, and also sent to Morristown provisions that had been previously gathered to supply the French expeditionary force.⁸⁰

The decision to build a log-hut city at Jockey Hollow also bore responsibility for the supply shortages. Nathanael Greene had recognized in November that transportation to the site would present a greater problem than less remote locales. Roads to Morristown traversed the rough ground of the New Jersey Highlands rather than the rolling hills of the Raritan Piedmont that led to Middlebrook. Jockey Hollow’s additional

distance from Trenton exacerbated the situation. Under typical climactic conditions, the Patriots may have overcome these issues. Instead, the Continentals faced the worst winter in living memory. For an army in the process of building a city for 10,000 men in hilly terrain, snowfall over mountain roads brought potentially fatal interruption to the flow of supplies.

Heavy snows fell in early January, provoking the greatest scarcity of provisions of the entire winter. A storm beginning on January 2 left what one observer called “a prodigious quantity of snow” on the ground by January 6. High winds blew the snow into drifts that “filled up the roads to the top of the fences,” making it “impossible to travel.”⁸¹ Ebenezer Parkman, a chaplain with the artillery artificers, wrote on January 2 “very severe winter weather, the army at Morristown exceeding short as to provisions.” Nathan Beers, a paymaster in Stark’s Brigade, likewise declared “no provision for two days past.” On January 3, 1780, James Thacher recorded in his journal, “The snow is now from four to six feet deep, which so obstructs the roads as to prevent our receiving a supply of provisions.”⁸² Washington informed Congress the next day that “the late violent snow storm has so blocked up the roads that it will be some days before the scanty supplies in this quarter can be brought to camp.”⁸³ Greene summed up the dire situation: “Our army is without meat or bread; and have been for two or three days past. Poor fellows! They exhibit a picture truly distressing.” He contrasted the starvation conditions prevailing in camp with the relative abundance found nearby, describing “a country, once overflowing with plenty, are now suffering an Army employed for the defense of everything that is dear and valuable, to perish for want of food.”⁸⁴ Indicative

of the impending threat of dissolution, some rank-and-file at Jockey Hollow plundered local inhabitants to make up for what their commissaries failed to provide.⁸⁵

The hunger resulting from the January snowfalls left the army in danger of collapse. To provide immediate relief, Washington solicited the support of the population of New Jersey itself. The Continental commander sought to feed his army by directly requisitioning supplies from the state's residents. In a letter to the county magistrates on January 8, Washington highlighted the "most distressing" situation in which the army found itself, and attributed it to "the uncommon vigor of the winter," which had obstructed road travel and greatly hindered the army's abilities to transport supplies from distant magazines. He explained that the Continentals had therefore rapidly emptied local magazines and turned to marauding when bread and meat ran out. While Washington admitted that such behavior would usually suffer severe punishment, given the dire circumstances the soldiers' plundering could be "only lamented as the effect of an unfortunate necessity."⁸⁶

After elucidating the causes of the army's plight, and indicating that plundering would only increase if supplies continued to remain short, Washington appealed to civilians to come to the army's aid. Expressing "affection to the virtuous inhabitants of this state," Washington outlined a plan by which each New Jersey county would provide a quantity of cattle and grain in proportion to its population. County magistrates were to oversee the collection of supplies. Washington appointed Continental officers, however, to monitor the counties' efforts. Magistrates were to decide how much each farmer could bear to contribute and announce a site determined by the officer where the supplies were to be delivered. Farmers received certificates that they could redeem at a later date for

fair payment for the goods provided. They had the option of receiving payment at the current market price of January 1780, or that of whenever they decided to redeem their certificates.⁸⁷ The Continentals thus circumvented the problem of inflated currency by passing financial responsibility on to civilians.

The army's use of certificates presented an image of virtuous conduct on the part of the army, even though the impressment of supplies with the vague promise of future payment amounted to state-sanctioned plunder.⁸⁸ Washington concluded his appeal with a gentle threat, reminding the civilian government that should the army "be disappointed in our hopes, the extremity of the case will compel us to have recourse to a different mode." He presumably meant requisition by force. Washington admitted that this method would "be disagreeable to me on every account, on none more than on the probability of its having an operation less equal and less convenient to the inhabitants, than the one now recommended."⁸⁹

Washington's appeal harnessed New Jersey's farms as an agricultural hinterland for the log-hut city at Morristown. The state featured an overwhelmingly agrarian economy in 1780, one that had taken part in expansive trade with both Philadelphia and New York City prior to the War of Independence. Much to Washington's disappointment the state's Whig leaders, many northern New Jersey farmers and merchants continued to trade with New York despite the British occupation.⁹⁰ British forces had likewise turned to New Jersey for emergency foraging operations earlier in the conflict.⁹¹ The January 7 appeal thus sought to divert the state's agricultural bounty to Morristown. Certificates and appeals to the population's patriotism substituted for the financial compensation that the army could not offer.

Swayed either by conscience or fear of military confiscation, the county magistrates agreed to Washington's terms. The civilian population turned out to support the army gathered in defense of the state. The commander-in-chief reported to Major General William Heath in mid-January that the counties had "with great readiness complied with the requisition, and I flatter myself, that with economy we shall be enabled to live till we can be furnished in the usual manner."⁹² Colonel Joseph Lewis, commissary at Morristown, reported supplies had "come in very well" to camp from January 12 to 15. Lewis highlighted the fusion of military and civilian authority that had yielded this bounty. He credited the "united efforts" of the county magistrates, commissary, and army detachments that had organized collections from "every town in this county."⁹³

To move supplies to camp, the Continentals adapted their transportation methods to suit winter conditions. The army needed to clear roads of snow to allow wagons to pass through to camp. Washington employed the militia to drive civilian horse teams to help "break roads" open and keep them cleared.⁹⁴ Continentals not busy with other tasks in camp also cleared roads.⁹⁵ Sleds supplanted wagons since they could more easily transit snowy terrain than could wagons. Writing from Morristown on January 18, Captain John Patten of the Delaware Regiment reported that "provisions are now coming in fast." He believed the exertions of New Jersey and its neighbors would ensure the army would remain well supplied unless the weather once again sealed off the roads.⁹⁶ Washington observed to Major General William Heath that "our dependence is upon the continuance of the frost," which allowed the army to maintain its supply trains via sled.⁹⁷

The New Jersey counties succeeded in keeping the Main Army together through the January crisis. Improving weather made it possible to clear the roads and bring supplies into camp, and through February the rank-and-file enjoyed a relative abundance of provisions. Given the ongoing financial crisis and ramshackle transportation network, however, the food supply remained tenuous. Greene reported in early February that “we have now a tolerable supply; but we have no magazines or money to form any; and therefore our stock cannot last long.” He characterized the county requisitions as a “temporary relief,” and believed that in the longer term it would not prove “a useful system.”⁹⁸

The army’s tenuous lines of communication running along inadequate mountain roads remained at the mercy of the weather. Provision shortages abated for only six weeks between mid-January and the beginning of March. Melting snows then removed the option of sled transport and turned the state’s roads to mud. The unsettled weather of early spring hindered crossings of the Delaware, disrupting the flow of provisions from Pennsylvania.⁹⁹ In Washington’s assessment, his men would again have to depend on whatever could be acquired locally “until the state of the roads will permit flour from the southward.” Transportation also suffered from the fiscal crisis. A lack of funds made it difficult to hire wagon teams, reducing the army’s ability to transport supplies from distant mills. Given New Jersey’s exertions during January, Washington estimated that state could offer minimal additional support. He likewise expected little further help from Connecticut, which had provided most of the Main Army’s cattle.¹⁰⁰ On March 20, Colonel Josiah Harmar of the 3rd Pennsylvania Regiment noticed “great murmuring amongst the troops,” as they had not had bread in four days. Similar conditions prevailed

five days later.¹⁰¹ Nathanael Greene lamented that army was reduced to subsisting on corn meal, with stocks small and little chance of resupply.¹⁰² Ebenezer Parkman complained “very short as to provisions,” at the end of the month.¹⁰³

The interruptions experienced in March set a pattern that continued through the spring, as periodic provisions scarcities continued at Jockey Hollow until the end of the encampment. Transportation remained the most salient problem. The impressment of wagon teams, coupled with the requisition of the last extant supplies in northern New Jersey, alleviated the worst of the shortages by late-April. Beef scarcities lessened whenever cattle drives made it through the mountains and into camp. The spring thaw had, by late April, yielded passable roads and uncovered pastures, removing the main environmental impediments to transportation. Cattle arrived from Connecticut in late April and early May, their passage eased by improving road conditions. Whenever a cattle drive suffered a delay, or wagons were unavailable, however, the Continentals at Morristown went hungry. Ebenezer Parkman recorded in his diary on May 13 that provisions were again “very short” in camp.¹⁰⁴ On May 20, former Continental Major General Philip Schuyler, visiting Morristown as part of a Congressional committee, reported that the army once more found itself without meat for two days.¹⁰⁵ Yet, on May 26, Washington again complained his men were “reduced to a situation of extremity for want of meat.”¹⁰⁶

Through May, Washington’s army continued its hand-to-mouth existence. While no periods of outright starvation recurred, officers and men nevertheless struggled to maintain a steady flow of food. At the end of May, the Continental Army took measures to organize the broad participation on the states in maintaining the flow of victuals during

the campaign season. Washington called upon every state from Virginia northwards to furnish provisions including food, forage, wagons, and horses for the Main Army, with deliveries to begin at the start of July and continue through November. These moves would hopefully keep the army fed during the coming campaign. Yet by this point, the worst of the Continentals' logistical difficulties had already subsided. Just as finance, climate, geography, and strategy had conspired to render the army hungry through the winter, these factors now combined to restore a steadier flow of foodstuffs by June. With the roads now dry, cattle and wagon trains moved with ease. The declining size of the army also lightened its burden on the region. The First and Second Maryland Brigades departed for the Southern Department in March, while the New York Brigade left for Albany a month later. Expiring enlistments and desertions reduced Washington's numbers down to roughly 5,000 by June 1780, less than half of what he had brought to Morris County the previous December.

The combination of appeals to civilians' virtue and patriotism, cooperation with local government, and veiled threats cajoled New Jersey's population into providing for the army during the depths of the winter crisis. Through spring, similar tactics kept soldiers fed sporadically. The expansion of the Continentals' grasp through Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia compensated for the exhaustion of supplies in New Jersey. The broad causes of the 1779-1780 supply crisis were not endemic to Morristown or log-hut city method of quartering. Through 1781, Continental troops throughout the Thirteen States dealt with periodic shortages of food and worthless currency. The ascent of Robert Morris to direct the nation's finances in 1781 alleviated some of the worst of the fiscal crisis, as did an influx of French and Spanish currency.¹⁰⁷

Nevertheless, the army's castrametation methods specifically exacerbated its logistical difficulties at Morristown by keeping the bulk of the army concentrated and locating the camp in a region with poor roads.

Winter Operations

Washington's decision to quarter his army in a concentrated encampment distant from the enemy carried strategic consequences. Continental troops would be able to offer only limited protection to New Jersey communities closer to the British base in New York. Unlike European armies that commonly retired to winter quarters in neutral territory, however, the Continentals remained beholden to civilian political concerns. Washington could not abandon his host state's Whig inhabitants without risking a loss of popular support, nor could he ignore civilians' trade with the British garrison across the Hudson. Therefore, throughout the winter of 1779-1780, Continental forces served away from the Morristown encampment, guarding New Jersey's borders against illicit trade and Royalist incursions. These troops, usually a brigade in strength, took position along the Essex County waterfront opposite Staten Island. Outposts covered Newark Bay, the Arthur Kill, and Kill van Kull waterways, what contemporaries collectively referred to as "the Sound." Quiet in 1778-1779, its shores hosted several sharp skirmishes during 1780.

British and Hessian forces maintained their winter quarters in New York, their strength diminished by the detachment of 8,000 men for an expedition against Charleston, South Carolina. The troops left behind under Wilhelm von Knyphausen occupied a mix of public buildings, houses, fortifications, barracks, and huts as it had the

previous year.¹⁰⁸ One German soldier recorded his regiment wintered in an old brewery along the banks of the Hudson.¹⁰⁹

The Rebels refined their approach to outpost duty just as they did to building quarters. For the Morristown winter, Washington opted not to permanently detach a single brigade to the Sound. Given the ineffectiveness and exhaustion Maxwell's troops experienced in 1778-1779, Washington chose instead to rotate troops from Morristown to the ground opposite New York. A rotation system allowed soldiers to return to the main encampment for rest and training, gave units experience in more active operations, and eased the logistical burden of supplying the entire force in one place. The commander-in-chief cautioned outpost commanders not to deploy their troops too far forward, as Maxwell had the previous year. To place the bulk of a brigade at one of the principal towns in the area such as Newark, Elizabethtown, or Perth Amboy, appeared to Washington "too much exposed to a surprise," and threatened any garrison with encirclement. Instead, he suggested keeping the main body of the brigade several miles inland, with only a rotating guard posted to the most exposed areas.¹¹⁰

Throughout December and early January, Patriot brigades manned the outpost line in Essex County with minimal interference from the British. Brigadier General Samuel Holden Parsons' brigade of Connecticut troops, followed by Brigadier General William Irvine's Pennsylvanians, patrolled the New Jersey waterways opposite Staten Island. Their tasks focused on suppressing illegal trade with New York and gathering intelligence about enemy strength. Outpost commanders faced greater challenges in finding shelter than their peers at Jockey Hollow. A lack of hut-building materials in Essex County forced men to billet in villages. This broke up cohesion and left troops in

isolated posts at Westfield, Crane's Mills, and Rahway, despite Washington's warnings. The forward-deployed brigades suffered provisions shortages in January just as did the main encampment. Like the rest of the army, forward brigades sought supplies from local inhabitants and offered them certificates in lieu of depleted currency. The isolation of small posts, close proximity to British positions, and hardships endured all contributed to increased desertion rates.¹¹¹

Amidst the shortages that plagued the entire army throughout January, Washington discerned an opportune moment for a limited offensive. The extreme cold that arrived in the northeast that winter covered the region's littoral waterways with ice. The climate presented Washington with an improbable opportunity: the ability to attack British positions in New York without naval support. On January 10, he informed his subordinates that he intended to launch a raid against British and Loyalist posts on Staten Island. Whether or not Washington had read Frederick's *Instructions* or not remains unknown, but the former's recognition that a frozen river offered a commander the opportunity to strike an opponent's quarters strongly resembled the Prussian king's commentaries on his 1740 Silesian campaign.

Washington placed Lord Stirling in command of the raid. Logistical need influenced the decision to attack. Stirling was to "bring off or destroy all public stores of every kind, and fat cattle and sheep." Officers and soldiers would divide all public property confiscated during the attack. Any soldier taking property for himself rather than appropriating it for the overall pool would forfeit his share and suffer a court martial. Washington prohibited the expedition from seizing any private property, but he excepted animals that might feed the troops given the army's food shortages.

Washington's formal orders for the attack also reflected his clear understanding of the importance of shelter to his enemy during the severe winter. As a secondary goal, Stirling's men were to destroy any military shelter standing on the island.¹¹² Ultimately, 2,600 men took part in the attack, including Irvine's in-place brigade, Colonel Moses Hazen's Canadian Regiment, and two additional detachments made from the Morristown encampment under Colonel Walter Stewart. An unknown number of New Jersey militia joined the columns during their march from Morristown. One New York officer recorded that 500 sleighs provided transportation.¹¹³

Despite the Continentals' careful preparations, Stirling's attack failed to achieve its objectives. Given the frequent civilian passages across the Sound, word of the attack reached the Staten Island garrison notwithstanding all efforts to maintain operational security. Stirling's force encountered well-prepared defenses. The New Jersey major general feared that reinforcements might soon arrive from Manhattan, despite the ongoing poor weather. With no time available to starve the garrison into surrender, Stirling took whatever useful supplies he could find and withdrew to New Jersey as his rearguard skirmished with British pursuers. The accompanying militia demonstrated poor discipline and focused on plundering private property. Stirling later ordered the stolen goods returned.¹¹⁴ Overall, he found the regulars had "in general showed a good disposition" but regretted more had not been achieved in the attack.¹¹⁵ Washington perceived that "no bad consequences could possibly result," from affecting the operation. Ultimately the foray gained and lost little.¹¹⁶

The Staten Island raid demonstrated the Continental Army's limited offensive proficiency during the winter. Over the following months, the enemy tested the Rebels'

defensive capabilities. Throughout the remainder of January and February, British forces under the direction of the New York garrison's temporary commander, Hessian Major General Baron Wilhelm von Knyphausen, retaliated against the Patriot outposts in Essex County. The frozen waterways facilitated the enemy attacks as much as they had the Continentals' offensive. Like Washington's Staten Island raid, the British sorties sought to destroy Patriot quarters and carry-off supplies. The frozen waterways around New York had interrupted the flow supplies to the British garrison. The redcoats and Hessians therefore sought to gather food and fuel at the Patriots' expense in New Jersey. An attack by Staten Island-based Loyalist troops struck Essex County on the night of January 25-26. The raiders burned the Presbyterian meeting house and court house in Elizabethtown, as well as the Newark Academy which had been used to quarter Continental detachments in that town. The surprised outposts, now under the command of Colonel Moses Hazen, lost eight killed and sixty-seven captured.¹¹⁷

Continental reevaluated their defensive arrangements following the British success. Washington dispatched Major General Arthur St. Clair to Morristown to "investigate the causes of the late misfortune & disgrace." Washington wanted St. Clair to examine the location of guard detachments and determine if outposts might be better placed to ensure ample warning in the event of another British attack.¹¹⁸ St. Clair's assessment of Continental outposts revealed several flaws in the existing defensive layout. The major general found Continental units widely spread, with posts at Rahway, Crane's Mills, Connecticut Farms, Elizabethtown, and Newark, as well as three small guard detachments along the waterfront opposite Staten Island. St. Clair figured that the lack of available housing in the region meant that these dispositions were as compact as

“the nature of the cantonment will allow.” The distances between these places and the lack of horses for communications, however, rendered “it very easy to surprise one or other of the posts.” St. Clair told Washington that to adequately cover the region would require a larger body of men than was currently available. To further disperse the current force into numerous “small bodies,” would increase its vulnerability to raids and encourage desertion.

With further reinforcement unlikely, St. Clair set about adjusting the deployment of his available men to ensure a stronger defense. He reduced the garrison at Elizabethtown, asserting that a leaner force “would answer every purpose that could be expected from the hundred as they may when on for one day only be kept constantly alert and half of them at a time patrolling during the night.” He recommended active patrols replace stationary guards to better secure the ground between posts. Given the distances between most positions, the general suggested that these patrols should be horse-mounted. As the outposts helped to protect New Jersey’s civilian population, St. Clair hoped that the state might provide the necessary animals.¹¹⁹ Colonel Moses Hazen reiterated the need for horses in a January 29 letter to Washington. Hazen claimed that while he had attempted to implement mounted patrols prior to the Elizabethtown raid, poor execution on the part of his subordinates and an insufficient number of horses limited the patrols’ effectiveness.¹²⁰

Washington agreed with his subordinates’ suggestions that more horsemen were needed to secure the gaps between infantry posts. He accepted a proposal by Essex County militia Captain Daniel Marsh to raise a force of forty-five mounted militia to act as an advanced guard. Washington dictated that twenty of these be placed on nightly

patrols along the Sound as long as the waterway remained frozen. These mounted scouts would facilitate the withdrawal of all isolated detachments during the night to prevent future ambushes. Washington recommended that some infantry augment the militia cavalry to strengthen this advanced force. He also suggested that in the event of an enemy attack all units fall back “into a chain of cantonment upon a line with Westfield.”¹²¹ This would place the outpost force eight miles west of the sound and twelve miles southeast of Jockey Hollow. As a whole, these late January arrangements focused on limiting Continentals’ exposure to ambush in the face of an aggressive enemy.

St. Clair’s adjustments limited the damage subsequent British attacks inflicted. On February 11, Rebel positions resisted British raids targeting Elizabethtown, Rahway, and Woodbridge. St. Clair reported that the troops at the latter two locales were “timely apprised” of the enemy’s approach and withdrew with minimal casualties. The implementation of mounted patrols mitigated the risk of a surprise. So too had the reduction of the number of troops deployed near the waterfront. Yet St. Clair still felt that the outpost forces remained too weak to stop a major enemy incursion and acknowledged that snow-covered roads had hindered the British advance as much as Patriot resistance. Had St. Clair’s opponents intended to “fall upon our rear,” he believed “they had troops enough to have given us full occupation, and them the opportunity.”¹²² On February 19, British forces made another incursion into New Jersey, this time towards at Newark. Mounted patrols again provided sufficient warning of the raid, and the town’s garrison quickly retired to the high ground to the west. There the Continentals decided to stand and fight after learning that the attacking force comprised only 100 infantry. Patriot regulars and militia counterattacked the raiding column, pursuing them back to the

Passaic River. Crown forces captured two civilians, but St. Clair suffered no military losses in the skirmish. While the British lost no men either, they did abandon twenty head of cattle that had been collected during their advance.¹²³

These successful Patriot responses deterred further British forays. Compared to January and February, little combat occurred in Essex County during March. Warming temperatures thawed the ice bridge connecting New York and New Jersey. Without it, British forces had to rely on boats to conduct their raids. Strengthened Whig resistance further deterred future attacks in Essex County. The New York garrison therefore fell quiet, while Patriot outposts under Major General Johann de Kalb that March, turned to curtailing illicit trade along the sound. Stymied in Essex, on March 23 and April 15 the British instead raided into Bergen County. The latter attack achieved for the redcoats their greatest success since the Newark and Elizabethtown attacks in January. On April 15, they captured nearly 200 Continentals, militia, and Whig civilians near Paramus. After this skirmish, the front lines fell quiet. The wet weather that characterized much of May left the ground in New Jersey unsuitable for even small operations. In addition, the spring thaw opened New York to steadier resupply. This lessened the British garrison's need to supplement provisions with foraging in New Jersey.¹²⁴

Washington and his subordinates had proven adept in devising suitable measures for covering the New Jersey countryside while keeping most of the army out of contact with the enemy. By early June, however, the Patriots' strategic situation in northern New Jersey had deteriorated significantly from that of the beginning of winter. The Main Army at Morristown dwindled to some 4,000 men. Three brigades departed for other theaters, while expiring enlistments and desertion left the remaining units understrength.

At Morristown, food shortages contributed to the brief mutiny of the Connecticut Line in late May. Finally, word reached New Jersey at the beginning of June of the Patriot disaster at Charleston, South Carolina. There nearly 5,000 Continentals and militia had surrendered to General Sir Henry Clinton on May 12. After the fall of the South's largest city Royal troops were expected to return to New York in early June.¹²⁵

This context reveals the importance of Washington's employment of remote encampments to Patriot strategy. Threatened by an opponent with superior numbers and in command of local waterways, the Main Army presented a vulnerable target if it were to emerge from the Highlands into the plain of the Raritan, the Hackensack Valley, or the Lower Hudson. Conversely, Washington could use secure lines of communication to shift forces to the region's strategic lynchpin at West Point as long as he retained his main body west of the Watchungs. During June 1780, the British garrison in New York directly threatened the Rebels' position at Morristown. Bolstered by reports of mutiny and desertion in the Continental camp and widespread disaffection among the civilian population, Major General von Knyphausen in New York resolved to launch an offensive into New Jersey on the night of June 6. Rather than use the well-traveled routes up the Raritan or Hudson, he pursued a new approach targeting Morristown via a march from Staten Island through the gap in the Watchungs near Chatham. The Rebels' reliance on the log-hut city at Jockey Hollow as a fixed base and supply depot offered the British with a discernable objective for a limited attack. The loss of the supplies and infrastructure concentrated at Morristown presented a potentially crippling blow to the Main Army in New Jersey.¹²⁶ Sir Henry Clinton in his memoirs highlighted the vulnerability of seizing the Continentals' "grand depot of military stores at Morristown

and capture or disperse the force that covered them.”¹²⁷ To do so, Crown forces needed to cross into New Jersey and penetrate into the Highlands.

Studies of the ensuing June 1780 campaign have interpreted the skirmishes that unfolded during that month as parts of an attempt to bring Washington to battle, incite a Loyalist uprising in the state, or the seize the Patriot base at Morristown.¹²⁸ Whatever the reasoning behind the expedition, it is evident Knyphausen expected to encounter minimal opposition from the militia. He believed the tattered remains of Washington’s Continentals could be defeated in a pitched battle to defend their quarters before Morristown. In actuality, the Rebels proved more resilient than Crown forces had envisioned. Although the Patriots faced 6,000 Hessians, redcoats, and Loyalists, they successfully employed the flexible defense they had developed in combatting enemy raids over the winter. Maxwell’s New Jersey Brigade, manning the outpost line since mid-May, accurately reported the size and direction of the enemy invasion to Washington on June 7 while avoiding a general engagement against a superior force. The commander-in-chief, properly warned, sent away whatever supplies and stores that could be moved from Morristown and prepared to move the Main Army to reinforce Maxwell. By late afternoon, the six brigades from Jockey Hollow had arrived to defend the gap near Chatham. Royal troops faced the prospect of attacking a prepared enemy holding the high ground, with a hostile militia threatening the flanks and rear. When word arrived that Clinton’s force from the Carolinas would soon return with reinforcements for a much stronger attack, Knyphasuen retired to Elizabethtown after burning the village of Connecticut Farms.¹²⁹

Although the British now held a position on the New Jersey side of the Sound, Washington adjusted his deployments to maintain a defensive pattern similar to that used over the preceding months. A mixture of Continentals and militia maintained a close watch on Knyphausen's troops at Elizabethtown Point. Maxwell's Brigade received 300 reinforcements under Brigadier General Edward Hand drawn from the other Continental brigades, placed command. Elements of the Morris and Essex County militia also joined the advance force. For the following two weeks, Patriot and Crown forces skirmished in the Elizabethtown vicinity. From June 8, Lord Stirling led the frontline contingent. After June 12, von Steuben took command. Knyphausen held his position and set about building a pontoon bridge connecting Elizabethtown to Staten Island, which the British completed on June 16. On June 17, Sir Henry Clinton's fleet arrived at New York. Assuming overall command, Clinton adopted a new strategy. Knyphausen's men would remain at Elizabethtown and tie down Patriot forces in New Jersey, while Clinton would lead an expedition up the Hudson to seize West Point. Secret intelligence from the treasonous Continental Major General Benedict Arnold indicated that West Point could be captured easily.¹³⁰

Clinton's arrival led Washington to re-evaluate the strategic situation in New York and New Jersey. While Knyphausen's presence in Elizabethtown threatened Continental stores at Morristown, the Rebel commander recognized West Point importance to securing the entire region. He therefore arrayed his brigades to ensure its protection. On June 21, Washington ordered the majority of his Main Army, the First and Second Pennsylvania brigades, First and Second Connecticut brigades, and Hand's Brigade, to prepare for a march to West Point. Major General Arthur St. Clair would lead

this force of 2,500 men. The Continentals' control of the Watchungs allowed Washington to divide his army and trust that St. Clair's wing could march to West Point unmolested, covered by hills to their east. Maxwell's and Stark's brigades, joined by Colonel Henry Lee's Legion, a mixed force of infantry and cavalry arriving from Burlington, along with the New Jersey militia, remained to screen Knyphausen at Elizabethtown. Major General Nathanael Greene took charge of this wing. Washington also ordered whatever baggage possible removed from the army's huts at Jockey Hollow and moved to local homes, where it might escape British attention if they seized the log-hut city. Uncertain of British intentions, the commander-in-chief ordered St. Clair on June 22 to halt his march to West Point at Rockaway Bridge, north of Morristown. From there, these brigades could be recalled to protect Morristown if Clinton should direct his main effort at New Jersey, or be sent on to West Point. Washington had afforded himself strategic flexibility in the June 1780 operations by placing his base behind a natural barrier remote from his opponent. Distance and terrain gave the Rebels time to organize a defense of the Morristown encampment if needed. Alternatively, they could economize by leaving a weak detachment to deter an enemy advance while sending the bulk of the army to protect the strategic prize at West Point.¹³¹

On June 23, Knyphausen's men surged forward from Elizabethtown once more. Meanwhile, Clinton sailed up the Hudson to threaten West Point. The Hessian general was to fix Continental troops in New Jersey and march on Morristown if opposition proved light. Reinforced by the Loyalist Queen's Rangers, Knyphausen proceeded in two columns over the same rout as the June 7 expedition. Facing these 6,000 men stood some 1,500 Continentals. Again relying on the distance separating Knyphausen from

Morristown, Greene arranged his units for a defense-in-depth. The 1st and 2nd New Jersey Regiments, the 2nd Rhode Island Regiment, Lee's Legion, and the militia established a series of blocking positions along the two main roads from Elizabethtown through the Watchungs. The rest of Stark and Maxwell's brigades stayed near Chatham as a main line of defense.¹³²

The British, German, and Loyalist units advanced steadily on June 23. Lacking artillery, the Patriots relied on heavy fire from the cover of homes, fences, and woods before withdrawing in the face of superior numbers. As during the June 7 attack, Rebel militia energetically harassed the flanks and rear of the British column. Washington turned St. Clair's force at Rockaway Bridge back to Morristown. He gambled that if Clinton did press up the Hudson, West Point could resist until the crisis in New Jersey had passed. Ultimately, the British commander-in-chief decided to call off his operation based on reports that the French fleet and expeditionary force were due to arrive in American waters soon. Knyphausen, who had pushed beyond Connecticut Farms to the village of Springfield, once again withdrew after burning Whig civilian homes. On June 24, Crown forces pulled back to Staten Island and removed the pontoon bridge. This ended the limited British offensive, the last significant incursion New Jersey suffered during the war.¹³³

Conclusion

Over the course of the 1779-1780 winter, the Continental Army erected a complex of well-built huts at Jockey Hollow that afforded officers and men protection from the elements during the coldest and snowiest conditions experienced during the war

in the middle states. Applying lessons learned from previous encampments, the Continentals maintained order and cleanliness within their quarters. Doing so ensured the army retained its health and discipline for the next campaign. Patriot officers and soldiers also met the challenges resulting from Washington's demand for a more secure encampment site located further from New York. Nathanael Greene and his staff found a locale that satisfied castrametation requirements while also placing the Continentals in a defensible, remote locale. Greene kept the army provisioned at Jockey Hollow, despite the transportation problems its isolated location incurred. While the Patriots did frequently go hungry that winter, even in the worst conditions the army never lost many men to starvation, nor did the army dissolve.

Success in the Springfield campaign highlighted the importance of remotely located log-hut cities to Patriot strategy. Ensclosed in the New Jersey Highlands, Washington's army stood secure from enemy attack despite its declining numbers. The commander-in-chief's decision to quarter the army west of the Watchungs, rather than at the originally preferred Scotch Plains location, proved sound. Two enemy attacks in June 1780 thrust seven miles inland from Staten Island, the same distance that separated Scotch Plains from British lines. Events thus demonstrated that the Patriots' first choice for winter quarters east of the Watchungs could have been easily threatened by the New York garrison. Given the Rebels' lack of wagons and forage, it is likely that had the log-hut city been placed near Scotch Plains, an enemy offensive could have seized many stores and wrecked the army's quartering infrastructure. Instead, the British and Hessians faced another fifteen miles of rough ground held by an alert Continental Army. Distance and terrain preserved the log-hut city. Improved discipline, administrative skill, and

Washington's and Greene's leadership ensured that Rebel soldiers passed the winter as healthy, well-covered, and well-fed as circumstances would allow. The Continental Army's way of castrametation thereby survived its greatest test.

Chapter 6 Notes

¹ Nathanael Greene to Moore Furman, September 17, 1779; Greene to Nehemiah Hubbard, September 17, 1779, both in Richard K. Showman, Dennis R. Conrad, and Roger N. Parks eds. *The Papers of Nathanael Greene*, 13 vols. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1976-2005), 4: 393.

² Nathanael Greene to Moore Furman, September 17, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 4: 393.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Nathanael Greene to Clement Biddle, October 18, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 473-74.

⁵ Biddle to Greene, October 30, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 522-24.

⁶ Furman to Greene, October 29, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 519.

⁷ Biddle to Greene, October 30, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 522-23.

⁸ James Caldwell to Greene, October 27, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 504-5.

⁹ Arthur St. Clair to Washington, November 2, 1779, in William Henry Smith, ed., *The St. Clair Papers: The Life and Public Services of Arthur St. Clair*, 2 vols. (Cincinnati: Robert Clark and Company, 1881), 1: 489-92.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Greene to Furman, November 3, 1779, in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 5: 9.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Biddle to Greene, November 3, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 11.

¹⁴ Greene to Abeel, November 4, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 12-13.

¹⁵ Paul G.E. Clemens and Peter O. Wacker, *Land Use in Early New Jersey: A Historical Geography* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1995), 55.

¹⁶ Greene to Washington, November 20, 1779, in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 5: 102-4.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Clemens and Wacker, *Land Use*, 71.

¹⁹ Biddle to Greene, November 6, 1779, Lord Stirling to Greene, November 9, 1779, both in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 5: 22, 44.

²⁰ James Abeel to Nathanael Greene, November 17, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 91.

²¹ Nathanael Greene to George Washington, November 20, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 102-4.

²² Greene to Washington, November 14, 1779, in W.W. Abbot et. al., eds., *The Papers of George Washington: Revolutionary War Series*, 25 vols. to date (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1987-), 23: 264.

²³ Washington to McDougall, November 14, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 260.

²⁴ Archer Jones, *The Art of War in the Western World*, (Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 387.

²⁵ Greene to Washington, November 17, 1779, in *PGW, Revolutionary War Series*, 23: 312.

²⁶ Greene to Washington, November 23, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 406-07.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ Greene to Washington, November 27, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 444-45.

²⁹ Washington to Greene, November 25, 1779, in John C. Fitzpatrick, *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799*, 39 vols. (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1931-1954), 17: 185.

³⁰ Greene to Washington, November 27, 1779, in *PGW, Revolutionary War Series*, 23: 444-45.

³¹ Washington to Greene, November 30, 1779, Greene to Washington, November 27, 1779, both in *Ibid.*, 490.

³² Livingston to Washington, December 7, 1779; Washington to Livingston, December 12, 1779, both in *Ibid.*, 548-49, 585-86.

³³ Alexander Scammell to unknown, December 8, 1779, Lloyd W. Smith Collection, Morristown National Historical Park, Morristown, New Jersey.

³⁴ As quoted in Friedrich Kapp, *The Life of John Kalb, Major-General in the Revolutionary Army* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1870), 187. Italics are my own.

³⁵ Friedrich Wilhem von Steuben, *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States* (Philadelphia, PA: Styner and Cist, 1779), 76-77.

³⁶ Washington to Greene, November 17, 1779, in Fitzpatrick, *Writings of Washington*, 17: 119.

³⁷ Edward S. Rutsch and Kim M. Peters, "Forty Years of Archaeological Research at Morristown National Historical Park, Morristown, New Jersey," *Historical Archaeology* 11, (1977), 21.

³⁸ Washington to Greene, November 17, 1779, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 23: 309-10.

³⁹ Robert K. Wright, *The Continental Army*, (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1986), 142.

⁴⁰ General Orders, December 3, 1779, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 23: 511.

⁴¹ Edward Hand to Greene, December 15, 1779, in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 5: 127.

⁴² Walter Finney, "The Walter Finney Diary," ed. Joseph Lee Boyle, *New Jersey History* 121 (2003): 59.

⁴³ Washington to Greene, November 17, 1779, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 23: 309-10.

⁴⁴ Greene to Washington, November 17, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 312.

⁴⁵ General Orders, November 19, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 338.

⁴⁶ Benjamin Gilbert, *A Citizen-Soldier in the American Revolution: The Diary of Benjamin Gilbert in Massachusetts and New York*, Rebecca D. Symmes, ed. (Cooperstown: New York Historical Association, 1980), 75.

⁴⁷ Rutsch and Peters, "Forty Years of Archaeological Research," 24.

⁴⁸ Jacqueline Thibaut, *In the True Rustic Order: Material Aspects of the Valley Forge Encampment, 1777-1778*, (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1980), 67.

⁴⁹ Brigade Orders, December 6, 1779, Orderly Book of the Second New York Regiment, New York Brigade, von Steuben Papers, New York Historical Society, New York, NY.

⁵⁰ Almon W. Lauber, ed., *Orderly Books of the Fourth New York Regiment, 1778-1780, The Second New York Regiment, 1780-1783, by Samuel Tallmadge and Others, with Diaries of Samuel Tallmadge, 1780-1782 and John Barr, 1779-1782* (Albany: The University of the State of New York, 1932), 192.

⁵¹ Quoted in Kapp, *Life of John Kalb*, 189.

⁵² James Thacher, *A Military Journal during the American Revolutionary War, from 1775 to 1783; Describing Interesting Events and Transactions of this Period; with Numerous Historical Sketches of Several General Officers* (Boston: Cottons & Barnard, 1827), 181.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 185.

⁵⁴ Ebenezer Huntington to Andrew Huntington, December 3, 1779, in Ebenezer Huntington, *Letters Written by Ebenezer Huntington during the American Revolution* (New York: Chas, Fred, Hartman, 1914), 82.

⁵⁵ Walter Finney, "Diary," 59.

⁵⁶ Lauber, *4th New York Orderly Book*, 816.

⁵⁷ Elijah Fisher reported the Commander-in-Chief's guard gathered timber on December 6, 1780, and had moved into their huts by December 9. See Elijah Fisher, *Elijah Fisher's Journal while in the War For Independence and Continued Two Years after he came to Maine, 1775-1784* (Augusta, ME: Badger and Manley, 1880), 11; Wayne to Joseph Reed, December 28, 1778, quoted in Carl Prince, *Middlebrook: The American Eagle's Nest* (Somerville, NJ: Somerset Press, 1958), 13.

⁵⁸ G.S. Conover, ed., *Journals of the Military Expedition of Major General John Sullivan against the Six Nations of Indians in 1779, with Records of Centennial Celebrations, Prepared Pursuant to Chapter 361, Laws of the State of New York, of 1885, by Frederick Cook, Secretary of State* (Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1970), 190.

⁵⁹ Thacher, *Journal*, 179.

⁶⁰ William Heath to George Clinton, January 25, 1780, Hugh Hastings, ed., *The Public Papers of George Clinton, First Governor of New York*, 10 vols. (New York: Wynkoop Hallenbeck Crawford: 1899), 5: 465.

⁶¹ Jeremiah Greenman, *Diary of a Common Soldier in the American Revolution, 1775-1783: An Annotated Edition to the Military Journal of Jeremiah Greenman*, (DeKlab: Northern Illinois University Press, 1978), 169.

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- ⁶² General Orders, December 25, 1779, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 23: 713.
- ⁶³ Brigade Orders, April 17, 1780, Spencer's Regiment Orderly Book, Regimental Orderly Books, Morristown National Historical Park.
- ⁶⁴ Brigade Orders, April 21, 1780, *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁵ Anonymous Sketch, n.d., Park Collection, Morristown National Historical Park.
- ⁶⁶ Rutsch and Peters, "Forty Years of Archaeological Research," 24.
- ⁶⁷ General Orders, February 16, 1780, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 24: 483-84.
- ⁶⁸ General Orders, March 8, 1780, in *Ibid.*, 659-60.
- ⁶⁹ Regimental Orders, Hazen's Regiment, February 1, 1780, Hazen's Regiment Orderly Book, Regimental Orderly Books, Morristown National Historical Park.
- ⁷⁰ Regimental Orders, March 5, 1780, Sherburne's Regiment Orderly Book, , Lloyd W. Smith Collection, Morristown National Historical Park.
- ⁷¹ Brigade Orders, March 8, 1780, 2nd Battalion, Artillery Brigade Orderly Book, Regimental Orderly Books, Morristown National Historical Park.
- ⁷² Charles H. Lesser, *Sinews Independence: Monthly Strength Reports of the Continental Army* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), xxxi.
- ⁷³ E. Wayne Carp, *To Starve the Army at Pleasure: Continental Army Administration and American Political Culture, 1775-1783*(Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 104-13.
- ⁷⁴ Thacher, *Journal*, 177.
- ⁷⁵ Ebenezer Huntington to Samuel Blachley Webb, December 29, 1779 and January 6, 1780, in Samuel Blachley Webb, *Reminiscences of General Samuel B. Webb of the Revolutionary Army*, J. Watson Webb et. al. eds. (New York: Globe Stationary and Printing, 1882), 201, 202.
- ⁷⁶ Alexander Scammel to unknown, December 8, 1779, Lloyd W. Smith Collection, Morristown National Historical Park.
- ⁷⁷ Greene to Unidentified Person, January 11, 1780, in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 5: 522-23.

⁷⁸ Furman to Greene, November 22, 1779, in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 5: 107; Washington to Congress, December 10, 1779, in Fitzpatrick, *Writings of Washington*, 17: 241.

⁷⁹ Washington to Samuel Huntington, December 15, 1779, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 23: 622-23.

⁸⁰ S. Sydney Bradford, "Hunger Menaces the American Revolution," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 61, (1966): 4

⁸¹ Francis Swaine to Joseph Reed, January 6, 1780, in *Pennsylvania Archives*, 2nd Ser., 8:76.

⁸² Thacher, *Military Journal*, 181.

⁸³ Washington to Samuel Huntington, January 4, 1780, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 24: 25-7.

⁸⁴ Greene to Furman, January 4, 1780, in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers* 5: 230.

⁸⁵ Washington to Samuel Huntington, January 5, 1780, in *Ibid.*, 41-43.

⁸⁶ Washington to the New Jersey Magistrates, January 7, 1780, in *Ibid.*, 49-51

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ Wayne E. Lee, *Barbarians and Brothers: Anglo-American Warfare, 1500-1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 199.

⁸⁹ Washington to the New Jersey Magistrates, January 7, 1780, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 24: 49-51.

⁹⁰ Gregory F. Walsh, "'Most Boundless Avarice': Illegal Trade in Revolutionary Essex," in *The American Revolution in New Jersey: Where the Battlefield Meets the Home Front*, James J. Gigantino III, ed., (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2015), 32-53.

⁹¹ For British foraging operations around New York in 1778, see Todd Braisted, *Grand Forage 1778: The Battleground Around New York City* (Yardley PA: Westholme, 2016).

⁹² Washington to Heath, January 14, 1780, in Fitzpatrick, *Writings of Washington*, 17: 395-98.

⁹³ Joseph Lewis to Moore Furman, January 15, 1780, Joseph Lewis Letterbook, Lloyd W. Smith Collection, Morristown National Historical Park.

⁹⁴ Greene to Benomi Hathaway, January 6, 1780, in Showman, et. al., *Green Papers*, 5: 243.

⁹⁵ Gilbert, *Citizen-Soldier*, 62.

⁹⁶ John Patten to Caesar Rodney, January 18, 1780, in George Herbert Ryden ed., *Letters to and From Caesar Rodney*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1933), 332-33.

⁹⁷ Washington to Heath, February 1, 1780, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 24: 343-44.

⁹⁸ Nathanael Greene to Christopher Greene, February 10, 1780, in in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 5: 362-64.

⁹⁹ Jacob Weiss to John Mitchell, April 6, 1780, in Jacob Weiss, *Jacob Weiss Letterbook*, Melville J. Boyer, ed. (Allentown, PA: Lehigh County Historical Society, 1956), 91.

¹⁰⁰ Washington to Congress, March 17, 1780, in Fitzpatrick, *Writings of Washington*, 18: 121-22.

¹⁰¹ Josiah Harmar's Diary, March 20 and March 25, Lyman Draper Papers, Wisconsin Historical Society.

¹⁰² Greene to Wadsworth, March 17, 1780, in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 5: 459-60.

¹⁰³ Ebenezer Parkman Diary, March 31, 1780, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, MA.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, May 13, 1780.

¹⁰⁵ Schuyler to Ezra L'Hommedieu, May 20, 1780, in Paul H. Smith, ed., *Letters of Delegates to Congress, 1774-1789*, 26 vols. (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1976-2000), 15: 165-66.

¹⁰⁶ Washington to Jonathan Trumble, May 26, 1780, in Fitzpatrick, *Writings of Washington*, 18: 425.

¹⁰⁷ Carp, *To Starve the Army at Pleasure*, 191-217.

¹⁰⁸ James Robertson to George Germain, May 18, 1780, in Milton M. Klein and Ronald W. Howard, eds., *The Twilight of British Rule in Revolutionary America: The New York Letter Book of General James Robertson, 1780-1783* (Cooperstown: New York State Historical Association, 1983), 109-12.

¹⁰⁹ Stephen Popp, "Popp's Journal, 1777-1783," Joseph G. Rosegarten, ed. *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 26 (1901): 33.

¹¹⁰ Washington to Parsons December 13, 1779, and Washington to Maxwell, December 13, 1779, both in *PGW, Revolutionary War Series* 23: 600, 601-02.

¹¹¹ Irvine to Washington, January 4, 1780, in *Ibid.*, 24: 34.

¹¹² Instructions for Attack on Staten Island, December 1, 1780, in *Ibid.*, 112-16.

¹¹³ Lauber, *4th New York Regiment Orderly Book*, 817.

¹¹⁴ James Caldwell to Washington, January 19, 1780, in *PGW, Revolutionary War Series*, 24: 181.

¹¹⁵ Stirling to Washington, January 16, 1780, in *Ibid.*, 160-61.

¹¹⁶ Washington to Samuel Huntington, January 18, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 174-75.

¹¹⁷ Hazen to Washington, January 26, 1780, in *Ibid.*, 258-59. The Newark Academy served as a makeshift barracks for Patriot forces in that town throughout the war.

¹¹⁸ Washington to St. Clair, January 27, 1780, in *PGW, Revolutionary War Series*, 24: 296-98.

¹¹⁹ St. Clair to Washington, January 28, 1780, in *Ibid.*, 307-09.

¹²⁰ Hazen to Washington, January 29, 1780, in *Ibid.*, 314-15.

¹²¹ Washington to St. Clair, January 30, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 329-31.

¹²² St. Clair to Washington, February 11, 1780, in *Ibid.*, 444-46.

¹²³ St. Clair to Washington, February 20, 1780, in *Ibid.*, 530-31.

¹²⁴ Samuel Stelle Smith, *Winter at Morristown, 1779-1780: The Darkest Hour* (Monmouth Beach, NJ: Phillip Freneau Press, 1979), 28; Adrian Leiby, *The Revolutionary War in the Hackensack Valley: The Jersey Dutch and the Neutral Ground*,

1775-1783 (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1962), 232-52; Mark Kwasny, *Washington's Partisan War* (Kent, OH: Kent State Press, 1996), , 259.

¹²⁵ Smith, *Winter at Morristown*, 28-30.

¹²⁶ Smith, *Winter at Morristown*, 30-31; Kwasny, *Partisan War*, 260-61.

¹²⁷ Henry Clinton, *The American Rebellion: Sir Henry Clinton's Narrative of His Campaigns, 1775-1782, with an Appendix of Original Documents*, William B. Wilcox, ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), 190.

¹²⁸ Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America: British Leadership, the American Revolution, and the Fate of Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 233.

¹²⁹ Smith, *Winter at Morristown*, 31-32, 42; Kwasny, *Partisan War*, 261-62; Thomas Fleming, *The Forgotten Victory: The Battle for New Jersey, 1780* (New York: Reader's Digest Press, 1973), 99-113.

¹³⁰ Smith, *Winter at Morristown* 42; Fleming, *Forgotten Victory*, 221-34.

¹³¹ Smith, *Winter at Morristown*, 42; Fleming, *Forgotten Victory*, 235-64.

¹³² Smith, *Winter at Morristown*, 42-44; Fleming, *Forgotten Victory*, 268-89.

¹³³ Fleming, *Forgotten Victory*, 290-302.

CHAPTER 7

CIVILIANS AND SOLDIERS IN NORTHERN NEW JERSEY

In May 1777, the Continental Army gathered for a new campaign season in Morristown, New Jersey. Martha Bland, an upper-sort Virginian woman, spent several weeks visiting her husband Theodorick, a colonel in the First Continental Light Dragoons. On May 12, she wrote to her sister-in-law, France Bland Randolph, to share her impressions of the New Jersey town and the surrounding area. She described Morristown as “a clever little village.” The built environment of this northern New Jersey settlement caught Bland’s eye, as she pointed out the town’s three churches, which gave it “a consequential look.” In the vicinity, she related that one could not travel “three miles without passing through one of these villages,” every one of them containing meeting houses and court houses “decorated with steeples which gives them a pretty airy look.” The surrounding countryside also captured her attention. She described Morristown as “situated in the most beautiful valley at the foot of five mountains.” The landscape featured farms set between the mountains, “the most rural sweet spots in nature, their meadows of fine luxuriant grass,” interspersed with yellow, blue, and white flowers. Amidst the devastation of war, Morristown appeared a tranquil oasis, representing “such scenes as the poets paint Arcadia.”¹

Bland’s account illustrated northwestern New Jersey as a peaceful rural environment. The vistas the Virginian viewed resulted from the impact of European settlers who had first arrived in the region west of the Watchungs during the early decades of the eighteenth century. Over the course of the following generations, they

developed a thriving agrarian community nestled in the hills and valleys of the New Jersey Highlands. Morristown, with its “consequential look,” stood at the heart of this community.

While Bland still found much rural beauty in Morris County in May 1777, the region had actually experienced traumatic changes during the previous months. The Continental Army’s arrival in December 1776 and January 1777 wrought widespread damages to civilian property and disturbances to their communities. At the time of Bland’s writing, soldiers and refugees crowded into civilian homes in Morristown and nearby villages. Smallpox swept through Continental ranks as well as local families. Although Washington’s men departed New Jersey in July, they returned in strength in the autumn of 1778. Patriot regulars would remain in the region nearly until the war’s conclusion.

Northwestern New Jersey’s experience with war stands out as one of the 1775-1783 conflict’s most distinctive. Studies of other North American regions during the Revolution have focused on partisan strife and violence such as that which swept the southern backcountry or western frontier. Other historians have emphasized internal class divisions or enduring ties between erstwhile Patriot and Whig opponents. Morris County and its environs depart from either model insofar as that the region did not experience British occupation, Tory insurgency, or class strife. Nor did it exhibit suspect loyalties or carry on trade with the enemy. More than any other region in the United States, the relationship between the Continental Army and the civilian population defined the New Jersey Highlands during the war.²

Antagonism and discord characterized this relationship through much of the war's first years. Like other early-modern armies, the Continentals frequently preyed on their surroundings. Animals and men trampled the fields over which they traveled, damaged crops, and tore apart fences, outbuildings, and even houses in their quest for fuel. During the army's first stay in New Jersey it inflicted great distress on the civilian population. At the close of the war, New Jersey's state government permitted residents to file claims for damages inflicted by both the British and Patriot armies. In Monmouth, Middlesex, Essex, and Bergen County, effectively the region within radius of the redcoats' foraging sweeps and raids, residents filed claims overwhelmingly against British forces. Somerset, which hosted the First and Second Middlebrook encampments but also experienced several British incursions, split its claims between Crown and Rebel. Indicative of the damages the Continental Army wrought on its hosts, Morris County filed every one of its claims against Patriot troops.

This chapter traces the relationship between the Continental Army and northern New Jersey's civilians during the War of Independence. In particular, it focuses on how the army's presence impacted Morris County's landscapes. Lisa Brady, an environmental historian of the Civil War, has defined landscapes as "the confluence of ecological and cultural processes and contain natural and social significance."³ As Brady demonstrated in her work on the Civil War, the Union Army's destruction of southern landscapes undermined Confederate civilians' morale, which hastened the war's end. This chapter similarly uses landscapes as a lens onto the civilian experience in Revolutionary New Jersey. It shows that the Continental Army's destructive habits in 1777 undermined popular support for the Patriot cause. New Jersey residents who had

carved out a thriving rural community before the war suffered violations of their private property in the form of torn-up fences, trampled fields, and ransacked houses. In early 1778, the state government responded to these damages by instituting a strict quartering law establishing the army's responsibility for any injury to civilian property.

During the war's later years, the Continentals demonstrated greater restraint towards the inhabitants' landscapes and communities. The development of the log-hut city bore much of the responsibility for this progress. By concentrating soldiers in a few locales, Washington and his subordinates reduced the breadth of the military's impact. After 1777, only officers quartered in civilian homes, while the rank-and-file resided instead in their huts. The log-hut city spread over only a few square miles, with much of its building material and fuel supply coming from unimproved woodlands, rather than farmers' orchards and fences. Quartermaster General Nathanael Greene worked out a system of compensation for homeowners inconvenienced by billeting officers, as well as for wood consumed during the course of the winter. Disciplinary improvements reduced incidences of damage to fields and fences.

From 1778 onwards, most Continental rank-and-file sheltered in remotely-located log-hut installations. Only a small fraction of New Jersey's population experienced the inconvenience of having soldiers quartered nearby. Instead, Morris County civilians interacted with the artificers and quartermasters that occupied the region even when the Main Army marched for other areas. Continental storehouses and quartermasters in the region employed local men and women. Patriot residents also benefitted from military protection that helped render Morris County's loyalists weak and ineffective. This military presence around Morristown stimulated the local economy and bolstered the

Whig cause. By the war's later years, soldiers and civilians and developed a fruitful partnership. In 1780, as national finances collapsed, the region supported the army with supplies and labor that sustained the Continental Army through the worst of the logistical crisis. Northwestern New Jersey's civilians lived alongside Washington's troops for a longer duration than any other region in the young United States. Due in large part to developments associated with the log-hut city, the population's relationship with the army ultimately showed itself to be a positive one.

New Jersey Highlands Civilians and the Experience of War

The New Jersey's people comprised one of the most diverse populations of the young United States. By 1775, the colony held an estimated 120,000 residents. While the majority of these were of English ancestry, New Jersey also contained substantial Scottish, Irish, and Dutch minorities, as well as small German and Swedish enclaves. Ten percent of the population was of African descent, the vast majority of these enslaved. A myriad of faiths comprised New Jersey's religious tapestry, with Presbyterians, Baptists, Dutch Reformed, and Congregationalists present throughout the state. A large Quaker population lived in the lower Delaware Valley. The majority of New Jerseyans farmed, and the colony remained the least urbanized of the northern provinces prior to the Revolution. In terms of wealth and political influence, the colony sat in the shadows of its larger neighbors, New York and Pennsylvania.⁴

While settlers had flowed into the fertile valleys of the Hackensack, Raritan, and lower Delaware during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, few Europeans ventured into the rugged Highlands. New Jersey's Native American

population, estimated at fewer than 10,000 prior to European contact, concentrated along the Delaware rather than in the rugged hills of the Highlands. Only in the 1710s did European settlers first cross the Watchungs, drawn by the prospect of mining iron in the region's hills. New residents largely hailed from New England, and imparted that region's culture on northwestern New Jersey. Over the course of the following decades, iron forges and agricultural communities developed, with Morris County established in 1739 to govern the area between the Watchungs and the Muscanetcong River. New England emigrants first settled Morristown in 1715. The town grew around its central commons during subsequent decades. By 1775, Morristown loomed as the Highlands principal town, home to a population of 250, the county court house, and Presbyterian and Baptist churches. The county as a whole contained nine Presbyterian churches, demonstrating a clear majority to the one house of worship each for Dutch Reformed, Lutherans, Baptists, Quakers, and Congregationalists.⁵

Like the rest of the colony agriculture dominated the region's economy, punctuated by only a few small iron mines and forges. While the rocky hills and swamps of the Highlands limited the availability of fertile land compared to New Jersey's piedmont and coastal plain, farmers around Morristown nevertheless grew a variety of crops. On the eve of the Revolution, corn and buckwheat ranked as the county's most common produce, and farmers also raised wheat, rye, barley, hemp, and flax. Apple and peach orchards also dotted the landscape. This fruit fueled the production of liquor distilled in communities including Bottle Hill and Mendham. Farmers grew hay and kept livestock in pastures cleared on the region's rolling hillsides. Tax lists for various Morris County farms included sheep, horses, steers, oxen, hogs, and bee hives. Landowners held

roughly 150 acres on average, though shortages of labor meant that much of this lay uncultivated. Some residents owned substantial holdings: Henry Wick, upon whose land much of the army was to quarter in 1780, maintained twenty-three horses, thirty sheep, and cattle on his 1,000 acres, while his neighbor Peter Kemble held seventy-eight sheep, forty-six horses, and cattle on his 680 acres.⁶

In the span of two generations, the region west of the Watchungs had transformed from a sparsely-inhabited area devoid of permanent settlement to a thriving agrarian community. The most apparent evidence of this transformation came in the form of the altered landscape. Whereas forests dominated the land before 1710, by the 1760s the woods had given way to orchards, fields, and pastures. Farmers built houses of increasing size and complexity, and stored their surpluses in barns and sheds.⁷ Most conspicuously, fences defined property lines, corralled livestock, and kept animals from grazing in fields where they did not belong. While some inhabitants relied on stone fences, as farms grew in size and number, the split-rail fence made from the region's abundant timber supplies surpassed stone as the most common form of enclosure.⁸

As a result of decades of agricultural development, late eighteenth-century Morris County evinced an idyllic pastoral landscape of well-ordered farms and houses. Prior to independence, this landscape had never been tested by unrest. On the eve of the War of Independence, northwestern New Jersey stood as one of the most pacific regions in all of British North America. During the French and Indian War, Morris County mobilized militiamen to help defend the colony's northwestern border from Indian attacks, but otherwise played no role in the conflict.⁹

Morristown and its environs sat on the periphery of the War of Independence's early campaigns. While New Jersey gave only reluctant support for full independence, Presbyterian-dominated Morris County demonstrated a greater degree of enthusiasm for the Revolution. Shortly after news of open warfare outside of Boston arrived, a crowd gathered at Morristown backing the Patriot cause. Riding this fervor, county delegates met on May 2, 1775, to craft the region's military response. The committee ordered the raising of five companies of minutemen, along with powder and lead for their weapons. All able-bodied men in the county were to prepare for possible militia service. Meanwhile, the Provincial Congress meeting at Trenton called for every township to raise militia and enacted a tax to fund this military build-up.¹⁰ Through 1775 and early 1776, fighting took place distant from New Jersey, however, and aside from raising troops and supplies the war had little initial impact.

This situation changed rapidly after the fall of New York in September 1776. A wave of refugees from the city and New Jersey's easternmost counties fled to Morris County. Abraham Lott, a prominent New York Whig, relocated to Beverwyk, the estate of Lucas van Beverhoudt north of Morristown. Lott's family would become prominent figures in both military and civilian social circles in New Jersey. Also fleeing westward were prominent Whig residents of Elizabethtown, Parson James Caldwell, and the family of Governor William Livingston. So numerous were refugees in Morris County by May 1777 that Martha Bland counted refugees, along with the local inhabitants and the army, as the three population groups one could expect to find in Morristown.¹¹

These refugees fled westward as the Crown's armies advanced into New Jersey. The British invasion directed by General William Howe in November 1776 devastated

much of eastern and central New Jersey. Although the British occupation had lasted only two months, plundering redcoats left in their wake widespread damage to Jerseymen's homes and farms. Howe's men showed little restraint in their quest for fuel and building materials, and little inclination to fell trees when abundant pre-cut wood lay nearby. Consequently, New Jersey houses, outbuildings, and fences suffered from enemy pillaging.¹²

In August 1777, New York postmaster Ebenezer Hazard observed on a journey from Philadelphia to Morristown the physical destruction left behind by the British and Hessians eight months after they had retired from New Jersey. In a never-ending quest for fuel, Howe's army had burned fences between Trenton and Princeton, as well as fences and homes in tiny hamlet of Kingston just north of Princeton. Further north, at Somerset Court House, Howe's soldiers tore the thatch roofs from barns and cut down two orchards to provide wood for what Hazard labeled "booths," the shanties that provided winter shelter for British and Hessian troops in early 1777. Later in the month, Hazard's journey took him to Elizabethtown and Newark, each of which had lodged British and Hessian troops during the occupation. At Newark, the New York postmaster discovered destruction of fences as the "chief damage" suffered. Elizabethtown's fences encountered a similar fate, and that locale also endured more extensive plundering.¹³

Morris County avoided British occupation thanks to the exertions of the local militia and timely arrival of Continental troops in late 1776. Nevertheless, the Continental presence in the area brought negative consequences for local civilians through the first half of 1777. As noted in Chapter Three, Washington's men sought refuge from the winter weather by billeting in civilian homes in and around Morristown.

They also established hospitals in the surrounding towns to conduct the smallpox inoculation program. The army's small size that winter limited its disruptiveness. Nevertheless, its extended occupation of Morristown, Chatham and other villages in the New Jersey Highlands forced the state's inhabitants to contend with the harsh realities of hosting an army.

The large numbers of soldiers and refugees of diverse backgrounds quartered among the inhabitants produced social tensions. In contrast to the region's quaint built environment and natural beauty, Martha Bland painted the Highlands' people in a more negative light. Bland contrasted the presumed gentility of the refugees of cosmopolitan New York with Morristown's natives, "the errentest rustics you ever beheld." Bland did not find the townspeople physically unattractive, for she admitted "there are some exceedingly pretty girls" amongst the inhabitants, but she took issue with their manners and conduct. She contrasted the appearance of "such pleasant looking creatures," with their behavior, labeling them "the most inhospitable mortals breathing." Overall, Bland presumed her sister-in-law would "laugh to hear them talk."¹⁴

While outsiders may have despaired of the locals' parochialism, Morris County's inhabitants likewise judged those recently arrived in their communities. Ashbel Green of Hannover recalled his father Jacob hosted ten Virginia officers and two waiters during the spring of 1777. The nine members of the Green family divided rooms in the house between themselves and the military men. While the tenants did not inflict any memorable damage to the Green's house, their manners struck the New Jersey family as atrocious. Ashbel Green described the officers' language as "absolutely horrifying to any

ear not accustomed to blasphemy.” To the staunch Presbyterian’s consternation, the Virginians spent their free time target-shooting or gambling on card games.¹⁵

More pressing than offended sensibilities, military tenants also frequently subjected civilian households to vandalism and thievery. Sergeant William Young recorded that his Pennsylvania militia comrades stole meat, breeches, and underjackets from the shoemaker with whom they billeted in Chatham in late January 1777.¹⁶ Morris County civilian Caleb Howell filed a claim for £2,000 for a “house destroyed,” by the army in 1777, and sought rent payments of £300 for another home rented by Continental surgeons. Another resident, Daniel Freeman, supported Howell’s claim for the destroyed house, testifying that he had seen “soldiers pulling it down.”¹⁷ Troops belonging to Brigadier General Adam Stephen’s detachment destroyed Morris County blacksmith Benjamin Bonnel’s shop.¹⁸ Washington’s men also pilfered household items from their hosts. Phoebe Freeman, a Morris County resident, filed claims for stockings, thread, yarn, an apron, silk gloves, and “a Barcelona handkerchief,” taken by “the Continental Army, as they were quartered in the house at the time.”¹⁹ Like the French army of the seventeenth century, the soldiers quartered upon the unfortunate Freeman seemed to have left quarters with a new wardrobe for themselves taken at the inhabitant’s expense.

Civilians suspected of sympathy for the Crown faced even greater distress. Catherine van Cortlandt, a Loyalist living in Hanover, suffered soldiers in her home and animal teams in her barn, “without even the ceremony of asking liberty.” While she conceded that some officers proved hospitable, a New England company that lodged in her home for a time struck her as “the dregs of the people.”²⁰ Nor were elite Patriot homeowners immune from injury. Catherine Livingston, daughter of the state’s governor

and one of those displaced to the Highlands by the war, returned to her family's home in Elizabethtown in November 1777 to find it converted into a militia guard house. The upper-sort Livingston could not recall another instance of "a governor's house being so degraded." In the guards' six-week occupation of the home, she claimed they had "done ten times the mischief to the house than the Hessians." The militia had stripped the home of many of its valuables, and even panes of glass, wall paper, furniture, and lead from the roof. They also burned the mahogany banisters and timber from the family property for firewood.²¹ Ebenezer Hazard, in his August 1777 travels through the war-torn state, did not refrain from blaming Patriot soldiers for damaging New Jersey landscapes. He attributed destruction to college buildings in Princeton to Washington's men rather than "the ravages of the enemy." Likewise at Morristown, he observed that "a great part of our army were a long time" there. Although the British had never occupied the settlement, "the licentiousness of our troops had damaged the town a great deal."²²

While Patriot soldiers wrought destruction on inhabitants' houses, they demonstrated an equal capacity for devastating the landscapes around their quarters. Troops in need of fuel made fences their primary target. Civilian John Dodds lost his forty-panel fence to Continentals in January 1777 along with fowls, calves, sheep, pillows, and clothing.²³ In July 1777, Laurence Wilson likewise suffered the plunder of a "forty-seven-panel fence" and its accompanying pastureland, where Continental troops proceeded to keep their horses. The destruction of fences and consumption of forage left the pasture unusable to Wilson for the remainder of the season.²⁴ Continentals burned John Meeks' fifty-panel fence and pasture under similar circumstances.²⁵ As Washington had outside of Boston and New York, he reprimanded Continental soldiers in New Jersey

for damages done to civilian property. In April, the commander-in-chief despaired at the destruction of the landscape, specifically fences enclosing inhabitants' "fields of grain, and grasslands." Such damages promised "at this season must be attended with consequences very prejudicial to community in general." Thus Washington forbade the army from tearing down fences, or taking any other action that would damage the inhabitants' enclosures. He stipulated that if at all possible the army was to "keep to the high roads" rather than travel through farms and pastures.²⁶

In eighteenth-century rural North America, enclosures stood as defining features of the landscape. Fences and walls separated different crops, penned in animals, and kept out predators. Enclosures also marked property lines, a feature that scholars have emphasized as crucial in establishing modern notions of private property. Along with enclosures, improvements such as pastures orchards, fields, and buildings established the colonists' sense of mastery over the wilderness.²⁷ These were the foundations of the landscape that caught Martha Bland's eye in May 1777. The Continental Army's presence imperiled them. The practice of destroying fences and opening pastures proved so widespread that it drew a remonstrance from Washington in his General Orders three times in July 1777.²⁸ In the final complaint, issued on July 25, Washington lamented, "How disgraceful to the army is it, that the peaceable inhabitants, our countrymen and fellow citizens, dread our halting among them, even for a night and are happy when they get rid of us? This can proceed only from their distress at the plundering and wanton destruction of their property."²⁹ No until August, when the army camped in Pennsylvania, did the rank-and-file apparently improve their conduct.³⁰ An influx of

militia into the army the following month eroded discipline, however, and in late September Patriot troops again threatened civilian improvements.³¹

Anger over billeting soldiers in houses derived from the colonies' inheritance of long-standing English opposition to quartering in private homes. Soldiers' damages to houses and improvements endangered two of the salient aspects of landholding. By destroying farmers' fences and opening their pastures, Patriot troops undermined the mastery over nature that defined white settlement in North America. Overall, Continental troops displayed poor discipline during their stay in New Jersey, with some soldiers subjecting the population to as severe depredations as European civilians suffered during the wars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

By late 1777, the regular army's numbers dwindled in New Jersey as Washington's men marched to campaign in neighboring Pennsylvania and New York. The soldiers' departure left New Jersey to take stock of its situation. Although Patriot troops had not faced serious formal opposition when they billeted in the state's towns in early 1777, the disease, property damage, and social disruption resulting from quartering the army produced a civilian backlash. Burdened with a prolonged military presence, New Jersey enacted laws to restrict the army's ability to take over homes. In October 1777, the State Legislature passed its first quartering laws. The law described a Continental Army whose quartermasters, soldiers, and commissaries, had "most grievously oppressed the good subjects of the state, in unlawfully quartering soldiers in their private houses." Appealing to the traditions of English Common Law, and existing statute law, the state declared "no officer civil or military, nor other person whatsoever, should presume to place, quarter or billet any soldier upon any subject." Violators faced

a £40 penalty paid to the aggrieved party and the threat of being cashiered from service. The 1777 law gave justices of the peace the authority over local decisions regarding quarters. The law also drew distinctions between public and private space by empowering justices of the peace to billet troops in “inns, livery-stables, ale-houses, victualing-houses,” and any homes retailing liquor, but “in no private houses whatsoever.” The army could use empty houses if other structures proved insufficient, provided a justice of the peace approved and made arrangements for payment to the absentee owner, if possible. Finally, soldiers could seek shelter in the barns and outbuildings of private homes, as “judged proper” by the justice of the peace. Thus, the State Legislature had established a set of housing options for the Continental Army in New Jersey, but firmly prohibited the unsanctioned use of occupied private homes.³²

A May 1778 act extended the proscription on quartering in private homes to the militia. The act also recognized that even when soldiers quartered in approved structures they sometimes injured private property. Not only did men damage dwellings and outbuildings, but also the surrounding landscape such as “the fences, fruit-trees, or ornamental trees planted near, or adjoining thereto.” Soldiers committing such damages faced fines payable to property-owners. Responsibility for payment fell to officers if they failed to report the names those soldiers who caused the damage. Justices of the peace who had arranged the billets, joined by “two reputable freeholders of the neighborhood,” were to assess the cost of damages. The same law also prohibited the army from impressing civilian carriages and horses.³³ In contrast to New Jersey, neighboring New York’s legislature enacted a quartering law that provided fewer protections for civilians. New York’s law did not carry a preamble appealing to Common Law, nor did it highlight

the state population's sufferings under Continental quartermasters and commissaries. Like New Jersey, it did place the onus on arranging shelter for soldiers on justices of the peace. They were to determine which inhabitants could best shoulder the burden of billeting Continentals, the number of days they could be quartered, and move soldiers to new billets if the previous ones proved problematic.³⁴

On a whole, the New Jersey quartering laws represented a direct response to the destruction to homes and landscapes inflicted upon the state during 1777. Moving forward, the state had the legal authority to block Continental troops from billeting in civilian homes. This left Patriot forces facing similar restrictions to redcoat regiments in Britain. The specific emphasis on fences, trees, and outbuildings demonstrated a particular concern for preserving the state's rural built-environments. When the Main Army returned to quarter in New Jersey in late 1778, inhabitants braced for further damages to houses and farms. Abraham Lott of Parsippany, recalling the quartering experience of 1777, expressed pity for the residents of Middlebrook upon whom the army quartered. Lott believed "there is no help for it."³⁵ Given the army's behavior in 1777, this pessimism appeared warranted.

The Log-Hut City and Civilian Relations

Unbeknownst to Lott or the legislature, the army that returned to the region in late 1778 represented a changed force from the one that had occupied the state's villages over a year earlier. Long-service soldiers and their officers exhibited better discipline, organization, and leadership, which they had garnered over the course of the previous campaigns. The Continentals also arrived with a new method of providing long-term

shelter, the log-hut city. This new method would prove crucial, given the more restrictive quartering laws in place in New Jersey by late 1778. Officers also returned to the state with a greater awareness of the ancillary damage the army caused to civilian property. When the Pennsylvania brigades arrived at Middlebrook in December 1778, Major General Nathanael Greene relayed to their commander, Brigadier General Anthony Wayne, a request from the inhabitants of the ground upon which Wayne's men were to build their huts. The residents implored the army to preserve the local landscape by not burning rail fences and trampling wheat fields. Greene supported the citizens' concerns, reminding Wayne that "they are generally good Whigs," and therefore deserved as much caution as the army could afford in preserving their property.³⁶ Memories of the damages incurred to pastures and orchards during early 1777 still lingered in the minds of the inhabitants.

During the previous winter at Valley Forge, the Continentals had demonstrated only incremental improvements in their treatment of civilian landscapes. John Johnson, a farmer living near Valley Forge, claimed encamped soldiers had burnt 10,000 rails, ruined a meadow, and left three of his orchards "without any fence," thereby ruining his winter crop.³⁷ George Emlen, another Pennsylvania resident, appealed directly to Washington for compensation for his fences. Emlen recognized these had been "of great service to the fires of the army."³⁸ Through 1778, a flurry of complaints from the owners of damaged farms besieged Washington, Nathanael Greene, and state leaders. In early 1779, Greene turned to Congress for guidance on the responsibility of payment for damages incurred during operations. In a February 1 letter to President John Jay, Greene pointed out the "incidental damages which happen to buildings, gardens, fields, &ca,"

that the army frequently caused. According to Greene, inhabitants recognized that receiving full restitution for damages remained unlikely. Inhabitants found particularly vexing, however, the absence of any clear system for ascertaining the extent of and responsibility for damages. Greene had previously made compensatory payments to aggrieved parties as quartermaster general. Due to the increase in complaints arriving at headquarters from distressed farmers from Valley Forge to Middlebrook the major general sought clarification of his responsibilities from a higher authority. Greene suggested the Board of War or another congressional committee appoint commissioners to assess damages and make payments. Despite Greene's urgings, Congress enacted no formal measure other than to censure commanding officers, "whose duty it is to prevent such mischiefs."³⁹ Without Congress's formal approval or disapproval of making payments for incidental damages, Greene continued to arrange compensation on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the commander-in-chief.⁴⁰ In cases in Washington did not sanction a payment from the quartermaster, civilians went uncompensated.⁴¹

While Patriot troops seemingly committed damages to farmers' fields, fences, and orchards wherever they marched and camped, improved discipline, and Washington's frequent injunctions helped to curtail this behavior by late 1778. Prior to entering winter quarters, Washington directed his subordinates commanding independent detachments to pay particular attention to preserving fences and enclosures near their hut sites.⁴² At Middlebrook itself, the large army continued to prey on fences as it built its huts in December, leading Washington to lament "the frequent complaints which are daily exhibited to him of the wanton destruction of enclosures, made by the soldiers." Washington therefore implored his officers "to search out and bring to severe and

immediate punishment every soldier who shall presume to burn or otherwise destroy rails or any part of the farmers' enclosures."⁴³

These repeated condemnations eventually affected soldiers' behavior. After December 1778, no further mentions of damages to fences appeared in the Main Army's General Orders for nearly a year. Washington's subordinates worked to preserve the integrity of fields and fences wherever the army operated. In June, 1779, Brigadier General William Smallwood reprimanded chaplain John Hurt for trampling a civilians' field near Smith's Clove, New York. Smallwood pointed out the "inconveniences attending the practice of riding through the inhabitants' enclosures, that it was contrary to General Orders, and that it was extremely injurious to the owners."⁴⁴ The Maryland general's judgment indicated Continental commanders had come to realize the importance of preserving improvements to maintaining a positive relationship with civilians. In December 1779, as the army constructed its log-hut city outside Morristown, the Washington again reminded his soldiers to avoid "every species of destruction or waste of the fences and enclosures of the inhabitants."⁴⁵ This was apparently a preemptive measure, however, as fences did not appear again in General Orders during the winter. Admonishments in divisional and brigade orderly books indicate that fence burning did continue within individual units, but did not reach an army-wide extent that required Washington's intervention.⁴⁶

The Continentals' growing skill at siting, building, and administering camps also reduced the degradation of civilian improvements. Middlebrook and Morristown had been selected specifically because of their proximity to ample stocks of uncut timber. With tools available to cut this wood, soldiers had less incentive to simply steal precut

rails when building their huts and fueling their fires. Under Greene, the quartermaster's department undertook responsibility for paying farmers for the timber cut on their lands. While by 1780 the army's financial plight meant that landowners had to make do with certificates rather than cash, the existence of a formal system demonstrated an honest effort on the part of Continentals authorities to establish a fair scheme to compensate farmers for the use of their land.

The records of Morristown deputy quartermaster Colonel Joseph Lewis reveal the extent to which the log-hut city at Jockey Hollow compensated property owners. Lewis issued 133 certificates to local landholders for the wood cleared by the army. Henry Wick, whose property lay to the south of the Pennsylvania Line's huts, received certificates for over 10,000 cords of wood cut during the 1779-1780 encampment. Peter Kemble, living to east of the Maryland Line's huts, received certificates in exchange for 8,000 cords. Five other local landholders received multiple certificates as well. All told, the army likely consumed at least 30,000 cords of wood during the 1779-1780 winter.⁴⁷

Lewis's records indicated the extent to which the army reshaped the landscape. Lieutenant Enos Reeves of the Pennsylvania Line believed his unit had cleared 600 acres of forest during the 1779-1780 encampment, and during its stay the following winter would "clear the plantation of every tree."⁴⁸ Winter fires depleted local timber supplies. Coupled with the exhaustion of locally available forage, this made it impossible to retain the whole army in one site for multiple winters. Indeed, returning to Jockey Hollow with two Pennsylvania Brigades in December, 1780, Anthony Wayne worried "the article of wood will be very scarce and at a great distance."⁴⁹ Assessing the landscape around Jockey Hollow following the 1779-1780 encampment, Edward Hand declared "the

vicinity of the old huts is much exhausted of fuel.”⁵⁰ Captain Walter Finney of the 6th Pennsylvania Regiment noted that his unit had to carry timber on their shoulders from sources a half-mile distant from their hut sites when they returned to Jockey Hollow at the end of 1780. Re-using the previous year’s huts at least eliminated the need to carry timber for construction as well as fuel. Because many structures remained intact from the last encampment, the Pennsylvanians completed work on their huts within a week of their arrival.⁵¹

Wayne and Hand’s observations reflected the prodigious quantities of fuel the large 1779-1780 camp required. The army could potentially have rendered the landscape even more barren had it not begun to develop a sense of conservation over the course of its winters in New Jersey. In December 1778, General Orders instructed soldiers to avoid cutting “green timber,” in their search for firewood. Instead, soldiers were to collect “logs, tops, and fallen timbers.” These measures ensured young trees would continue to grow and therefore remain available to civilian inhabitants.⁵² In May 1779, Division Orders for the Pennsylvania brigades at Middlebrook forbade soldiers from cutting new firewood until they exhausted their entire supply in camp.⁵³

By the war’s end, Continental officers realized that the timber used in huts’ construction remained a viable source of fuel. As the army drew down its size with the approach of peace in August, 1783, the quartermaster general’s office at New Windsor announced an auction of huts recently occupied by the Massachusetts brigades, as well as firewood cut but never used.⁵⁴ A local officer purchased the New York Brigade’s 252 huts at New Windsor for one dollar each. Concurrently, Quartermaster General Colonel Timothy Pickering planned to consolidate wood from remaining camp structures to

provide fuel for the West Point garrison through the winter.⁵⁵ While it seems that residents broke up most of the built remains of the New Windsor camp, some discharged soldiers stayed in their huts and lived amongst the civilian community for up to a year after hostilities ended.⁵⁶ Little is known of what became of the huts at Jockey Hollow or Middlebrook after the war's conclusion. Presumably, inhabitants deconstructed the huts for their timber and converted some of the cleared ground into farmland. The steeper hillsides eventually returned to the forested covering that had preceded the huts.

In addition to better preserving civilian landscapes, Washington's army also took steps that reduced the disruption that accompanied the billeting of officers in private homes. While log-hut cantonments now provided quarters for the bulk of the army, senior officers continued to seek billets in civilian domiciles. Upon the army's return to northern New Jersey in late 1778, the quartering laws passed the previous year empowered New Jersey civilians to deny Continental requests for the use of their houses. Generals desired comfortable quarters befitting their gentlemanly status, as well as for practical reasons. Washington, with an entourage including aides-de-camp, servants, slaves, personal baggage, and frequently his wife, needed space to accommodate this retinue. To satisfy these needs, Greene selected for Washington the most substantial homes in the vicinity of the main encampment. In 1778-1779, Washington lodged in the home of John Wallace, a Philadelphia merchant who had recently built a large home four miles west of the huts of the Maryland and Virginia brigades.⁵⁷

Emboldened by the provisions of New Jersey's quartering laws, Wallace restricted the terms of Washington's stay. The commander-in-chief occupied the upstairs rooms of the house, but found these provided insufficient space for his staff. Washington

directed Greene to inquire if Wallace could “spare two rooms below stairs,” as this would “make our quarters much more comfortable, as well as render them more convenient for public business.”⁵⁸ It remains unclear whether or not Wallace acquiesced to Washington’s request. The Philadelphia merchant did not prove particularly accommodating to the army, however, and demanded \$1,000.00 for rent from the quartermaster’s department.⁵⁹

The request for cash payment in exchange for billets clashed with previous Continental Army policy. As Greene explained to Wallace in a July 1779 letter, “We have always made it a rule in the Army not to pay anything for officers quartering with the inhabitants. The protection they give is always considered an equivalent for the inconveniencies.”⁶⁰ Beyond the protection to which Greene alluded, he also cited as ancillary benefits to Wallace’s lodging of officers. These included the various outbuildings the army built and left behind, as well as dung deposited by army horses that could be used as fertilizer. Nevertheless, Wallace persisted in seeking financial compensation. He ultimately received a \$1,000.00 payment for Washington’s use of part of his home from the commander-in-chief’s own expense account, rather than the quartermaster’s department. Greene balanced this payment by ordering army property left behind on Wallace’s estate to be sold to the public, rather than left to the householder. Greene intended the rent paid to Wallace to remain an isolated case. The quartermaster general claimed that other homeowners living near the Middlebrook encampment, including the Van Veghten family with whom Greene himself had lodged through the winter, had shown themselves to be more generous. In contrast to Wallace, Greene’s

hosts had shared their home out of a sense of public duty. Therefore, the Rhode Island major general decreed “no precedent should be established,” from Wallace’s situation.⁶¹

The following winter, Greene encountered greater difficulties in arranging billets for senior Continental officers in and around Morristown. Having endured one Continental occupation in early 1777, Morristown residents did not look forward to sharing their living space for another winter. Greene contrasted the inhabitants’ temperaments with that of the 1777 winter, finding that the locals “receive us with coldness, and provide for us with reluctance.”⁶² Greene encountered resistance in his own arrangements for quarters. In November 1779, he ordered his deputy, Colonel James Abeel, to find shelter in Morristown for Catherine Greene, the Quaker general’s wife, and Colonel George Olney’s wife, Elizabeth.⁶³ Abeel obtained lodging for Mrs. Greene in the home of Jacob Arnold, a local militia captain and tavern owner.⁶⁴ Since the army had not settled upon Morristown for winter quarters in mid-November, Arnold assumed Greene’s wife would only lodge in his home temporarily. When Washington decided to winter at Morristown shortly thereafter, the tavern-keeper complained to Abeel that he had approved only of a temporary stay, not the season-long quarters Nathanael Greene now intended to occupy with his wife.⁶⁵

Greene’s reaction belied the army’s limited respect for the state’s quartering laws. The major general proclaimed that Arnold’s home stood as the “most convenient and suitable place,” for him to discharge his duties. Had Arnold lodged a formal protest with civilian authorities, Greene professed that he would have applied through the local magistrates as the state’s quartering laws demanded. Had the magistrates denied such an application, however, Greene declared that he would quarter the officers “and myself

without the consent of the people.” While the Rhode Islander hoped that he would never have to resort to such measures, he nevertheless held that providing his comrades with quarters superseded any sense of deference to civilians’ Whig sensibilities. Greene dismissed Arnold’s protest, asserting that “the officers of the Army will not lodge in the open fields for fear of putting the inhabitants to a little inconvenience.” He claimed that while he had always attempted to respect the law, adding that “if the citizens become barbarous and inhuman and the magistrates cruel and unreasonable the Army of the United States will not forget what is due themselves.”⁶⁶

Despite this fiery invective, Greene also displayed a more lenient tone in closing his letter to Arnold. The general claimed he wished to live on good terms with his host family, and “endeavored to accommodate my family so as to render it as little inconvenient as possible.” These measures including setting up an office in another house and erecting a separate kitchen to free Arnold’s servants from having to share space with Greene’s. According to Greene, Arnold’s wife had proven herself more obliging and agreeable than her husband. The Fighting Quaker concluded by placing the onus on Jacob Arnold to maintain cordial relations through the winter, stating “if you are friendly and obliging you shall not find me wanting in justice and generosity.”⁶⁷ No response from Arnold has survived, and Greene apparently remained in his quarters through the winter without further complaint. The tavern-keeper received payment for rent and firewood used during that winter, compensation not afforded to all homeowners who lodged officers.⁶⁸

Arnold did not stand alone in obstructing the army’s search for suitable officers’ billets. Washington learned in early December 1779, that several Morris County

residents had denied Greene's requests for lodging for Major Generals Robert Howe and Benedict Arnold. The commander-in-chief wrote to Greene complaining, "I am extremely concerned to find that you meet with such difficulties in quartering the officers." Washington's frustration arose from the local magistrates' refusal to cooperate with Greene in finding acceptable officer housing. While recognizing the merit of the inhabitants' protestations, the commander-in-chief told his subordinate that if a satisfactory solution could not be found in accordance with the law, the army was to proceed with quartering "in such houses as the good of the service may require."⁶⁹ Greene once again appealed to the local magistrates, articulating the army's preference to operate within the bounds of the law, but also pointing out that if the state did not comply, Washington would take officers' quarters on his own authority.⁷⁰ Adopting an attitude similar to the one he presented to county magistrates during the January food crisis, Washington showed that his commitment to republican principles lasted only so long as that served the interests of the military.

The commander-in-chief encountered less resistance in establishing his own quarters at Morristown compared to the previous year. Greene had selected for Washington the home of Theodosia Ford. Built just before the war, the house had been owned by Jacob Ford, a prominent figure in the state's iron industry as well as local political leader. Ford had commanded the county's militia in late 1776 and died of illness in January 1777.⁷¹ Washington's growing stature as a national hero, and his own reputation for gentlemanly conduct made the prospect of billeting him and his staff less troublesome for Whig civilian hosts than it may have been for less renowned commanders. Governor Livingston hoped Washington's "amiable disposition & the

pleasure he takes in making everybody about him happy” would make Ford’s tasks in lodging the general “as easy to her as possible.” Considering Washington’s status, Livingston hoped Ford “will not resent that her house has entertained such a General.”⁷²

The negotiation for space within the home played out differently than at Wallace’s house. Theodosia Ford, as a widow, lacked the presumptions of equal authority that a male gentry homeowner would have carried into a negotiation with the army. Although a wealthy woman, she deferred to Washington’s demands for rooms within her home. Washington and his staff therefore occupied over half of the house, confining Theodosia Ford, her four children, and household servants and slaves to the rooms of the house’s kitchen wing. Washington, his wife, aides, servants, and slaves, took up residence in the majority of the home, while Washington’s guard camped on the Ford’s property in front of the mansion.⁷³

Greater numbers of civilians sought financial restitution for lodging officers in 1780 than the previous year. By the summer of 1780, the quartermaster’s office included rent with other goods and services for which it exchanged certificates to be redeemed for cash later. In September and October 1780, deputy quartermaster Colonel Joseph Lewis settled accounts for fifteen Morristown-area homeowners for certificates related to quarters provided during the previous winter.⁷⁴ Theodosia Ford, while not among the recipients Lewis listed, nevertheless sought recompense by writing to Washington’s staff directly. In the army’s haste to depart the home in June 1780, the Continentals had not issued the widow a certificate. In July, she contacted Colonel Richard Kidder Meade, one of Washington’s aides-de-camp, requesting he “procure me a certificate from the general specifying the time how long and the number of rooms occupied.”⁷⁵ Meade

responded within the week with a certificate detailing the army's use of Ford's rooms and grounds.⁷⁶

Homeowners varied in the degree to which they accepted having officers lodged on their premises. Wallace, who had demonstrated no outwardly Whig sympathies, restricted Washington's use of his house and demanded payment at a time when the practice was uncommon. Yet Jacob Arnold, who had shown himself to be an avowed supporter of the Patriot cause, also complained about Greene's stay in his house, and took rent payments. Theodosia Ford, while either unable or unwilling to protest Washington's use of her house on account of her sex, also sought financial remuneration. Other homeowners, however, made no such efforts. Henry Wick and his family, upon whose land the Continentals erected much of the Jockey Hollow camp, billeted Captain Joseph Bloomfield in their house in 1777, Major General Arthur St. Clair in 1780, and Lieutenant Enos Reeves in 1781, with no complaint and no request for payment.⁷⁷ Nearby, Peter Kimble, one of Morris County's wealthiest residents and one of its most prominent Loyalist sympathizers, similarly allowed Brigadier General William Smallwood and Anthony Wayne to billet in his home without protest. Wealth and affiliation seemingly made little difference in a homeowners' willingness to share their living space with the army, leaving Greene and his staff to navigate complaints and demands on a case-by-case basis.

The number of homeowners billeting the commissioned ranks declined from 1778 onwards. Compared to early 1777, only a relatively small number of officers lodged in private residences. The rank-and-file found quarters in their log huts. In contrast to the distress soldiers caused families when sharing their homes, building log huts in the

countryside drastically reduced inconveniences to the population, and thereby diminished the number and intensity of complaints officers faced. In a letter to John Hancock written as the Middlebrook camp underwent construction, Nathanael Greene highlighted the benefits of the log-hut city for the civilian population. While he recognized that the labor of building the encampment added to the army's hardships, it paid off in that the "inhabitants are free from the distress that always attends quartering troops upon them." Compared to cantoning the army in villages, in camp, men could be kept in a constant state of discipline and readiness, "while the morals of the people are preserved from the corruptions of the soldiery."⁷⁸

Despite periodic property damage, the army's extended stay in northern New Jersey garnered few civilian complaints during the latter half of the war. Keeping soldiers in the countryside contributed to this absence of civilian outcry. In contrast, wherever soldiers were quartered in built-up areas, local populations voiced concerns over damaged property. For example, the inhabitants of Providence, Rhode Island, after "having suffered much expense on account of the troops having been barracked upon the inhabitants," petitioned Congress in 1779 for funds to compensate the town for the costs occurred in "accommodating the troops."⁷⁹ The Rhode Islanders' complaints derived from that community's particular circumstances. With the British capture of Newport in 1776, Providence served as the *de facto* state capital, the principal quarters for Continentals and militia garrisoning the region, and an important supply depot. Former Continental general James Varnum wrote to Congress to support the town's petition, arguing "the calamity of war" which Providence had hitherto "unequally sustained."

Morristown's inhabitants might have quibbled with Varnum's characterization of the uniqueness of Providence's distress.⁸⁰

The residents of Wilmington, Delaware, expressed similar concerns in 1780 regarding Patriot soldiers damaging a schoolhouse they had been using for quarters. In a petition to Congress, the Delaware citizens described the injuries inflicted upon the building during its use as a military hospital and barracks. In great detail they enumerated damages to floors, stair cases, partitions, joists, and shutters so that "only a shell of the house," remained in 1779. While quartermaster general Colonel Thomas Mifflin had promised that the army would compensate the school owners for the damage, his resignation in late 1777 had left the issue in doubt. With residents now forced to convene classes in a rented house, the petitioners requested Congress provide funds to restore the building to its state before the Continental Army had taken it over. They also wanted rent payments.⁸¹

In contrast, few New Jersey towns experienced large-scale quartering from 1778 onwards. The most significant complaints that state's residents raised during the war came when Washington garrisoned cavalry in their communities. In early January, 1778, Hunterdon County magistrates, upon hearing word that Continental dragoons were to be quartered in Trenton, wrote to Washington to protest. A concentration of horses for the army's supply wagons already burdened the pastures near the town. Trenton residents feared they would lack the forage and billet space needed to house the Continental horsemen.⁸² Circumstances bore out the magistrates' complaints. With the town already crowded and local forage depleted, the dragoons ultimately dispersed throughout the region. Similarly, a resident of Gloucester County complained of the

“disorder” that accompanied “troops undertaking to billet themselves,” in a petition to the state legislature in 1782. On this occasion the disorder resulted from the passage of the cavalry of Lieutenant Colonel Henry Lee’s Legion through the county on its way to the South.⁸³

There is no evidence that people living in and around Morristown or Middlebrook ever petitioned the state or national government for redress for property damaged in the course of quartering the army. Indeed, following winter cantonment of 1778-1779, the assembled clergy of the Dutch Reformed Church of Raritan, near Middlebrook, expressed their gratitude to Washington. They thanked him first for his leadership during the “trying winter,” of 1777, when the general had safeguarded the New Jersey Highlands, including the Raritan area, with only his scant screen of Continentals and “undisciplined militia.” The Raritan Dutchmen followed up by praising the army’s conduct during the more recent winter quarters. They recognized that “quartering an army amongst citizens is always attended with unavoidable inconveniences to the latter,” but throughout the winter, Washington took precautions to “prevent and alleviate these calamities as much as possible.” In the clergy’s estimation, Washington’s support for civil government, and the strict discipline of his officers at headquarters and camp had “merited the approbation and applause of the good people of this neighborhood.”⁸⁴ Washington’s response similarly recognized the distresses that civilians experienced with quartering, but emphasized that he had striven to keep these to a minimum.⁸⁵

The contrast between how residents of Providence, Wilmington, and Trenton reacted to the quartering of troops in their communities with that of the Raritan clergy rested with how the army affected the built environment and civilian households in these

locations. Wherever cavalry made their quarters, locals faced the depletion of forage stocks to feed Continental troopers' mounts. Essentially, quartering horsemen portended the degradation of pastureland in a manner not seen when providing lodging for infantry. Hence the opposition to cavalry in small, rural communities. Similarly, the long-term presence of soldiers billeted in towns resulted in damages to fences, houses, and public buildings. In both instances, degradation to the built environment lay at the heart of civilians' complaints. Log-hut cities such as those at Middlebrook and Morristown kept these disruptions to civilian life in New Jersey to a minimum from late 1778 onwards. Certificates given by the army provided satisfactory compensation for whatever damage or inconvenience did arise.

Civilian Life in the Vicinity of Camp

As Morristown developed into an encampment site, supply hub, and headquarters, the surrounding region never lacked for Continental troops. From 1777 onwards, the New Jersey Highlands served as the center of Whig resistance in the state. Compared to Bergen and Monmouth Counties, both of which endured prolonged violence between Patriots and Loyalists, northwestern New Jersey suffered little in the way of partisan strife. Nor did the county exhibit the widespread neutrality of Quaker-dominated West Jersey, or the opportunistic across-the-lines trading that flourished in Essex County. Instead, as a mostly-Presbyterian bastion of opposition to the Crown buoyed by Whig refugees, Morris County stood as the most pro-independence populations the Continental

Army encountered in the state. In such an atmosphere, those expressing open support for the Crown faced intense opposition.

Washington's recovery of most of the state in early 1777 emboldened Patriots throughout New Jersey to take retribution on their Tory neighbors. Throughout that year, Rebel authorities tried British sympathizers while the militia rounded up suspected Loyalist agitators. Given Morris County's secure location and demonstrated support for the Patriot cause, Governor Livingston selected Morristown as the site to jail Loyalist prisoners. The additions to the town's population exacerbated health concerns. A petition from three men jailed in Morristown complained to the state legislature during the summer of 1777 that military hospitals and Tory prisons in town had contributed to the "bloody flux and camp fever," that had left "barely one family in the neighborhood" free of illness.⁸⁶ Some Loyalists avoided imprisonment but were restricted to keeping within six miles of Morristown. In the wake of the recent invasion and questionable loyalties of much of the population, New Jersey's government placed its most strident internal opponents in captivity near Morristown. Morris County's demonstrated Whig sympathies, the ongoing Continental presence in the region, and its remoteness from New York, made Morristown a logical choice. The county exhibited only weak opposition to independence throughout the war. Whig courts confiscated only \$62,000 worth of property from Loyalists in Morris County, significantly less than the \$210,000 seized in sparsely populated Sussex County, and paling in comparison to the \$450,000 taken in Middlesex.⁸⁷

Beyond soldiers, Loyalists, and Patriot civilians, African-Americans comprised another facet of Revolutionary Morris County's social portrait. After New York, New

Jersey ranked as the largest slaveholding northern colony at the time of the Revolution. While Quaker West Jersey hosted a prominent free black population, the state's northern and eastern counties, included substantial numbers of enslaved blacks working as farm hands and domestic servants. In 1779, Morris County tax records listed 137 slaves in the possession of property-holders. Compared to the Hackensack and Raritan Valleys where the state's Dutch-descended communities maintained the largest enslaved populations, unfree labor comprised a small part of Morris County's population. Free blacks likely made up only a tiny fraction of the community. Nevertheless, slavery remained a contentious issue for local residents. Several members of the community supported abolition: Aaron Miller of Rockaway manumitted his slaves in May 1776, while Reverend Jacob Green in Hannover gained notoriety for his anti-slavery sermons. Nevertheless, most of the county's white population continued to purchase, loan, and sell their human chattel during the war.⁸⁸

While little evidence exists in the written record, the military presence in the New Jersey Highlands certainly must have disrupted the practice of slavery in the region. Some members of Morris County's enslaved black population took advantage of the upheaval accompanying the army's arrival to escape to freedom. A 1780 advertisement in the *New Jersey Gazette* described the flight of "a Negro Man named Joe," from Mendham township, five miles west of Morristown. An enslaved woman and her six-week old child accompanied Joe. Their former owner, Ebenezer Blachley, offered 1200 dollars for the slaves' return, and another 800 for two horses taken during their escape.

According to the *Gazette*, "one slight soldier" belonging to the Pennsylvania brigades at Jockey Hollow assisted in the escape of Ebenezer Blachley's slaves. The

Pennsylvania soldier allegedly “stole a written discharge, in the name of William Nelson, whom he will probably impersonate,” to facilitate his own desertion. There is no indication that Ebenezer Blachley recaptured his runaways.⁸⁹ Nevertheless, the incident demonstrates the army’s potential for social disruption.

The Continental encampments from 1778 to 1781 brought thousands of white and several hundred black soldiers to the New Jersey Highlands. Free and enslaved blacks served in the army in a variety of auxiliary functions, as well as combat soldiers. New Jersey’s black population living in close proximity to the encampments likely became aware of the existence of these armed members of the race nearby enjoying autonomy unknown to slaves.⁹⁰

The army’s destruction of property confiscation of supplies, and interruptions to the rhythms of civilian life may have helped to nurture the dream of freedom for the state’s most oppressed population. Conversely, Continental troops may have taken enslaved African Americans for themselves as a form of plunder. Sarah Dickenson filed a claim after the war in the name of her deceased husband Peter for the loss of one “negro man,” valued at £50, along with a silver punch spoon, a horse, and 600 rails and 100 posts for fences. In her deposition, Dickenson swore the enslaved man “was taken away from the owner by a Continental soldier.”⁹¹

Enslaved people also worked at Washington’s headquarters during encampments. Local masters contributed their slaves’ labors to support the army’s social activities. In the Ford household that served as Washington’s headquarters in 1780, Pompey, a slave owned by the widow Theodosia Ford, played the fiddle at a social gathering. Theodosia’s son Gabriel recalled Pompey had earned a considerable sum for entertaining

his guests, leaving the party “with his pockets full of money.”⁹² Gabriel Ford, who lived in Morristown throughout his life, ultimately owned at least a dozen slaves during his lifetime.⁹³ Washington’s headquarters staff also included slaves owned and rented by officers at Morristown. Hannah and Isaac Till, two enslaved New Yorkers, drew wages for kitchen services rendered while rented to Washington. Hannah Till ultimately used this money to purchase her and her husband’s freedom after the war.⁹⁴ In January 1780, Washington alluded to a kitchen staff of eighteen, “belonging to my family,” as well as “all Mrs. Ford’s.”⁹⁵ The general did not make clear how many of this number were enslaved, as it presumably included free whites such as his housekeeper Elizabeth Thompson.

Continental activity in New Jersey also stimulated the local economy, at least as long as the nation’s finances remained solvent prior to late 1779. Even when the Main Army campaigned elsewhere, the Continental quartermaster’s department kept northern New Jersey busy with the work of supplying the war effort. The account books of deputy quartermaster Colonel James Abeel, in charge of camp equipage at Morristown, reveal the myriad of items the army purchased from local producers. In July 1779, for example, a month in which most of the Continental Army had departed northern New Jersey for operations further afield, Abeel nevertheless paid for goods ranging from axes and shears to boards, tents, and portmanteaus. Some of the region’s most prominent businessmen found the army to be a substantial customer for their products. Abeel frequently contracted with Rockaway ironmaster John Jacob Faesch for an assortment of items, including, nails, billhooks, horseshoes, anvils, scythes, and wagon boxes. Shepard Kollock, the Chatham publisher of the *New Jersey Journal*, sold the army stationary.⁹⁶

Local residents found employment in a variety of tasks that undergirded the Continental war-effort. Abeel issued payment for wagon drivers, nailers, and tent menders. Robert Wilson earned five dollars for taking in stray horses. Seventeen-year-old Timothy Ford, son of Morristown's deceased militia colonel, worked as a clerk under Abeel throughout the summer and fall of 1779, even running an errand to Philadelphia for the Continental commissary.⁹⁷ Sam Oliver earned forty dollars in February 1780 for "taking up a number of thieves" that had plundered an army storehouse. In early March, Abeel paid Hezekiah Alcott to travel to Succasunna in search of the stolen items.⁹⁸

Local women also worked for the army. Most of this came in the form of traditional women's roles. Mary Delois served for four months in early 1779 as a cook for the artificers' regiment, while Amanda Davis likewise cooked for the artificers in July. Sarah Meeker earned ten dollars in March 1779, for "keeping sick soldiers." Abeel paid Ann Davis for washing army tents and "sundries" in May 1779, presumably in preparation for the army's departure from its log huts that June. Elizabeth Thompson, who was to serve as a cook for Washington's staff during his stay at the Ford House, received ninety dollars for similar work in August 1779, also for cooking for the artificers.⁹⁹

Morristown grew during the war in large part due to the influx of people and money as a result of the army's stay in the region. The swollen population of the area elicited an increase in mail traffic, leading to the establishment of the first post office in Morristown in 1777. Greater demand for consumer goods attended the opening of new shops and stores. Saddlers, silversmiths, locksmiths, gunsmiths, watchmakers, and jewelers all benefitted from an increase in business arising from the influx of officers,

refugees, and army contracts. While Morristown itself witnessed the most economic growth during the war, nearby Chatham and Hannover also benefitted from increased traffic. To the west, Roxbury and Mendham Townships did not host significant Continental detachments; nevertheless, Patriot storehouses existed in both localities by 1779.¹⁰⁰

By early 1780, Washington had developed a largely positive relationship with the civilian population of Morris County. Soldiers, for the most part, kept out of civilian homes and pastures, and were punished when caught plundering. Morristown and other nearby communities benefitted from an infusion of people and cash into the local economy. In January of that year, New Jersey civilians faced another challenge as Washington turned to his host state for immediate logistical relief during the supply crisis. The commander-in-chief's specific instructions to the regional commanders responsible for overseeing the supply operation revealed the more extreme measures the general stood willing to employ to ensure the Continentals at Morristown would not starve. Washington instructed the officers responsible for collecting provisions in each New Jersey county to convince local officials of the "necessity of their exertions." He implored the officers to include "more particular detail of the sufferings of the troops" if civilians leaders should question the army's motives. If the magistrates resisted, the officers were to inform them that they were authorized to directly impress supplies if needed. Magistrates were thus left with the choice to cooperate fully with the army, or suffer uncompensated impressment. In the latter case, Washington instructed his subordinates to ensure "that no family may be deprived of its necessary subsistence," and

avoid confiscating milk cows. Otherwise, they had free reign to gather whatever was needed to keep the army alive.¹⁰¹

New Jersey's residents proved supportive. Continental officers never had to resort to force, and the gathering of supplies proceeded smoothly. Morris County residents showed particular generosity, giving not only the required food, but turning over sleds and turning out to help clear roads. Despite having endured soldiers' marches, quartering, and plunder, New Jerseyans' had not yet exhausted their fervor for the cause. The *New Jersey Journal* related a glowing report to its readers that "our army is now exuberantly supplied with provision and every other necessary to make a soldier's life comfortable."¹⁰² The New Jersey civilians' exertions garnered the gratitude of Congress. In a letter to Governor William Livingston, President Samuel Huntington declared, "may the laudable Example of New Jersey be imitated by the other states."¹⁰³ Washington thanked the county magistrates for facilitating the army's supply, celebrating the "striking proof" of their "attachment to the service."¹⁰⁴ Later in 1780, as the Pennsylvania Line headed to Morristown for winter quarters, Washington cautioned his subordinate Anthony Wayne to refrain from placing undue burdens on the already overtaxed population. Washington suggested "the strongest manner the preservation of the persons and properties of the inhabitants from wanton or unnecessary violation." These people had, he reasoned, "borne much of the burden of the War and have never failed to relieve the distresses of the Army, when properly called upon."¹⁰⁵

Conclusion

By war's end, the inhabitants of Morris County had endured a sizeable Continental Army occupation of greater duration than any other area of the state, if not the whole nation. The region had experienced the billeting of an army in their homes in early 1777, and its quartering on their lands from 1778 through the end of the war. Even for those not living in the direct path of the army, the task of supplying equipment, services, and food meant that Washington's men made their presence felt beyond the boundaries of their camps. In 1783, inhabitants of Morris County made known the burdens they had suffered, and sought restitution. A petition from county residents to the state government highlighted the county's civilians' meritorious service during the war through bravery in battle, willingness to serve in the militia, and the "attention they have paid to the American troops, who have frequently taken their quarters for months together in this county." Despite the "inconvenience and distress" quartering the army caused, the petitioners claimed that they and their neighbors had "cheerfully submitted" throughout the war. With peace restored, they now wanted compensation to "defray the great bill contracted by the war." The Morris County petitioners therefore requested that the state press the Continental Congress to take the western lands acquired from Great Britain, to be "sold for the mutual advantage of all the United States, according to their importance." Presumably, New Jersey's exertions placed the state ahead of its peers. Without the state government's intervention, the petitioners feared that other states would "avail themselves to the great part thereof," of any land sales, to New Jersey's detriment. Over forty residents endorsed the petition.¹⁰⁶

The document had no impact, and no sales of western lands ever compensated civilians for the damages incurred by the war. Nevertheless, the petition revealed how a community situated in the heart of the Continental Army's base of operations understood its relation to the war effort. Attending to the soldiers quartered in the petitioners' community stood as one of their key contributions to the struggle, alongside more the more traditional conceptions of military sacrifice, bravery in battle and dutiful service in the militia. The authors felt New Jersey's support for the war, and Morris County's in particular, exceeded those of the rest of the states. Quartersing the army comprised a key component of that contribution. Throughout the petition, the Morris County residents never criticized the Continental Army, even though it overwhelmingly bore responsibility for incurring the "great bill" contracted by the war. Nor did the authors condemn the state or national governments that had failed to fund the supply of the army, leading to much of the financial hardship that Morris County residents now faced. Instead, they sought only a share of the spoils of war, the proceeds from the sale of those western lands acquired in the Treaty of Paris. By focusing their attention on acquisitions from Great Britain, rather than critiquing the army or government, Morris County residents placed their service in sustaining the army alongside that of combat

Credit for fostering this positive relationship rests in part with the implementation of the log-hut city after 1777. While northern New Jersey's residents proved initially grateful upon the army's arrival in the region in late 1776, relief from the threat of British attack quickly turned to distress as soldiers ransacked homes and wrecked improvements. The state government responded by passing more restrictive quartering laws, limiting the army's ability to quarter in private residences. Upon the Continentals' return to the state

in force in late 1778, the use of the log-hut city significantly reduced the army's impact on most civilians' lives. For many of the county's inhabitants, the needs of the army provided work and stimulation to local businesses. Only the handful of homeowners who billeted officers and the landholders upon whose ground the log huts sat faced significant disruptions.¹⁰⁷ Even in these instances, Washington's men kept to unimproved timberland. Frequent remonstrance against damaging fences and orchards revealed the regard with which Washington held for improved landscapes. Other forms of property damage, from soldiers' theft of goods to the loss of slaves represented more of a nuisance than serious issue. Even in 1780, when the nation's fiscal collapse undermined the army's purchasing power, residents came forth to satisfy requisitions with few qualms, earning Washington's approbation. The events of late 1776 and early 1777 had demonstrated that the army afforded security. Therefore, New Jersey residents saw it as in their best interest to support the Patriot troops.

Had the Continentals dispersed deeper into the interior, they may have lost much of the state's forage, as well as the loyalties of its inhabitants. Conversely, had Washington and his subordinates attempted to billet the army for long terms, they may have incurred the ire of residents unhappy about having soldiers staying in their already overcrowded towns. The experiences of Providence and Wilmington had already born this out. By contrast, the log-hut city minimized the army's detrimental impact on the region while still providing security. Northwestern New Jersey's residents thereby endured large portions of the Continental Army in their midst from 1778 onwards, with minimal complaint to army, state, or national civilian authorities.

Chapter 7 Notes

¹ Martha Dangerfield Bland to Frances Bland Randolph, May 12, 1777, in Louise V. North, Janet M. Wedge, and Linda Freeman, eds., *In the Words of Women: The Revolutionary War and the Birth of the Nation, 1765-1799* (New York: Lexington Books, 2011), 108-09.

² For partisan violence in New Jersey, see Michael S. Adelberg, *The American Revolution in Monmouth County: The Theatre of Spoil and Destruction* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2010); James G. Gigantino II, ed., *The American Revolution in New Jersey: Where the Battlefield meets the Home Front* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2014); and Adrian C. Leiby *The Revolutionary War in the Hackensack Valley: The Jersey Dutch and the Neutral Ground 1775-1783* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1961). For “war and society” studies of the Southern theater, see Wayne E. Lee, *Crowds and Soldiers: The Culture of Violence in Riot and War* (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2001); Michael A. McConnell, *The Politics of War: Race, Class, and Conflict in Revolutionary Virginia* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007). For the New York area, see Judith van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies: Patriots and Loyalists in Revolutionary New York* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002)

³ Lisa Brady, *War Upon the Land: Military Strategy and the Transformation of Southern Landscapes during the Civil War*, (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2012), 13. For the uses of timber in warfare, see John R. McNeill, “Woods and Warfare in World History,” *Environmental History* 9 (July 2004): 388-410.

⁴ Richard P. McCormick, *New Jersey from Colony to State* (Newark, NJ: New Jersey Historical Society, 1981), ix-x.

⁵ Thayer, *Colonial and Revolutionary Morris County*, (Morristown, NJ: Morris County Heritage Commission, 1975), 65-67.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 67-68.

⁷ Thayer, *Colonial and Revolutionary Morris County*, 80; Peter O. Wacker and Paul G. E. Clemens, *Land Use in Early New Jersey: A Historical Geography* (Newark: New Jersey Historical Society, 1995), 69.

⁸ Thayer, *Colonial and Revolutionary Morris County*, 66.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 123-26.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 135-36.

¹¹ Martha Dangerfield Bland to Frances Bland Randolph, May 12, 1777, in North, Wedge, and Freeman, *In the Words of Women*, 108-109.

¹² For an overview of the British invasion of New Jersey, see Arthur Leftkowitz, *The Long Retreat: The Calamitous Defense of New Jersey* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1999).

¹³ “Ebenezzer Hazard’s Diary,” in Larry Gerlach, ed., *New Jersey in the American Revolution, A Documentary History* (Trenton: New Jersey Historical Commission, 1975), 299-301.

¹⁴ Martha Dangerfield Bland to Frances Bland Randolph, May 12, 1777, in North, Wedge, and Freeman, *In the Words of Women*, 108-09.

¹⁵ Ashbel Green, *The Life of Ashbel Green* (New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1849), 92.

¹⁶ Entry for January 24, 1777, William Young, “Journal of Sargent William Young,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 8 (1884): 274.

¹⁷ Damage Claim of Caleb Howell, Revolutionary War Damage Claims, Morris County, New Jersey State Archives, Trenton, New Jersey.

¹⁸ Damage Claim of Benjamin Bonnell, *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Damage Claim of Phoebe Freeman, *Ibid.*

²⁰ H.O.H. Vernon-Jackson, “A Loyalist’s Wife: Letters of Mrs. Philip Van Cortlandt, December 1776-February 1777,” *History Today* (August 1964), quoted in Thayer, *Colonial and Revolutionary Morris County*, 188.

²¹ Catherine W. Livingston to Sarah and John Jay, November 21, 1777, in North, Wedge, and Freeman, *In the Words of Women*, 112-13.

²² Ebenezer Hazard Diary, in Thayer, *New Jersey in the American Revolution*, 300.

²³ Damage Claim of John Dodds, Revolutionary War Damage Claims, Morris County, New Jersey State Archives.

²⁴ Damage Claim of Laurence Wilson, *Ibid.*

²⁵ Damage Claim of John Meeks, *Ibid.*

²⁶ General Orders, April 19, 1777, in W.W. Abbot et. al., eds., *The Papers of George Washington: Revolutionary War Series*, 25 vols. to date (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1987-), 9: 207-08.

²⁷ William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), 120-21; Allan Greer, "Commons and Enclosures in the Colonization of North America," *American Historical Review* 117 (April, 2012): 365-66.

²⁸ General Orders, July 4, and July 7, 1777, both in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 10: 177, 252.

²⁹ General Orders, July 25, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 402.

³⁰ General Orders, August 11, 1777, in *Ibid.*: 581

³¹ General Orders, October 1, 1777, in *Ibid.*, 11: 355.

³² "An Act to Explain the Law and Constitution of the State of New Jersey, as to the Quartering of, and Furnishing of Carriages for, the Army in the Service of the United States of North America; and for Making Some Further Provision for the Same," October 11, 1777, in William Paterson, *Laws of the State of New Jersey* (Newark, NJ: Mathias Day, 1800), 124-26.

³³ An Act for the Better Regulating the Quartering of Soldiers, and Furnishing of Carriages, Horses, and Other Necessaries for the Army," March 11, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 189-90.

³⁴ *State of New-York, An Act for Regulating Impress of Forage and Carriages, and for Billeting Troops within this State* (Poughkeepsie: Printed by John Holt, Printer to the State of New-York, 1778)
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³⁵ Abraham Lott, January 13, 1779, Nielson Papers, Rutgers University Special Collections, New Brunswick, NJ, quoted in Thayer, *Colonial and Revolutionary Morris County*, 218.

³⁶ Greene to Wayne, December 19, 1778, in Richard K. Showman, Dennis R. Conrad, and Roger N. Parks eds. *The Papers of Nathanael Greene*, 13 vols. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1976-2005), 3:120.

³⁷ John Johnson to Washington, June 9, 1778, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 15: 366.

³⁸ George Emlen to Washington, November 20, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 18: 400.

³⁹ Greene to Jay, February 1, 1779, in Showman, et. al *Green Papers*, 3: 201-03.

⁴⁰ Showman, et. al, *Greene Papers*, notes 1 and 2; Ichabod Burnet to Ephraim Bowen, February 9, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 218.

⁴¹ Greene to Sullivan, February 9, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 222-23.

⁴² Washington to Israel Putnam, November 27, 1778; Washington to Thomas Clark, December 4-7, 1778, both in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 18: 314, 360.

⁴³ General Orders, December 29, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 524.

⁴⁴ Joseph Montgomery Testimony at Smith's Clove, June 16, 1779, Andre de Coppet Collection, Box 26, Folder 16, Princeton University Firestone Library.

⁴⁵ General Orders, December 3, 1779, in John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799*, 39 vols. (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 1931-1954), 17: 214.

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⁴⁷ Return of Certificates given in Specie by Joseph Lewis for wood used by the Army before May 1, 1780, Joseph Lewis Letterbook, Lloyd W. Smith Collection, Morristown National Historical Park.

⁴⁸ Enos Reeves to unknown, November 30, 1780, in "Extracts of the Letter Book of Enos Reeves, or the Pennsylvania Line," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 20, no. 4 (1896): 470.

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⁵¹ Walter Finney, "The Walter Finney Diary," ed. Joseph Lee Boyle, *New Jersey History* 121 (2003): 81.

⁵² General Orders, December 24, 1778, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 18: 497.

⁵³ Division Orders, May 9, 1779, Jacob Brower, 6th Pennsylvania Regiment Orderly Book, Society of Cincinnati, Washington, DC.

⁵⁴ Janet Dempsey, *Washington's Last Cantonment: High Time for a Peace* (Monroe, NY: Library Research Associates, 1987), 243-44.

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⁵⁷ Carl Prince, *Middlebrook: The American Eagle's Nest* (Somerville, NJ: Somerset Press, 1957), 48.

⁵⁸ Washington to Greene, December 4, 1778, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 18: 362.

⁵⁹ Greene to Wallace, July 5, 1779, in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 5: 205-06.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Greene to Sidney Berry, June 23, 1779, in Ibid., 177-78

⁶² Greene to George Weedon, December 25, 1779, in Ibid., 209-10.

⁶³ Greene to Abeel, November 15, 1779, in Ibid., 77-78.

⁶⁴ Abeel to Greene, November 25, 1779, in Ibid., 117.

⁶⁵ Greene to Arnold, December 16, 1779, in Ibid., 179.

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⁶⁸ Return of Certificates Given in Specie before the first day of May, 1780, Joseph Lewis Letterbook, , Lloyd W. Smith Collection, Morristown National Historical Park.

⁶⁹ Greene to Washington, December 21, 1779; and Washington to Green, December 22, 1779, both in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 5: 192-93, 197-98.

⁷⁰ Greene to Justice Benjamin Lindsley, December 22, 1779, in Ibid, 199-200.

⁷¹ Thayer, *Colonial and Revolutionary Morris County*, 174.

⁷² Livingston to Timothy Johnes, December 10, 1779, Carl E. Prince and Dennis P. Ryan eds., *The Papers of William Livingston*, 5 vols. (Trenton: New Jersey Historical Commission, 1980), 3: 256.

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⁷⁸ Greene to Hancock, December 20, 1778, in Showman, et. al., *Green Papers*, 3: 121.

⁷⁹ Petition from Inhabitants of Providence Rhode Island to Congress, July 3, 1779, Papers of the Continental Congress, M247, reel 104, item 78, v. 23, p. 173, National Archives, Washington, DC.

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⁸⁵ Washington to Dutch Reformed Church of Raritan, June 2, 1779, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 21: 25.

⁸⁶ Petition of Peter DuBois, James Nuttman, Thomas Cadmus, John Robinson, and Eliphath Johnson, July 17, 1777, New Jersey Council of Safety Records, Box 2, Folder 101, New Jersey State Archives.

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⁹⁴ Marie Jenkins Schwartz, *Ties that Bound: Founding First Ladies and Slaves* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 73.

⁹⁵ Washington to Greene, January 22, 1780, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 24: 217.

⁹⁶ Entries for July 1779, James Abeel Account Book, Society of the Cincinnati.

⁹⁷ Entries for June through November, 1779, James Abeel Account Book. Payments to Timothy Ford begin on June 9. Payments for travel to Philadelphia occurred in April 1780 for a trip that occurred in August of the previous year.

⁹⁸ Entries for February and March 1780, *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ Entries for March 12 and July 27, 1779, August 5, 1780, *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Thayer, *Colonial and Revolutionary Morris County*, 211-12, 216.

¹⁰¹ Washington to William DeHart, January 8, 1780, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 24: 57-61.

¹⁰² *New Jersey Journal*, January 25, 1780.

¹⁰³ Samuel Huntington to Livingston, February 1, 1780, in Prince and Ryan, *Livingston Papers*, 3: 295.

¹⁰⁴ Washington to the New Jersey Magistrates, February 2, 1780, in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 24: 352-55.

¹⁰⁵ Washington Wayne, November 27, 1780, in Fitzpatrick, *Writings of Washington*, 20: 406.

¹⁰⁶ Petition of Morris County to the General Assembly of New Jersey, (undated, though likely 1783), Miscellaneous Revolutionary War Manuscripts, item 10713, New Jersey State Archives.

¹⁰⁷ The 1779-1780 encampment sat on the land of three proprietors, Henry Wick, Joshua Guerin, and Peter Kemble. McClintock, *Topography of Washington's Camp*, 22.

CHAPTER 8

THE SOCIAL WORLD OF WINTER QUARTERS

From late 1777 onwards, log-hut cities occupied an increasingly important place in the formulation of Continental Army strategy. The new method of quartering afforded Patriot soldiers opportunities to rest and train, provided a firm base from which to initiate operations in the spring, and kept the bulk of the army at a distance from civilian populations. Rebel officers and men spent up to half the year ensconced in these installations. During this period, life in camp defined the military experience of soldiers and officers as much as did marching or fighting.

The army that lived in the log-hut cities in New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut exhibited distinct social divisions. Several historians, including Mark Edward Lender, James Kirby Martin, Charles Neimeyer, and Caroline Cox have highlighted the class divides that separated officers and men. From the war's outset, Continental leaders, George Washington foremost among them, desired a respectable army. In such an army, officers would exude gentlemanly behavior commensurate with the upper-sort status that characterized the leadership of European armies. On the other hand, common soldiers came from more middling backgrounds. As the war dragged on, Continental recruiters filled their quotas by enlisting increasing numbers of poor, landless men, including many immigrants. Thus by the latter half of the conflict, the Continental Army featured a primarily middle and upper-sort officer corps that contrasted sharply with its poor rank-and-file.¹

This chapter reveals how log-hut cities manifested in physical space the gap in status between officers and men. In quality and comfort of accommodations, privileges to associate with family members or fraternize with local civilians, and the rigors of daily camp life, the cantonments separated common soldiers from their leaders. Generals and their headquarters staffs enjoyed the best lodging in civilian homes and engaged in opportunities to socialize. The presence of generals' wives and unmarried local elite women transformed senior officers' winter quarters into a social world of balls and frolics. The fine lodgings officers occupied and the respectable behavior they exuded at social gatherings reinforced the gentlemanly image Washington hoped to craft for his officers.

Life in the hut encampments did not foster such a convivial atmosphere. Line officers often remained isolated from the social world at headquarters. They encountered fewer chances to consort with the opposite sex. Married officers could rarely spare the time or money needed to bring their wives to camp or return home on furlough. Line officers instead found comfort in male comradeship through dining, drinking, and gambling in their huts. Enlisted men faced even greater hardships. Cramped, uncomfortable housing and tedious camp routines undermined morale. Unlike their officers, the rank-and-file were prohibited from leaving camp and interacting with civilians. Only a small number of female camp followers resided in the cantonments, offering few opportunities to intermingle with the opposite sex.

Soldiers resented over their infrequent pay, shoddy clothing, and lack of food. Ultimately, life in the log-hut cities exacerbated this fostering restiveness in the ranks. From 1779 onwards, these feelings boiled over into mutiny. Winter quarters hosted the

most significant outbreaks of indiscipline to afflict Continental ranks. Cantonments' physical layouts shaped how these disturbances unfolded. Huts played a central role in how the Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey Line mutinies unfolded in 1780 and 1781. Soldiers organized their acts of defiance in their huts, away from their officers' gaze. Assembly on parade grounds without orders inaugurated the mutinies, while news of indiscipline spread down company streets to units not initially involved in these conspiracies. A return to huts symbolized the mutiny's end. This chapter thereby interprets rebellion in the Continental ranks as a form of urban crowd actions similar to those that swept colonial cities during the Revolutionary era. Overall, Continental winter quarters further entrenched the class division between officers and men.

The Social World of Headquarters

In waging the War of Independence, Washington viewed the Continental Army as a regular force comparable to the armies employed by European monarchies. The commander-in-chief expected honorable and respectable conduct from his subordinates. While Continental leaders generally hailed from more middling backgrounds than their European counterparts, they nevertheless aspired to gentry status if they did not already hold it. Military service defined officers as gentlemen, and conferred upon them distinct rights and privileges. As historian Caroline Cox has shown, these included better pay, access to superior medical care, and distinct burial rituals. Officers might occasionally face slights from their British opponents and French allies for their comparatively humble origins, but historians agree that Washington's efforts in cultivating a respectable image for his officer corps largely succeeded.² As historian Wayne Lee has asserted,

Washington's gentlemen earned the respect of the "international aristocratic officer class."³

Lodgings and behavior in winter quarters helped to build this respectable character for Patriot officers. Just as an officer's uniform, sword, and spontoon contributed to his gentlemanly image, so too did his housing. As seen in the previous chapter, although billeting the entire army fell out of favor after early 1777, senior Continental commanders continued to seek their own winter lodging in homes throughout the war. For the most part, generals, their staffs, quartermasters, and artilleryists quartered outside of the precincts of the army's log-hut cities. Instead, these privileged parties found living in civilian homes, public buildings, and purpose-built complexes, such as the artillery academy at Pluckemin. The prevalence of such arrangements revealed how access to shelter depended on one's social standing.

Perceived as the army's exemplars of gentility, senior officers and their staffs presumed the right to quarters appropriate for their status. Washington explicitly stated his standards for senior officers' housing. Prior to the 1779-1780 winter, he declared that civilians should provide homes for those "whose rank and situation require they should be lodged in the houses in the vicinity of the Army."⁴ When housing failed to live up to expectations, complaints invariably arose. In early December 1779, Brigadier General Samuel Holden Parsons shared a house he described as a "tophet," occupying a single room along with his staff of five. The family Parsons imposed upon acted, in that general's words, "worse than the devil." As the Connecticut general had not yet applied for a billet through the local magistrates, as per New Jersey's laws, Parsons lamented that the local government would soon threaten him if he continued to occupy the home. The

apparently humble structure stood so far below Parsons' expectations for suitable lodging that he described it as "this hut," drawing comparisons to the enlisted-men's dwellings concurrently under construction at Jockey Hollow. Exasperated, Parsons requested that Major General Nathanael Greene order him "a large marquee and a stove" as a last resort for winter quarters.⁵

Washington expected his officers to earn their respectable reputations. For an officer corps representing the standing army of a new government, proper behavior stood paramount. When officers sharing quarters with civilians violated social conventions, they earned the commander-in-chief's censure. On May 6, 1777, as the Continental Army gathered around Morristown for the coming campaign, Washington wrote to Major General Lord Stirling to reprimand him for committing a social faux pas. Washington had received word that Stirling had treated Susannah Livingston, the wife of the New Jersey governor, "with a degree of roughness and indelicacy," while the latter had lodged in the former's home. The commander-in-chief ascribed Stirling's conduct to a "sudden transport of passion" and appealed to his subordinate's gentlemanly character and humanity to implore him to avoid a reoccurrence in the future. Washington feared for Stirling's reputation, pointing out that the major general's military rank as a potential source of discord. He argued "the enemies of our cause will take advantage of such a circumstance," as Stirling's cool reception of Livingston had caused. Washington felt Stirling should note the "abundant causes of distress," and be "very careful how we aggravate or multiply them." Britain's 1776 invasion had caused much of this distress, in the Livingstons' case driving them from their Elizabethtown home and forcing the family to temporarily reside with Stirling in Basking Ridge. As the standing army already found

itself at odds with the ideology of Whig civilian leaders, Stirling's insulting conduct towards the governor's wife harmed the respectable image Washington sought for his officer corps. In this case, Susannah Livingston's "character, connections, sex, and situation" entitled her to "a degree of respect and consideration" that Stirling had denied her.⁶ The major general responded with an apology to Washington for troubling his superior with such matters.⁷

Stirling's case illustrated the high standards of behavior Washington set for his senior officers when living alongside civilians. Senior officers strove to minimize their infringements on civilian homeowners even while sharing their living spaces. Living at Jacob Arnold's home during January 1780, Nathanael Greene ordered a separate kitchen built for his own use to decrease the imposition on his hosts. To reduce crowding, several of Greene's staff resided in other houses and buildings at a distance from the major general's quarters, despite the inconvenience this caused the quartermaster. At the Ford house, Washington likewise ordered a separate kitchen built as Theodosia Ford's lacked the space needed to cook for her family of five as well as Washington's entourage of eighteen.⁸

While officers may have proven ornery in their quests to obtain quarters, they nevertheless tried to limit the distress arising from their presence in a home. Several members of Washington's army bonded with their civilian hosts. Simeon deWitte, the army's assistant cartographer, grew close to Timothy Ford, Theodosia Ford's eldest son. The mapmaker and the Ford boy shared various masculine diversions, including "speaking, composing, playing on the flute, – smoking together, [and] walking."⁹ Dr. Samuel Adams, attached to the artillery brigade at Pluckemin during the winter of 1778-

1779, upon departing wither quarters lamented leaving his “kind, generous, landlords not without some regret, their friendly behavior to me conciles my warmest gratitude.”

Nevertheless, Adams also felt that quartering in a home represented a departure from his expectations of military life. When the 1779 campaign season began, he excitedly informed his wife “I live like a soldier, have not lodged in a house since I left Pluckemin and pleased be god, I enjoy an exuding good state of health.”¹⁰

Regardless of how Continental generals secured their billets, those quartered in private homes enjoyed privileges during winter encampments beyond those available to enlisted men or line officers. Foremost among these, married senior commanders brought their wives to join them through the winter.¹¹ For married officers, winter quarters provided time to reconnect with families. During the winter of 1776-1777, commanders experienced for the first time in the war the loneliness arising from living away from their families. In late March 1777, Greene expressed to his wife Catherine that “the great distance” separating them had left him “very disagreeable.” He also teased that the young ladies of Philadelphia, upon a recent visit “put my virtue to a new trial.” The lonely major general urged his wife to “bless me with your company.” In late April he reiterated these sentiments, stating “I long to hear from you but wish more to see you.” During later encampments, generals’ wives, including Catherine Greene, Lucy Knox, and Martha Washington commonly resided with their husbands for several months.¹² Housing arrangements facilitated their stays with the army. Compared to the huts line officers and rank-and-file inhabited, civilian homes offered more comfortable shelter and more space for the women, their baggage, and their servants and slaves.

Washington burnished his gentlemanly image by building an entourage of officers, military wives, and prominent civilians during his time in winter quarters in New Jersey. Martha Bland, joining her husband Colonel Theodorick Bland at Morristown in May 1777, thought highly of the social circle that orbited around the commander-in-chief. She described Washington as “*our noble and agreeable commander (for he commands both sexes)*” and highlighted the twice to thrice-weekly social calls she made to his headquarters. While Washington’s military duties kept him busy for most of the day, Bland found the general “free for all company” from dinner onwards. Bland occupied a genteel social circle that amused itself in late night entertainment at the headquarters as well as horseback rides through the countryside. Joining the Blands and the Washingtons were Susannah Livingston and Washington’s aides-de-camp. In contrast to the residents of Morristown whom Bland referred to as “inhospitable mortals,” the general’s “family” comprised “all polite and sociable gentlemen who make the day pass with a great deal of satisfaction.”¹³

During the later encampments, the houses secured for senior officers provided settings for intimate gatherings between officers, their wives, and the local gentry. At Nathanael Greene’s quarters in the home of Derrick Van Veghten in March 1779, the major general hosted what he described as “a little dance party.” Washington attended and danced “upwards of three hours,” with Catherine Greene. The gathering also included Colonel Samuel Bletchley Webb and his brother, as well as assistant commissary of purchases Royal Flint. Beyond this company, Greene and his wife commiserated at various times with Cornelia Lott, the daughter of the New York refugee Abraham, and Elizabeth Livingston, the New Jersey governor’s daughter. On one

occasion, these women called the quartermaster general away from writing a letter to commissary-general Jeremiah Wadsworth to join them for tea.¹⁴ Other officers likewise hosted small affairs at their quarters. At the Ford house in 1780, Greene dined with Governor Livingston and his wife, while Stirling used his Basking Ridge mansion to entertain guests including Washington.¹⁵ Elite Patriot civilians living near Morristown also hosted gatherings, such as Abraham Lott's event held at the end of December in Parsippany.¹⁶

Beyond recreational gatherings, winter headquarters also hosted official functions. At headquarters houses and camp buildings, the army exhibited its growing respectability and refinements to civilian leaders and foreign dignitaries. In February 1779, the Patriots celebrated the anniversary of the French alliance. Continental commanders selected the most imposing military space available near camp, the artillery park at Pluckemin, to host the festivities commemorating this significant moment. Brigadier General Henry Knox and his officers organized the celebration. George and Martha Washington attended along with most of the army's principal officers and their wives. According to Doctor James Thacher, "a considerable number of respectable ladies and gentlemen of the state of New Jersey" also attended. The discharge of cannons and fireworks accompanied an "elegant dinner" inside the artillery park's great hall, while the evening concluded with a "splendid ball." Washington opened the ball by dancing with Knox's wife, Lucy.¹⁷

Washington's headquarters exuded military pageantry, with an estimated fifty or more guards, servants, and staff present inside the home. The headquarters more than just gave the appearance of a capital; it also functioned as one by receiving various officials. At Washington's headquarters at the John Wallace House near Middlebrook in

May 1779, the commander-in-chief received a visit from Native American leaders. He led them on a review a Continental brigade. Exhibiting the army's improved discipline and rising standards of equipment, such a parade served, in James Thacher's view, "to convince them of the strength and discipline of our army, that they may be encouraged, if disposed to be friendly, or deterred from aggression."¹⁸ Spanish envoy Don Juan de Mirrales called on the headquarters at Morristown received in April 1780.¹⁹ Mirrales' death from illness at the encampment was followed by an elaborate display of military spectacle. Ebenezer Parkman, a chaplain with the artillery artificers recorded on April 29 that "the Spaniard [was] buried with great pomp."²⁰ Parkman was similarly impressed by the April 24 parade in honor the French ambassador the Chevalier de la Luzerne, writing "troops assembled to salute the French Ambassador his excellency, with the grandee and they ladies waited on him in the field." He noted "thirteen cannon were fired. A very grand appearance."²¹ The parade directed by Major General Wilhelm von Steuben served to impress both the foreign visitor and the local inhabitants.²² The Continentals conducted similar processions in Morristown the following month, with much emphasis given to an ordered, disciplined appearance. This time both a visiting delegation from Congress and the arrival of Major General the Marquis de Lafayette were present.²³ Balls befitting of Europe's military aristocracy followed the celebrations. James Thacher, a surgeon serving in Stark's Brigade, reported: "Washington and the French minister attended a ball, provided by our principal officers, at which were present a numerous collection of ladies and gentlemen of distinguished character. Fireworks were also exhibited by officers of the artillery."²⁴

For unmarried officers, winter quarters provided an opportunity to socialize with local women. Compared to their more senior and often married colleagues, these men did not dine with governors, congressmen, or foreign dignitaries. Instead, they indulged in more casual flirtations with women inhabitants. As historian John Ruddiman has pointed out, socialization between Continental men and civilian women helped to normalize connections between soldiers and civilians.²⁵ In New Jersey, officers attached to headquarters stood at the forefront of this normalizing process.

The case of Nathanael Greene's young aides during the Middlebrook winter illustrates how recreation and refinement furthered the army's goal of projecting respectability. On January 1, 1779, Greene's aide, Major William Blodget, several fellow officers, and their civilian companions, took part in an apparently elaborate game. The major described it as an "attack on the General Hospital," in which he and his companions "came off with flying colors." Many took part in this New Years' Day amusement apparently while inebriated. Blodget was "really able to tell next day how he got home," but among his companions, "many could not do." This was one of the officers' "own little amusements, in a good fellowship way," which punctuated a mundane winter that otherwise presented "nothing worth relating." During the inactive months, Blodget, referred to by a colleague as a "*beau nash*," viewed time in camp as an opportunity to mix with the inhabitants. He planned to invite "Mrs. Livingston, Miss Gilly (Lott), and Miss Cornelia Lott" to Middlebrook, along with Colonel William S. Livingston, and hoped to entertain them with a dance "in order to make camp more agreeable to them." Blodget viewed his conduct at the event as an extension of the

army's respectable image. He promised to Greene that he and his associates would "do our possibles to make the department shine on the occasion."²⁶

One of Blodget's companions, Major Robert Forsyth, similarly viewed time in camp as an opportunity to court prominent local women. He did not succeed in the frolic at the hospital, admitting to Greene that he "was caught." Nevertheless, Forsyth had "come off very well," at "all our other maneuvers," indicating the frequency of such frivolities. Forsyth, like Blodget, highlighted the presence of Livingston and the Lott sisters in camp, writing of Blodget's plans for a dance that "I imagine we shall make out very well."²⁷ Blodget and Forsyth had brought another of Greene's aides, Major Richard Claiborne, into their circle of mischief. Forsyth claimed the woman who owned the home in which the three billeted had "given up" Claiborne "for lost." She blamed Blodget and Forsyth for "assisting and abetting."²⁸ As the escapades of Blodget, Forsyth, and Claiborne illustrate, Continental staff officers enjoyed mixed-gender relations with civilians while at camp. Indeed, Blodget found himself at another "hop" in March. This time he planned to socialize alongside Colonel Samuel Blachley Webb, having secured the company of two women, "Miss Banker" and "Miss van Zandt." Webb was a paroled prisoner of the British.²⁹

Grand assemblies provided the largest opportunities for socializing during winter quarters. These substantial undertakings indicated the importance Continental officers placed on such activities. In February 1780, thirty-five officers including Washington, Greene, and their staffs agreed to pay 400 dollars each to fund a dance assembly to be held in Morristown that month.³⁰ This idea apparently proved popular amongst officers and locals alike. By mid-February 130, officers had subscribed to the assembly, as had

165 women.³¹ A newly-built house intended to hold the assemblies stood two stories tall, seventy feet long by forty wide, with a main hall and two drawing rooms.³²

It took time for Continentals to hone their dancing skills. Some officers apparently failed to distinguish themselves at the early assemblies. In February, assistant commissary Royal Flint informed Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth that “there are not many able hands in the business of dancing – however they make good progress and practice very assiduously.”³³ By March, Nathanael Greene remarked that through the winter’s social whirl Flint had “become a prodigious beau and a great dancer,” and contrasted the convivial atmosphere of New Jersey with Flint’s home of Connecticut, joking “I don’t believe he will be able to breathe in the confined air of the holy land.”³⁴ The following winter, the army again erected a venue for dances for their main cantonment in the Hudson Highlands. Doctor Samuel Adams, a surgeon in the artillery, wrote excitedly to his wife Sally in December 1780 from Murderer’s Creek, New York, announcing that a “very elegant hut,” was under construction at camp. It was to have “a large hall in it for dancing, etc.!”³⁵

Unattached officers eagerly anticipated winter encampments and their promised a season of flirtation with local women. Captain Samuel Shaw, an aide to Henry Knox, expressed his keenness for the coming social time to his friend, Captain Winthrop Sargent. Shaw declared that “to be denied the pleasures we have promised ourselves in Jersey the ensuing winter would be a disappointment second to nothing but an exclusion from Heaven.” Sargent, conversely, was to winter in the Hudson Highlands. Shaw reported on the known whereabouts of desirable women in the area, including Cornelia and Gilly Lott, and Susannah Livingston, the governor’s daughter.³⁶ As the winter

encampment progressed, dance assemblies provided opportunities for officers to formally associate with New Jersey's elite women. In mid-February, Shaw spent three nights straight awake past 2:00 AM socializing prior to the opening of the winter dance assembly, which he feared would leave his companions "rather dead" with fatigue. Shaw's exhaustion derived from waking early to return to camp to attend "another hop," after escorting two women from Raritan to the home of ironmaster John Jacob Faesch in Rockaway. While Shaw lamented the lost opportunity to mingle with the two women further, he confidently declared that "it shall not be long before I have at them again."³⁷

Describing a February dance held at Morristown, Shaw remarked on the array of attractive women such gatherings attracted, declaring "the circle of pretty creatures is so engaging there seems to be no quitting it." Despite the presence of so many beauties Shaw lamented the absence of several of the region's most prominent young women. Not attending the February dance were "detachments from Basking Ridge, Beverwyk, and Elizabethtown," as well as Raritan, which referred to the daughters of prominent New Jersey families including Lord Stirling's, the Livingstons', Lotts', van Hornes.' Denied a chance to keep company with any of these women, Shaw and his comrades "sauntered away the evening," and expressed hope that the next assembly would offer better opportunities.³⁸

The captain blamed the women's absence on two factors. First, bad weather made travel to Morristown difficult, a reason also noted by Royal Flint.³⁹ Only sixteen women attended this winter assembly, compared to fifty to sixty men.⁴⁰ Second, as Shaw observed, "Certain of their sex have to be informed, before they venture, who and who do there assemble." By contrast, the captain enjoyed greater success in more intimate social

settings. Shaw's travels brought him back to the home of John Jacob Faesch and the latter's daughters in Rockaway, where he passed "a couple of days very agreeably with lovely Maria and her amiable sister." Shaw confessed that the more time he spent with Maria Faesch, "the better I like her. Every visit serves to confirm my attachment, and I feel myself gone past recovery."⁴¹

Despite Shaw's infatuation with Maria, he continued to frequent the larger balls held at Morristown. At the beginning of March, the officers held another assembly that enjoyed better attendance. Shaw found himself paired with Cornelia Lott during a dance, and used the opportunity to "be serviceable" in his mission of arranging a courtship for his friend Winthrop Sargent. According to Shaw, Lott observed "that the company was agreeable" at the assembly. Lott's reaction also revealed how New Jersey women perceived the social scene near the army's primary encampment, compared to that of more remote installations. Lott supposed that social life in the Hudson Highlands "must be a very disagreeable contrary to the diversions of Morristown."⁴² Unfortunately for Shaw's friend Sargent, Lott did not express any interest in pursuing a relationship with the captain stationed in the far-off and less refined camp in the Hudson Highlands. Shaw believed she would remain "exceedingly on her guard in future," should he attempt to again play matchmaker. For Winthrop Sargent, a posting to distant and isolated winter quarters had hindered his chances at courting civilian women. Conversely for Samuel Shaw, close proximity to the social world of the winter encampment presented opportunities for forming relationships with the opposite sex.⁴³

Overall, the prolonged presence of the Continental Army in New Jersey fostered mixed-gender socialization. Traveling through the Garden State in 1781, the Marquis de

Chastellux stopped at the home of Philip Van Horne, near Middlebrook. Van Horne had frequently hosted Continental officers traversing the Raritan Valley. To Chastellux, Van Horne's daughter Harriet "appeared to be on terms of great familiarity with one of the young officers," but the marquis later discovered that despite their close contact, there was not "any idea of marriage between them." Chastellux shared this anecdote with his readers "only to show the extreme liberty that prevails in this country between the two sexes, as long as they are not married."⁴⁴ Despite Chastellux's observations, marriages between encamped military men did marry local women. At the comparatively small and brief encampment at Redding, Connecticut, one local clergyman recorded eight marriages between soldiers and locals during early 1779.⁴⁵ In May, 1781, Colonel Samuel Blachley Webb married Elizabeth Bancker, a resident of the Raritan Valley countryside adjacent to the Middlebrook encampment.⁴⁶

Throughout the Continental Army's time in winter quarters, senior officers and their staffs proved themselves worthy of Washington's expectations of respectability. Through their quality of lodgings, official ceremonies, and socialization, Continental officers exuded the gentlemanly conduct befitting a regular army's leadership class. For civilians frequently living with a standing army in their midst, the parades, balls, and dinners hosted in and around headquarters facilitated friendly relations between the upper strata of the host population and its military guests.

Officers in the Log-Hut City

In creating this social world at headquarters, Washington's army came to resemble its opponent. Generals and rear-echelon officers in the British Army frequently

enjoyed winter balls and festivals in occupied cities such as Philadelphia and New York. By contrast, redcoat and Hessian enlisted men and line officers suffered through severe weather and short rations while garrisoning posts outside the cities.⁴⁷ For the Continental Army, line officers and the rank-and-file likewise experienced physical and social isolation while inhabiting the log-hut cities. The world of familial companionship, refined entertainment, and flirtation that officers enjoyed took place largely on the periphery of the log-hut cities themselves. Officers might attend a ball at the Morristown assembly building or a fine dinner at a headquarters house, but rarely did such pleasures manifest within the confines of camp itself. Instead, the line officers and soldiers that comprised the majority of the residents of log-hut cities inhabited a distinct and separate social world.

Among the best chroniclers of life in the log-hut city was Sergeant Major John Hawkins of Colonel Moses Hazen's 2nd Canadian Regiment. Hawkins left a diary of his experiences through the campaigns of 1778 and 1779 that featured frequent descriptions of the towns through which his unit passed. In February 1779, Hawkins wrote the most complete description of a winter encampment from a common soldier's perspective, while residing at the log-hut city built in Redding, Connecticut. Deploying the first of many urban metaphors, Hawkins began by comparing the encampment to Quebec City, emphasizing that like Quebec, the Continentals' encampment had "an Upper and a Lower Town," separated not only geographically, but socially as well. Hawkins' upper town consisted primarily of officers' quarters and service buildings, and elicited comparisons to an upper-sort neighborhood. Here resided "field, staff and other commissioned officers," as well as their servants. Also within the upper town lay the "public huts,"

providing essential services to the encampment: commissaries, carpenters, guards, shoemakers, tailors, bake-ovens, and soap-boilers. Officers at Redding enjoyed greater leniency in the arrangement of their quarters than enlisted men. Not only were “the woods about them not being properly cleared,” but also “the huts are placed so very irregular and scattered,” that Hawkins could not provide an accurate count of their number.⁴⁸ By contrast, the enlisted men’s huts of the lower town evinced Washington’s expectations for a well-disciplined army in camp. Hawkins gave a precise count of 116 huts, as these stood “on a regular line, front and rear, with a little vacancy between the rows like a lane or an alley, and a smaller space between hut and hut as a passage from a front hut to a rear one.” The enlisted men had refined their hut designs, many of them equipped with windows, “neat doors,” and stone chimneys adorning the structures.⁴⁹

The encampment appeared to Hawkins as a town, “the largest, (tho’ not the grandest) that I have seen in this state,” and as such it recreated not only the built form of an urban space, but also its diverse inhabitants. Hawkins’ town housed a heterogeneous population in terms of race, gender, and class, home to “good and bad, rich and poor, black and white.” The non-commissioned officers, along with “their wives and concubines,” resided in the lower town. Military functions within camp also prompted comparisons to town life. The frequently convened courts martial appeared to Hawkins as “courts of justice, which are opened almost daily.” Providing sanitation were “camp colormen, whose duty it is to keep clean the streets, lanes and alleys in our city.” Completing Hawkins’ urban metaphor were the “doctors,” and “trades of various kinds going on.” Less clearly, Hawkins also noted the presence of “statesmen and politicians,” but did not specify whether he simply meant officers or agitators among the enlisted by

this analogy.⁵⁰ Hawkins' account of the Redding encampment described a position entirely separate from surrounding civilian communities. While Middlebrook and Morristown lacked a similarly eloquent chronicler, both encampments resembled Redding in their built form and distance from significant civilian population centers.

In contrast to generals and their staffs, line officers rarely secured billets in civilian homes near camp. When such arrangements occurred, they brought Continentals into contact with local women, providing opportunities for female companionship. Lieutenant Enos Reeves with the Pennsylvania Line at Morristown during the 1780-1781 winter, lodged in the home of Mary Wick at Jockey Hollow. The small size of the force cantoned there that winter meant that line officers could avail themselves of civilian homes close to the encampment. These would have been taken by generals had the whole army been stationed at that locale. The fortunate Reeves made the most of a rare opportunity to billet with civilians. Similar to rear echelon officers, the Pennsylvania lieutenant used his lodging situation as venue for entertaining, pointing out that he did not leave "the ladies neglected." On December 26, Lieutenant Reeves spent the afternoon "with the fair sex, some of our agreeable neighbors Miss Wick, Miss Leddell or both." Miss Wick referred to Temperance, Mary Wick's twenty-two year-old daughter. Elizabeth Leddell lived in a in nearby Mendham. Reeves enjoyed "pleasant chat" over tea with his companions, whom he described as "the agreeable young ladies."⁵¹ In mid-January, Reeves complimented his hosts, having spent "time very agreeably in this very pleasant family in the constant company of the ever amiable and very agreeable Miss Betsy Leddell and very often with the additional happiness of Miss Wicks' company."

Colonel Oliver Spencer also joined Reeves on occasion, bringing his “lovely family.” Captain William Gray of the 4th Pennsylvania Regiment took part intermittently as well.⁵²

The company of fellow officers and several women allowed Reeves to enjoy “long and perhaps tedious evenings to pass away unnoticed.” Reeves, Leddell, and Gray would “ply the apple-toddy,” to intensify their socializing.⁵³ The comfort that Reeves’ relationships with both men and women afforded him composure amid the tumult of the January 1781 mutiny. He admitted that he had “striven to beguile care” while the “revolt has given me many uneasy hours.” Reeves proved loath to quit the company of the local families when his regiment relocated. On January 28, he dined with the Leddells and Temperance Wick for a final time, and tarried till 4:00, when “with regret I was forced to part with that agreeable family.”⁵⁴

Reeves’ experience represented an exceptional case. For most officers who were unable to obtain quarters in civilian homes, huts like the ones in Hawkins’ “upper town,” formed an integral part of their social world. Socialization with women remained rare for line officers due to the imbalanced ratio between men and women and the fact that most women attended social functions at headquarters rather than camp. Infrequently, officers socialized with women at their huts. Women of the local gentry attended a “house warming” for a lieutenant of the artificers upon the completion of his hut at Middlebrook.⁵⁵ Colonel Ebenezer Huntington of Stark’s Brigade at Morristown remarked that when his hut was finished, “I expect to open the doors & welcome every guest that comes with Stores, doubly to pay what he eats & drinks while with me.” Like many officers, he desired liaisons with local women as well, claiming, “I expect to have about a dozen fine girls to drink tea with me the first afternoon.”⁵⁶ Officers in camp

sought to operate within the expectations for both their gender and social sort, and feared consequences when they did not. Ebenezer Huntington, the lieutenant colonel of Webb's Additional Regiment despaired of having to resort to hiring "some woman" to live in his camp and attend to washing uniforms for himself and other officers. Having a washwoman living in his camp led Huntington to believe that "many persons will tell the story to my disadvantage."⁵⁷

Married line officers rarely brought their wives to camp, given the expenses travel might incur and the uncomfortable settings awaited these women on their arrival. Retirement to winter quarters instead led to a bout of furlough requests from officers seeking to return home. Captains, majors, and colonels beseeched Washington for permission to depart winter encampments, seeking a chance to reconnect with their families. By early 1780, their applications increasingly met with denials as Washington feared having too few officers in camp. For many line officers, camp life meant long-term separation from home and family.⁵⁸

Captain Walter Finney of the 10th Pennsylvania Regiment endured a particularly lonely existence. While stationed at Monmouth County during early 1779, Finney took up quarters in the home of John Little. Here, he was "treated with politeness and respect." Enjoying the status and freedom to socialize that came with such a billet, he attended at least three social engagements during his deployment to Monmouth.⁵⁹ In April, Finney declared himself "enamored with the ladies of that place." When recalled to Middlebrook that month, however, the Pennsylvania captain complained that just as he had begun to form attachments, the "striking of tents disappoints all our expectations." Finney was left to "wander about camp ever since in my nightgown and slippers,"

lamenting his lack of a “certain abode.” In sharp contrast to the frolics and flirtations headquarters staff enjoyed that winter, he described the Pennsylvanians’ Middlebrook cantonment as the “male monastery on the Millstone.” Officers in camp confines were “to live secluded from the enjoyment of the virtuous fair” sex. He joked that Congress should provide officers with a wife in each state in addition to rations of rum, sugar, and tobacco.⁶⁰

Within camp, male-only socialization for officers proved more common than mixed-gender flirtations. At Middlebrook during April 1779, the officers serving with army surgeon James Thacher provided “genteel entertainment” for the Virginia officers in camp, as well as Maryland Brigadier General William Smallwood. During this winter of relative abundance, Continental officers enjoyed the material markers expected of gentile society. Thacher observed “our table was furnished with an ample variety of dishes, and the choicest liquors that could be procured.”⁶¹ During late 1780, Enos Reeves shared a dinner with the officers of his regiment at his quarters in the Wick’s house on December 23, followed by a regimental dinner at a nearby captain’s hut on December 24, and finally a feast with all officers of the brigade on Christmas Day. The latter dinner occasioned “elegant entertainment,” and apparently plenty of alcohol. The officers “kept up the frolic till late and got half tipsy.” Officers of Reeves’ regiment shared another dinner on January 1, 1781.⁶² Lieutenant Benjamin Gilbert likewise passed his time cantoned in New York’s Hudson Highlands in 1779 and 1780 playing cards and drinking with his comrades in the 5th Massachusetts Regiment. Unlike most officers, Gilbert commiserated with his regiment’s sergeants, who spent New Year’s eve “at our

hut and kept it up very high.”⁶³ Gilbert, although an officer, had been promoted from the ranks and therefore represented an outlier.

Officers’ huts also hosted fraternal associations through masonic activities. During February 1780, officers of the New York Brigade used Captain John Francis Hamtramck’s hut as a masonic lodge.⁶⁴ On April 12, 1780, Colonel Israel Angell of the 2nd Rhode Island Regiment moved into his hut where that night “the worshipful lodge met in instead of a house warming.”⁶⁵ In December, 1780, Pennsylvania Line masons converted huts in the abandoned Maryland Line camp for their order’s meetings and processions.⁶⁶

Officers distinguished the social life in their huts from the more refined entertainment found in houses. In March 1780, Ebenezer Huntington found that his duties in camp precluded him from attending a gathering hosted at General Greene’s headquarters in Morristown. Huntington flattered himself with “pleasing thoughts of drinking tea at Mrs. Green[e]’s this afternoon in company with Miss Banker, Miss Lott, etc.” The lieutenant colonel lamented, however, that by late afternoon he remained “*in Hutt*, on business which threatens me during the evening.” Huntington admitted that on other occasions poor weather might have provided a reason for his absence, but in this case “the weather would be too trifling an excuse.” Instead, “that rascal of a business has intended to prevent my promised pleasure.” Huntington sought out the company of a fellow officer in consolation, requesting that Colonel Samuel Blachley Webb join him “at the hut this night.”⁶⁷ That same month, Huntington missed a dinner with Webb at Colonel Walter Stewart’s hut after spending an afternoon with another colonel.

Huntington assured his friend that he meant no disrespect by his absence, and told Webb “I must depend on a sociable evening with you.”⁶⁸

Officers expressed an attachment to their huts that reflected these structures’ importance as shelter, social spaces, and markers of status. Captain John Eccleston of the 1st Maryland Regiment pronounced himself “very happy and comfortable” with his hut at Middlebrook. He referred to the structure as “the first house I ever owned.”⁶⁹ Lieutenant Colonel Josiah Harmar described his newly completed hut in late February 1780 as “large and will be elegant when finished.”⁷⁰ Line officers endeavored to add a semblance of gentility to their otherwise rustic surroundings. For example, Harmar planted a garden beside his hut, sowing lettuce in April 1780, and harvesting it two months later before the army departed.⁷¹ Colonel Henry Sherburne, writing from his hut with “peace and plenty,” similarly promised to share the “net proceeds of my little garden,” with Colonel Henry Jackson.⁷² Colonel Walter Stewart likewise improved the comfort of his living quarters at Jockey Hollow. By the start of February 1780, Stewart had moved into his hut, although one room remained under construction. He also expressed his happiness at having in his hut a “good pipe [of] wine” imported from Boston. The Pennsylvania colonel planned to share this item sparingly until he could be joined by “a few Philadelphians.”⁷³

Although officers mostly socialized with one another in camp, they also attempted to build bonds with the enlisted men. Major General Wilhelm Freidrich Von Steuben’s *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States* helped cultivated a new sense of responsibility among officers for their men. Published in the spring of 1779, the subsequent winter represented the first time the Baron’s regulations

guided officers' conduct throughout a winter encampment. Von Steuben's directed that an officer's "first object should be to gain the love of his men," and that "he should know every man of his company."⁷⁴ In furtherance of this goal, Washington ordered regimental officers and brigade staffs at Jockey Hollow to quarter with their units. Brigadier generals were also to hut with their men wherever they could, or otherwise seek quarters "as convenient as possible" to their units.⁷⁵ These measures recognized the importance of commanders' presence for both disciplinary and morale purposes. In contrast to previous years, Washington denied leave to a greater extent to officers seeking furloughs for the period when the army entered quarters."⁷⁶ Private Ebenezer Parkman recorded his comrades worked "with the officers to build our huts."⁷⁷ Construction of line officers' huts was to begin only when the privates' were finished. Not every officer followed this directive. Ensign Jeremiah Greenman, for instance, occupied a sergeant's hut as soon as it was completed and occupied it until his hut "could be moved into." The building was not finished until early February, but apparently struck the officer as "very comfortable" after two months' work.⁷⁸

Camp spaces fostered camaraderie between officers and men. Captain John Eccleston declared "nothing gives me more comfort than to walk amongst my men's huts and give comfort to those in distress."⁷⁹ Similarly, Colonel Walter Stewart related that he was "happier among my men than when I lived in the Country at the distance of two miles."⁸⁰ Yet officers who fraternized too closely with their men faced particularly harsh penalties. An officer at Morristown found guilty of drinking and gambling with the privates under his command suffered immediate dismissal from service.⁸¹

Line officers occupied an intermediary space in the social world of winter quarters. Unlike generals and their staffs, they spent more time in camp living in log huts rather than billets in civilian homes. With fewer opportunities to affiliate with civilian women, line officers found comfort in the male camaraderie of their fellow officers. They used their huts as venues for dining, gambling, and commiserating, thereby imparting a measure of refinement to the otherwise humble structures. In trying conditions, line officers cultivated a life in camp commensurate with their status. Despite the attentiveness of many of these gentlemen however, they could not bridge the divide between themselves and the rank-and-file.

Soldiers in Camp

Unlike officers, common soldiers could not leave camp to experience the wider social world beyond the log-hut cities. In contrast to their frequently frolicking superiors, sergeants, corporals, and privates were forbidden from leaving their quarters after dark.⁸² At Middlebrook, General Orders stipulated a punishment of 100 lashes for enlisted men found more than a mile from camp without permission. To ensure the rank-and-file's adherence to this rule, officers were to place the order on the doors of all the enlisted men's huts, thereby inscribing the terms of a soldier's social limitations on the built-environment. Daily camp routine further reified the restrictions on soldiers' mobility. Officers were to inspect huts twice daily to ensure men had not slipped away.⁸³ Restrictions on soldiers' absence from camp derived from the Continental Army's British heritage. The practice of confining men to their camps originated in efforts to control the marauding armies of the seventeenth century. To rein in plunderers and deserters,

European officers implemented control measures that became standardized by the eighteenth century. The British had first limited soldiers to a one-mile radius around camp in 1686. In 1765, the British instituted nightly inspections to ensure men had retired to their quarters.⁸⁴

Once camps were standing, regiments assembled every morning, weather permitting, to drill.⁸⁵ On the parade grounds in front of their brigades' huts, officers read soldiers the day's orders, informed them of court martial verdicts, and carried out sentences. Compared to officers, who faced censure or demotion for disciplinary infractions, enlisted men suffered corporal punishment for transgressions ranging from theft to desertion to disobedience. Soldiers were also denied access to the material refinement officers enjoyed in camp. Liquor came under strict regulation. General Orders at Middlebrook banned unapproved "tippling houses" in the vicinity of camp.⁸⁶

Through much of the war, regulations restricted the number of women allowed in camp to a minimum. In Washington's vision of a respectable army, the presence of women alongside the rank-and-file carried connotations of disorder and vice.⁸⁷ Commanders permitted women to serve in ancillary roles including cooks, washerwomen, and nurses. Given the small percentage of married soldiers in Continental ranks by 1780, the number of enlisted-men's wives likely remained few. Only women providing services useful to the army were permitted to reside in camp and draw rations, usually one-half or one-third those allotted to men.⁸⁸ While evidence is scarce for common women's lives accompanying the army, scholarly estimates place the number of women camp followers at Morristown at fewer than 400. This number pales in comparison to the 8,000 to 10,000 soldiers present in camp. Consequently, the vast

majority of soldiers could not have had female companions. In addition, information on prostitution in the Continental Army is similarly scarce. Given the army's chronic lack of hard currency, scholars have presumed most women plying this trade would have gravitated towards British, rather than Patriot lines.⁸⁹ In a letter from von Steuben from a 1782 camp at Pompton, New Jersey, the Prussian drillmaster revealed how inflated currency undermined soldiers' capacity to pay for such services, complaining of the expense of "camp ladies."⁹⁰

The regimented routine of life in the log-hut city helped acclimate recruits to the rigors of military service and instill the order and discipline expected of a respectable army. Separating enlisted men from civilian populations contributed to this process of regularization. Orders confining soldiers to the vicinity of camp reinforced it. So too did the banishment of potentially "lewd" women. Sanitary regulations, beyond their practical benefits of reducing camp illness, also contributed to improving enlisted men's image. As historian Kathleen Brown has argued, eighteenth-century elites tied bodily cleanliness to notions of gentility and respectability. For a republican army, hygiene reflected the nation's morale and virtue.⁹¹ On the march, officers could encourage good hygiene by directing their men to bathe and wash their clothes frequently, as well as powder their hair and shave. In prolonged, crowded camps, officers emphasized the persistent washing of clothes, digging of fresh latrines, and clearance of trash. The clean camps at Middlebrook and Morristown thus symbolized an army developing a more virtuous, respectable identity.⁹²

Through the 1778-1779 and 1779-1780 winters, social stratification proceeded alongside regularization within the army. Enlisted men's log huts, neatly arranged in

rows and separated from their officers produced an urban space that reinforced the army's growing class divide. An anonymous sketch of Stark's Brigade's position at Morristown reflected spatially the hierarchy of enlisted men and officers within camp. The artist depicted two rows of huts at the lowest level, presumably those of the enlisted men, with ensigns' and lieutenants' huts at greater intervals on a third row. Captains' huts were depicted in a fourth row, distinctly afforded more space than those of the lower ranks, and notably possessing two chimneys rather than one. The artist portrayed majors' huts larger than those of the lower ranks, and atop the brigade's spatial hierarchy. Majors' huts appeared as distinct structures akin to a civilian home, rather than the repetitive uniformity of the lower ranks' huts. In contrast to the anonymity of the enlisted and ensign's huts, the sketch ascribed names to the higher ranking officers'.⁹³

Archaeological work has revealed material evidence of class divisions within Continental encampments. Studies of the hut sites of Stark's Brigade's at Morristown and the 1782-1783 New Windsor encampment have confirmed contemporary visual depictions of the hierarchical arrangements within these cantonments. Company officers' huts rested 100 feet further uphill from the enlisted men, while field officers erected their shelters a further eighty feet away. Officers thereby enjoyed a favorable geographic location to their men, more space between their residences, and more leeway in the design and placement of their huts. Whether they comprised the "upper town" Hawkins described at Redding or the hillside brigade sites at Middlebrook and Morristown, officers' "neighborhoods" within the log-house city enjoyed a privileged location and design appropriate for their gentile residents.⁹⁴

Camp life's cramped quarters, limited mobility, and restrictions on personal habits clashed with the liberties many soldiers had enjoyed in their lives before entering the service. By 1778, most enlisted men came from lower-sort background and were likely to have enjoyed geographic mobility throughout their pre-military careers. For the average Continental soldier, life in the log-house city represented a departure from their peacetime routines, as well as from military experiences acquired on the battlefield, on the march, or in temporary encampments. Those from rural backgrounds in particular would have found the dense streets and structures of the log-hut cities' built-environments unfamiliar. Proscriptions on where soldiers could and could not relieve themselves clashed with rural habits.⁹⁵ Restrictions on alcohol and gambling likely drew complaints from men of various origins. Unlike months spent on active campaign, camp life brought little in the way of distractions that might be found on the march, nor did it offer the opportunities for fulfilling aspirations to manly conduct that the battlefield offered.

Log-hut camps brought together soldiers from unfamiliar backgrounds. The enlisted men taking shelter in the log-hut cities around New York after 1778 comprised a diverse body of men sharing few commonalities other than their meager material statuses and young age. In the New Jersey and Pennsylvania Lines, numerous immigrants contributed unfamiliar dialects, cultures, and attitudes to Continental service. In every state's line, a high degree of intra-colonial mobility meant that transient men enlisted in localities other than where they had been born and raised. Urbanites, townsfolk, and rural residents alike filled-out Continental ranks. Regiments apparently grew more diverse in age, nationality, occupation, and geographical locale as the war progressed. It

therefore appears unlikely that many soldiers shared much in common with their fellow recruits upon enlistment.⁹⁶

Huts housing twelve men each provided a venue in which the diverse rank-and-file could bond.⁹⁷ Compared to the motion and activity of the campaign season, the limited mobility that characterized much of winter would have left men hours to socialize. Over a hut's hearth, soldiers could cook and share a meal together. Recruits could become familiar with their more experienced comrades. On the occasions soldiers were issued rum, they drank together in their huts. They also gambled their worthless pay in the same setting despite their officers' prohibition of the practice. Compared to life in tents, huts provided soldiers with greater comfort from harsh winter weather. Unlike billets, the men did not have to contend with cranky civilian hosts in hut camps, or the disruptions that came with being separated in various rooms and outbuildings. After retiring for the night, they would have encountered little interference from their officers, who were more often than not on furlough, attending a ball, or socializing with one another in their own huts uphill. Huts thereby served as one of the few spaces the army's lower-sort common soldiers could call their own.

As the material condition of the Continental Army declined through the second half of the war, discontented soldiers increasingly protested their circumstances in the ranks. Grievances included lack of pay and food, unfulfilled enlistment bonuses, or disagreements over enlistment expirations. Earlier in the war, Continentals had mostly acted individually in their protests. Historians such as James Kirby Martin have identified soldiers' assaulting officers, deserting, and swearing in close proximity to civilians as common forms of defiance. Bounty jumping, the practice of deserting and

reenlisting under a different name, allowed soldiers to obtain the compensation for service that they felt was their due. Excessive drinking gave the rank-and-file an escape from camp duties and alleviated boredom while subverting military discipline.⁹⁸

During the war's later years, collective indiscipline replaced individual defiance in the ranks. From 1779 onwards, protests developed into mutinies that engulfed regiments, brigades, and even whole divisions. Not coincidentally, these uprisings occurred while the Continental Army rested in its log-hut cities. Rebel troops turned these encampments into centers of protest.⁹⁹ By contradicting the peculiar disciplinary structures of camp life, soldiers sought to better their conditions of service. Private Joseph Plumb Martin recalled the men of his Connecticut regiment parading without orders in front of their huts at Redding in 1779. The men gathered without arms after evening roll call. This act of indiscipline removed any need to formally notify their officers of their discontents, for "we well knew they would hear of our muster without our troubling ourselves to inform them."¹⁰⁰ When a Connecticut officer arrived to hear the soldiers' complaints and promised redress, the men returned to their huts. Doing so symbolically ended the "mutiny" for a short time. Nevertheless, Martin's hungry comrades continued to fire muskets in camp, in violation of regulations, to disquiet their officers and make known their displeasure at the army's material plight.¹⁰¹

Placing the army in huts through the winter made it easier for disaffected soldiers to stage indiscipline. The twelve-man mess that comprised a single hut's complement made for a convenient body of comrades-in-arms. Whereas the rapid turnover in enlistments, campaigns of movement, and distended quarters of the early war meant men rarely served with the same compatriots or in the same locations for prolonged periods,

the long-term enlistments and periods of stationary life in huts after 1777 provided opportunities for soldiers to develop close friendships with their messmates. Soldiers stayed in close proximity for long periods, with little food to sustain them or combat to occupy them. Their log-huts facilitated the culture of class-protest that took hold in the later years of the war.¹⁰²

Soldiers' rebellions unfolded in a manner similar to that of the upheavals that occurred in colonial cities during the years leading up to the Revolution. Historians such as Benjamin Carp and Benjamin Irvine have emphasized how city landscapes shaped the course and character of colonial mob actions. In Carp's interpretation, crowds transformed such urban spaces as Boston's waterfront, Philadelphia's streets, and New York's taverns into sites of political protest and mobilization. The physical arrangement of urban environments brought people together in political action and facilitated the spread of information and rumor. Crowds targeted their protests at physical symbols of power such as the State House in Philadelphia or British customs houses on the Boston waterfront.¹⁰³

The built form of the log-hut city likewise influenced how the Continental rank-and-file enacted their protests. The huts and streets that comprised the "lower town" of the Redding camp served as the stage for the defiant troops' crowd action. Private Martin recalled the Connecticut rank-and-file had "organized ourselves and regulated the plan for our future operations," in this case a plan for a mass walk-out from camp and a march on the state capital. The densely-packed huts, and the narrow "streets," and "alleys" within the camp facilitated the organization and spread of this protest. They provided communications arteries, while sheltering conspirators from detection by their officers.¹⁰⁴

The indiscipline at Redding in early 1779 set a pattern that remained consisted through the end of the war. Dreary huts incubated mutinous sentiments. Soldiers conspired in these spaces away from their officers and planned acts of defiance. They then gathered on their parade grounds, sites that had been used to issue daily orders, reveal court martial verdicts, and conduct punishments. Assembling without orders thereby subverted the disciplinary functions associated with that space. In the most extreme case, the Pennsylvania Line mutiny of 1781, the riotous men vacated their camp entirely.

The log-hut city at Jockey Hollow hosted two riots during 1780 and early 1781. Enlisted men from the 3rd and 6th Connecticut Regiments took part in another limited mutiny against their officers in May 1780. This upheaval originated in the supply crisis that afflicted the Continentals in New Jersey during the first half of 1780. Captain Samuel Richards of the 3rd Connecticut began his account of the mutiny by describing another “season of starvation,” afflicting the troops in May 1780. Having endured two months on outpost duty, the Connecticut soldiers returned to camp expecting to find improved conditions, only to encounter another time of privation.¹⁰⁵ As Joseph Plumb Martin recalled, “We had entertained some hopes that when we had left the lines and joined the main army, we should fare a little better, but we found that there was no betterment in the case.”¹⁰⁶

As they had in 1779, the Connecticut soldiers vented their frustrations in front of their huts. Martin recalled that the men had spent most of May 25, 1780, on parade, while “growling like soreheaded dogs.” When the Connecticut regiments assembled for evening roll-call, the enlisted men continued to make known their dissatisfaction by

“snapping” at their officers and “acting contrary to their orders.” In Martin’s account, most of the line officers then retired to their huts, while the enlisted men remained assembled on the parade ground, quarrelling with their adjutants. This verbal sparring led one of Martin’s comrades to call out, ““Who will parade with me?”” upon which the regiment formed up to march.¹⁰⁷

While Martin’s account portrayed the mutiny as a spontaneous affair, other sources indicate a degree of premeditation. Colonel Return Jonathan Meigs, who commanded the 6th Connecticut, reported finding a letter behind the brigade camp site listing the soldiers’ grievances over lack of pay and food, as well as their threats to disband should the army fail to improve conditions. Meigs wrote that the evening roll-call passed “without any appearance of disturbance.” Afterwards, he informed his subordinate officers of the soldiers’ letter and cautioned them to stay alert for mutinous activity before dismissing them to their huts. According to Meigs, the mutineers began their protest through a planned, choreographed return to the parade ground to the beating of the drums.¹⁰⁸ In the neighboring Pennsylvania Line, Brigadier General William Irvine similarly described how the mutineers subverted the disciplinary routine of camp, beating drums and assembling on their parade ground without orders, “in order to march home bag & baggage.” The men stormed out of their huts and “paraded under arms, without an officer to head them.” Sergeants instead directed the men.¹⁰⁹ Samuel Richards pointed out that the officers “all sprang out and enquiring the object of their movement and their designs.” That the officers had no prior knowledge of the enlisted men’s intentions to mount a protest prior to the discovery of the letter indicates that the rank-and-file had contrived to launch their rebellion in secrecy. The private the men

enjoyed in their huts away from the direct supervision of the officers facilitated their conspiracy.¹¹⁰

In Martin's recollection, the mutineers set off from their parade ground intent on sweeping up the neighboring Connecticut regiments into their protest. They used "signals on the drums" to rally men to their cause. Drumbeats could be easily heard in the densely-arranged brigade encampment. The camp's topography, however, hindered the mutineers. Martin described a "brook and bushes" that obstructed the Connecticut mutineers from reaching their comrades from other states.¹¹¹ Camp geography facilitated officers' ability to catch up to the rioters and make a last exhortation for to return to the huts. The separation of the various brigades enabled officers on the scene to cauterize the mutiny before it could spread further. Meigs distrusted his own men and instead appealed to the neighboring 2nd Pennsylvania Regiment under Colonel Walter Stewart to suppress the revolt.¹¹² Joseph Plumb Martin recorded the role that Stewart, "with two or three other officers of that line," played in convincing the Connecticutmen to cease their indiscipline. Martin described Stewart as an "excellent officer, much beloved and respected by the troops." Perhaps Stewart's preference to reside in his hut rather than partake in the social scene at nearby Morristown colored Martin's assessment of the man. The Pennsylvania officer praised the "immortal honor" the Connecticut Line had won in its service to the country, and attempted to build empathy with the suffering enlisted men by relating that he had "no other resources than you have to depend upon." Reminding the mutineers that their actions brought dishonor to the army, he promised to confer with their superiors to improve the rank-and-file's conditions.¹¹³ According to Meigs, the ringleaders of the mutiny were confined, while the timely arrival of fresh supplies quieted

the enlisted men's concerns.¹¹⁴ Irvine expressed pride that his home state's troops had "kept the army together."¹¹⁵

A day after the mutiny, Meigs reflected on its causes. He chiefly blamed the food shortage from which the Connecticut men had suffered. They had gone ten days without bread, which "had not been the case with the other troops." In Meigs' estimation fault for this discrepancy lay with poor staff work of the camp commissary. The colonel reiterated that he had had some intimation of the discontent present in the ranks, and had warned his subordinates to stand ready to suppress any mutinous behavior. Calm prevailed on May 25 until after sunset, when Meigs awoke to discover that twenty men had turned out of their huts and threatened to break into a store house, initiating the riot. While the colonel maintained that "the principled part of the troops opposed the thought of mutiny," the "influence of a few bad fellows" had allowed the spirit of disaffection to manifest into open disobedience. Lack of meat remained the root cause of the disturbance in Meigs' eyes, and this he blamed on "want of teams to transport it."¹¹⁶ The national government's inability to adequately fund the purchase and shipment of supplies certainly contributed to shortages. So too did the Continentals' concentrated deployment in rough terrain. The log-hut city's geographic position at Jockey Hollow exacerbated the supply problems that so incensed the Connecticut soldiers, while the camp's built environment helped spread the mutinous spirit "a few bad fellows" among otherwise "principled" troops.

The return of the army to huts in late 1780 brought with it the familiar conditions that had bred indiscipline in the past. In December of that year, the Pennsylvania Line returned to Jockey Hollow while the New Jersey Brigade built a small hut encampment fifteen miles northwards at Pompton. The remainder of the Main Army wintered in the

Hudson Highlands. While the supply situation improved from previous years, food remained a concern as winter approached. Lack of pay continued to gall many soldiers. Additionally, by late 1780 many Continental soldiers who had enlisted for three-year terms in 1777 expected to leave the service on January 1, insisting they had expired. Continental authorities, on the other hand, insisted they were bound to serve “for the war,” or the duration. These grievances erupted into mutiny amongst the Pennsylvania Line on New Year’s Day 1781. The Pennsylvanians had apparently learned much from the Connecticut riot in May. Once again, enlisted men challenged the disciplinary space of the parade ground. Pennsylvania Lieutenant Enos Reeves found the rank-and-file assembled there without orders on the evening of January 1, “in small groups whispering and busily running up and down the Line.” Mutineers again used auditory cues to signal the revolt to their comrades, with gunfire from the 2nd Pennsylvania Brigade and a “skyrocket” from the 1st Pennsylvania Brigade informing soldiers not present at the parade that the mutiny had begun. Just as the Connecticutmen had in May, the Pennsylvania mutineers vacated their quarters “with their arms, accoutrements and knapsacks.” Conversely, Lieutenant Enos Reeves and his fellow officers sought to keep the rank-and-file “in their huts.” Officers traveled from hut to hut, urging soldiers to stay in their quarters. According to Reeves, the men complied initially, “but the moment we left one hut to go to another, they would be out again.”¹¹⁷ The troops had again turned the huts into sites of mobilization. Officers could no sooner return men to their quarters before they conspired to defiantly turn out once more.¹¹⁸

The built-environment of the log-hut city framed how the mutiny spread and intensified. The parade ground again served as an assembly site for the mutineers. Enos

Reeves testified that men “began to move in crowds” to the parade grounds. Here, Lieutenant Francis White and a Captain Samuel Tolbert of the 10th Pennsylvania Regiment confronted the mutineers and were fired upon. White suffered a wound in the thigh, Tolbert a “shot through the body.” As the crowds continued to carry on in a “riotous manner,” the other Pennsylvania officers “left them to go their own way.” Taking advantage of the ease of access the log-hut city format afforded them, the mutineers proceeded from the parade ground to the camp magazine, where they appropriated a cannon. The mutineers put this piece to work to signal their comrades. Reeves observed that “every discharge of the cannon was accompanied by a confused huzza and a general discharge of musketry.”¹¹⁹

With the cannon announcing their presence, the mutineers traversed the whole of the Pennsylvania Line’s quarters, and “turned the soldiers out of every hut.” By January 2, the mutineers had largely vacated the camp at Jockey Hollow and set out for Philadelphia. Those who refused to take part in the mutiny were forced to hide until the mob departed. Enos Reeves found that roughly half the men in his regiment chose not to take part in the uprising. By 1:00, the mutineers left Jockey Hollow, adopting regular marching formations by platoons, but with sergeants rather than officers commanding. Sylvannus Seely, a Morris County militiamen residing in nearby Chatham, reported men departing camp “in companies.”¹²⁰ For the most part, the enlisted men did not damage to their officers’ huts. The soldiers’ own huts, and the parade grounds beyond, symbolized their perceived neglect and facilitated their organization, but for most men, the riot did not progress to the destruction of the officers’ neighborhood. Nonetheless, according to Lieutenant Reeves, “those who were obstinate in opposing,” the officers did take the

opportunity to plunder their superiors' quarters.¹²¹ On January 5, another party of Pennsylvanians that had heretofore remained at Jockey Hollow left, firing on their officers as they departed.¹²² News of the rebellion in the ranks spread from the encampment to nearby communities. Jacob Arnold, Morristown's prominent Whig and militia leader, related the "disagreeable news" of the mutiny to New Jersey Colonel Israel Shreve at Pompton, describing the deaths of several officers in camp.¹²³

Word of the Pennsylvanians' uprising spread to the rest of the Main Army. Ensclosed in the Ramapo Mountains fifteen miles northeast of Jockey Hollow, the New Jersey Brigade shared many of the Pennsylvanians' grievances. Only a day's ride from Jockey Hollow, news of the mutiny there quickly reached the New Jerseyans' Pompton encampment. According to Lieutenant Benjamin Gilbert, the New Jersey rank-and-file "followed the example of the Pennsylvania troops on January 18." Like the Pennsylvanians, the Jerseymen marched out of camp in defiance of their officers. In contrast to the January 1 mutiny, the New Jerseyans encountered geographic and climatic conditions that prohibited a successful march against their state government. Whereas the Pennsylvanians moving south from Jockey Hollow had found provisions and prosperous towns in the New Jersey Piedmont, the Jersey Brigade leaving Pompton met snow-covered roads and barren landscapes devoid of population centers. Gilbert related that upon discovering that the countryside "would not afford so good Quarters as what they moved out of," the mutineers decided to return to their huts at Pompton.¹²⁴

From Main Army headquarters at West Point, Washington resolved to snuff out the mutinous spirit in his army before it could spread any further. The commander-in-chief had already assembled a force of 300 trusted troops of the Massachusetts Line

under Major General Robert Howe to suppress the Pennsylvanians' mutiny. On January 23, Howe led this contingent from the Hudson Highlands to put down the uprising at Pompton, where in Howe's words "the Jersey line caught the infection and went off in a body."¹²⁵ Whereas the Pennsylvanians had escaped the confines of their quarters to enact a successful protest, the New Jerseyans now found themselves confined to camp. After a grueling night march, Howe's men discovered the mutineers "napping in their huts just at daybreak."¹²⁶ Howe ordered the rebellious soldiers to assemble on their parade ground without arms to confirm their submission, juxtaposing the practice of assembling with arms in defiance of their officers that had come to signal the start of a camp mutiny. Howe then selected twelve mutineers and formed them into a firing squad that executed two sergeants that had led the revolt. The mutiny was over.¹²⁷

In all three uprisings, non-commissioned officers organized and led the rebellious enlisted men. The space of the log-hut city facilitated these men's leadership of the revolts. Sergeants and corporals shared the space of the log huts with their men. In contrast, line officers occupied separate, more luxurious huts away from the enlisted line's cabins. The huts themselves served as the flashpoints at both the outset and conclusions of mutinous acts. "Marching out of huts," signified the beginning of protest. Conversely, the Connecticut Line's rebellion of May 1780 concluded when the discontented soldiers returned to their quarters again. Following the disorders, Continental officers adjusted the arrangement of the winter camps. As the Pennsylvania Line was now dispersed throughout its home state, the New Jerseyans moved to occupy the now mostly empty hut complex around Jockey Hollow. On February 16, the New Jersey Brigade ordered all lingering Pennsylvanians, men and women, to vacate the camp

site and return to Pennsylvania. The New Jersey officers apparently planned to condense the size of the camp and wished to remove dilapidated structures. The officers informed squatters on February 16 that “all the huts in front will be demolished tomorrow.”¹²⁸ The cowed New Jersey brigade remained quiescent thereafter.

The bulk of the Rebel Army spent the final years of the war in its strongholds in northern New Jersey and New York’s Hudson Highlands. The mutinies of 1780 and 1781 had lasting effects on the way the Main Army built its subsequent camps. For the 1781-1782 winter, Washington dispersed his forces to a greater degree than previous years. The commander-in-chief himself eschewed the social scene of winter quarters for that of Philadelphia, where he stayed until March before returning to the Hudson Highlands. For the 1782-1783 winter, however, the Continentals erected another log-hut city at New Windsor, New York. This cantonment drew together regiments from New York, New Jersey, and New Hampshire, as well as three Massachusetts brigades. The camp’s architecture changed from that of the New Jersey hut complexes. Enlisted men benefitted from larger, more refined living spaces. Colonel Timothy Pickering, serving since late 1780 as Greene’s replacement as quartermaster general, designed a new model for Continental huts to be put into practice for the first time at New Windsor. Pickering set new dimensions for huts: rather than the single fourteen foot by sixteen foot room that had remained constant since Valley Forge, Pickering’s model contained two rooms, each sixteen feet by eighteen feet, and featuring a door, chimney, and window. The quartermaster general standardized roof pitches at forty-five degrees and demanded lathed rafters and singles for their construction. A generous fourteen feet by sixteen feet kitchen conjoined the two wings of each hut. The size of each mess housed within a hut

grew from twelve to sixteen men, who would enjoy more space, thirty-six square feet per man, rather than eighteen and-a-half. Officers also enjoyed larger huts at New Windsor, as well as the privilege to build separate kitchens.¹²⁹ The larger enlisted men's huts promised more comfortable living conditions, but also easier surveillance. These changes in hut design indicated a greater awareness of the social disparities inherent in the army's quarters.

Most importantly, the army shifted its scene for social gatherings to the heart of camp. In October 1782, soldiers assisted blacksmiths, carpenters, and masons in erecting a large wooden structure on a stone foundation known as the Temple of Virtue. Major General William Heath described this centrally located structure as "handsomely finished, with a spacious hall, sufficient to contain a brigade of troops."¹³⁰ Like the Pluckemin artillery academy and the Morristown assembly hall, officers expected the Temple of Virtue to host dancing assemblies. In early 1783, officers and locals celebrated the anniversary of the alliance with France in that structure. In contrast to the sites used in New Jersey, the New Windsor building sat in the heart of camp rather than miles away from the soldiers' huts. While it is unlikely officers allowed soldiers to join their leaders for the festivities, in a departure from previous locations common soldiers did access the space of the Temple of Virtue. On a daily basis, the building replaced parade grounds for reading out daily orders. In addition, the Temple hosted religious services. Brigades rotated into the building for divine worship, with officers attending alongside their men. The Temple represented the only house of divine worship built at any of the army's encampments, and the most visible venue in which officers and common soldiers shared a space. It provided a physical manifestation of the values of

honor and gentility that undergirded the military hierarchy, but also allowed room for the rank-and-file that had not been present at previous iterations of the log-hut city.¹³¹

Conclusion

At the Continental Army's winter quarters, its officers strove to create an army that possessed the order, discipline, and refinement expected of a regular army as well as the virtue and morality reflective of the nation's republican ideals. In its methods of quartering and behavior therein, Washington and his officers succeeded in satisfying most of these goals. Elite officers lodged in the region's fine homes, and conducted themselves as gentlemen. Despite the occasionally brusque manner in which Continental officers acted towards their hosts, they projected an air of gentility and refinement through their intimate social gatherings, parades, and balls. Cultivating the support of New Jersey's Whigs, the army demonstrated it was not a force to be feared. Officers contributed to this image in their courtship of local women. Their frolics, dances, and dinners helped to forge the ties that bound the army to the population it both defended and relied upon to sustain it.

Senior officers and their staffs created a social world that fit with their conceptions of their rank and status. Elite officers and civilians in New Jersey never held the refined galas and theater performances that characterized British headquarters. Nevertheless, the dance assemblies, parades, and banquets that took place at winter quarters represented an American approximation of the aristocratic officer class that led Europe's armies. Line officers shared in this refinement infrequently. Administrative

duties dictated that these men reside closer to their troops. Line officers' gambling, dining, and occasional carousing with civilian women indicated that they shared predilections similar to those of their counterparts at headquarters. Yet some seem to have embraced the opportunities to bond with the rank-and-file in camp. These officers occupied an intermediate place in the social hierarchy of the army as well as the physical arrangement of winter quarters, closer to the enlisted men than senior commanders and their staff, but still distinctly separate.

The refinement and recreation many officers enjoyed during winter quarters further exacerbated divisions with the rank-and-file. Occupying a distinctly subordinate place both socially and physically, common soldiers living in the log-hut city received frequent reminders of their inferior status. Coupled with soldiers' chronic lack of pay and food shortages, life in the log-hut city contributed to the widespread collective indiscipline that spread through Continental ranks during 1780 and 1781. Conspiracies against officers hatched from the huts and spread through cantonment streets just as riots did in Philadelphia or Boston. Much like the cities that the camps resembled, the cantonments at Middlebrook and Morristown hosted refinement and crudeness, wealth and poverty, discipline and disorder. Essentially, log-hut cities embodied the conflicting ideals and realities of revolutionary-era society.

Chapter 8 Notes

¹ For the social origins of Continental troops, see Charles Patrick Neimeyer, *America Goes to War: A Social History of the Continental Army* (New York: New York University Press, 1997); Caroline Cox, *A Proper Sense of Honor: Service and Sacrifice in George Washington's Army* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Mark Edward Lender, "The Enlisted Line: The Continental Soldiers of New Jersey" (PhD Dissertation, Rutgers University, 1975); Edward C. Papenfuse and Gregory A. Stiverson "General Smallwood's Recruits: The Peacetime Career of the Revolutionary War Private," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, 30 (1973): 117-32.

² Wayne E. Lee, *Barbarians and Brothers: Anglo-American Warfare, 1500-1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 200; Cox, *Proper Sense of Honor*, 28.

³ Lee, *Barbarians and Brothers*, 205.

⁴ Washington to Green, December 22, 1779, in Richard K. Showman, Dennis R. Conrad, and Roger N. Parks eds. *The Papers of Nathanael Greene*, 13 vols. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1976-2005), 5: 192.

⁵ Parsons to Greene, December 8, 1779, in Showman, et. al., *Green Papers*, 5: 154.

⁶ Washington to Stirling, May 6, 1777, in W.W. Abbot et. al., eds. *The Papers of George Washington: Revolutionary War Series*, 25 vols. to date, (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1987-), 9: 358-59.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Greene to Washington, January 21, 1780; Washington to Greene, January 22, 1780, both in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 24: 198, 217.

⁹ Simeon de Witte to John Bogart, January 10, 1780, John Bogart Collection, Rutgers University Alexander Library, New Brunswick, New Jersey.

¹⁰ Samuel Adams to Sally Adams, June 14, 1779, Andre de Coppet Collection, Box 4, Folder 1, Princeton University Firestone Library.

¹¹ Holly Mayer, *Belonging to the Army: Camp Followers and Community during the American Revolution* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1996), 146-47.

¹² Ibid., 150-51.

¹³ Martha Dangerfield Bland to Frances Bland Randolph, May 12, 1777, in Louise V. North, Janet M. Wedge, and Linda Freeman, eds., *In the Words of Women: The Revolutionary War and the Birth of the Nation, 1765-1799* (New York: Lexington Books, 2011), 108-9.

¹⁴ Greene to Jeremiah Wadsworth, March 19, 1779, in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 3: 353-54.

¹⁵ Samuel Stelle Smith, *Winter at Morristown, 1779-1780: The Darkest Hour* (Monmouth Beach, NJ: Phillip Freneau Press, 1979), 22.

¹⁶ Theodore Thayer, *Colonial and Revolutionary Morris County*, (Morristown, NJ: Morris County Heritage Commission, 1975), 235.

¹⁷ James Thacher, *A Military Journal during the American Revolutionary War, from 1775 to 1783; Describing Interesting Events and Transactions of this Period; with Numerous Historical Sketches of Several General Officers* (Boston: Cottons & Barnard, 1827), 155.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 159.

¹⁹ Ebenezer Parkman Diary, April 28, 1780, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts; Nathan Beers Diary, April 29, 1780, Yale University Stirling Library, New Haven, Connecticut.

²⁰ Ebenezer Parkman Diary, April 29, 1780.

²¹ *Ibid.*, April 24, 1780.

²² General Orders, April 25, and April 26, 1780, both in John C. Fitzpatrick, *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799*, 39 vols. (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1931-1954), 18: 296, 297.

²³ General Orders, May 28, 1780, in Fitzpatrick, *Writings of Washington*, 18: 433-34; Thacher, *Journal*, 190-91; Ebenezer Parkman Diary, May 29, 1780.

²⁴ Thacher, *Journal*, 187.

²⁵ John A. Ruddiman, *Becoming Men of Some Consequence: Youth and Military Service in the Revolutionary War* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014), 130.

²⁶ William Blodget to Greene, January 25, 1779, in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 3: 181.

²⁷ Robert Forsyth to Greene, January 25, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 182.

²⁸ William Blodget to Greene, January 25, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 181.

²⁹ Blodget to Webb, March 15, 1779, in Samuel Blachley Webb, *Reminiscences of General Samuel B. Webb of the Revolutionary Army*, J. Watson Webb et. al., eds. (New York: Globe Stationary and Printing, 1882), 160.

³⁰ Subscription List to Dance Assembly, in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 5: 408.

³¹ Ebenezer Huntington to Samuel B. Webb, February 16, 1780, in Webb, et. al., *Reminisces of General Webb*, 204-5.

³² Walter Stewart to J.M. Nesbitt, February 1, 1780, Walter Stewart Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

³³ Royal Flint to Jeremiah Wadsworth, February 8, 1780, Lloyd W. Smith Collection, Morristown National Historical Park, Morristown, NJ.

³⁴ Greene to Wadsworth, March 2, 1780, in Showman, et. al., *Greene Papers*, 5: 429-30.

³⁵ Samuel Adams to Sally Adams, December 20, 1780, Sol Fienstone Collection, David Library of the American Revolution.

³⁶ Samuel Shaw to Winthrop Sargent, November 17, 1779, in Samuel Shaw, "Samuel Shaw's Revolutionary War Letters to Captain Winthrop Sargent," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 70 (July, 1946): 306-8.

³⁷ Samuel Shaw to Winthrop Sargent, February 19, 1780, in *Ibid.*, 308-9.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 310-311.

³⁹ Royal Flint to Jeremiah Wadsworth, February 23, 1780, Lloyd W. Smith Collection, Morristown National Historical Park.

⁴⁰ Joseph Brown to William Irvine, February 29, 1780, Irvine Papers, New York Historical Society, New York City, New York.

⁴¹ Samuel Shaw to Winthrop Sargent, March 3, 1780, in Shaw, "Revolutionary War Letters," 306-8.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 309-10.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Francois Jean, Marquis de Chastellux, *Travels in North America in the Years 1780, 1781 and 1782*, 2 vols. (London: G.G.J. and J. Robinson, 1787), 1: 79.

⁴⁵ Charles Burr Todd, *History of Redding Connecticut* (New York: John Gray Press, 1880), 74.

⁴⁶ Philip R. Griffin, "Samuel Blachley Webb: Wethersfield's Abelest Officer," *Journal of the American Revolution* <https://allthingsliberty.com/2016/09/samuel-blachley-webb-1753-1807/> (retrieved September 19, 2016).

⁴⁷ David Hackett Fischer, *Washington's Crossing* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 351.

⁴⁸ John Hawkins Diary, February 11, 1779, Historic Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Enos Reeves to unknown, December 28, 1780, in "Extracts from the Letter Book of Enos Reeves, of the Pennsylvania Line," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 20, no. 4 (1896): 472.

⁵² Enos Reeves to unknown, January 14, 1781, in "Extracts from the Letter Book of Enos Reeves, of the Pennsylvania Line" Ibid. 21 (1897): 77.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 80-81.

⁵⁵ Jeduthan Baldwin, *Revolutionary Journal of Colonel Jeduthan Baldwin, 1775-1778*, Thomas William Baldwin, ed. (Bangor, ME: De Burians, 1906), 142.

⁵⁶ Ebenezer Huntington to Samuel Webb, February 16, 1780, in Webb, et. al., *Reminiscences of General Webb*, 204-5.

⁵⁷ Ebenezer Huntington to Andrew Huntington January 8, 1780, Huntington Papers, Connecticut Historical Society.

⁵⁸ For commentary on winter furloughs, see Wayne to Washington, December 18, 1779; Washington to the Board of War, January 11, 1780, both in *PGW*, Revolutionary War Series, 23: 649, 24: 81.

⁵⁹ Walter Finney, "The Walter Finney Diary," ed. Joseph Lee Boyle, *New Jersey History* 121 (2003): 46-47.

⁶⁰ Walter Finney to William McPherson, April 28, 1779, McPherson Collection, Library of Congress.

⁶¹ Thacher, *Journal*, 158.

⁶² Enos Reeves to Unknown, January 2, 1781, in "Extracts from the Letter Book of Enos Reeves, of the Pennsylvania Line" *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 21 (1897): 72-73.

⁶³ Benjamin Gilbert, *A Citizen-Soldier in the American Revolution : The Diary of Benjamin Gilbert in Massachusetts and New York*, Rebecca D. Symmes, ed. (Cooperstown: New York Historical Association, 1980), 62.

⁶⁴ Almon W. Lauber, ed., *Orderly Books of the Fourth New York Regiment, 1778-1780, The Second New York Regiment, 1780-1783, by Samuel Tallmadge and Others, with Diaries of Samuel Tallmadge, 1780-1782 and John Barr, 1779-1782* (Albany: The University of the State of New York, 1932), 818.

⁶⁵ Colonel Israel Angell's Diary, April 12, 1780, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Massachusetts.

⁶⁶ *Pennsylvania Archives*, 2nd Series, 11: 583-84.

⁶⁷ Ebenezer Huntington to Webb, March 1780, in Webb, et. al., *Reminiscences of General Webb*, 206.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 207.

⁶⁹ John Eccleston to Charles Eccleston, February 1, 1779, Eccleston Letters, Rutgers University Alexander Library.

⁷⁰ Josiah Harmar Diary, February 28, 1780, Lyman Draper Manuscripts, Wisconsin Historical Society.

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⁷² Henry Sherburne to Henry Jackson, June 16, 1780, in "Some Unpublished Revolutionary Manuscripts," *Proceedings of the New Jersey Historical Society*, 2nd Series, 13 (1894-1895): 80.

⁷³ Walter Stewart to J.M. Nesbitt, February 1, 1780, Walter Stewart Papers, Library of Congress.

⁷⁴ Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben, *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States* (Philadelphia: Styner and Cist, 1779), 135. For the emphasis on officers' duties to their men, see Robert K. Wright, *The Continental Army* (Washington, DC: Center for Military History, 1983), 142

⁷⁵ General Orders, December 10, 1779, in *PGW, Revolutionary War Series*, 23: 515.

⁷⁶ Washington to John Stark, November 25, 1779, in *Ibid.*, 432.

⁷⁷ Ebenezer Parkman Diary, December 18, 1779, American Antiquarian Society.

⁷⁸ Jeremiah Greenman, *Diary of a Common Soldier in the American Revolution, 1775-1783: An Annotated Edition to the Military Journal of Jeremiah Greenman* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1978), 145, 168.

⁷⁹ John Eccleston to Charles Eccleston, February 1, 1779, Eccleston Letters, Rutgers University Alexander Library.

⁸⁰ Walter Stewart to J.M. Nesbitt, February 1, 1780, Walter Stewart Papers, Library of Congress.

⁸¹ George J. Svejda, *Quartering and Disciplining, and Supplying Washington's Army at Morristown, 1779-1780* (Washington, DC: Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, 1970), 129.

⁸² General Orders, January 1, 1779, Jacob Brower, 6th Pennsylvania Regiment Orderly Book, Society of the Cincinnati, Washington, DC.

⁸³ General Orders, January 21, 1779, *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ Lee, *Barbarians and Brothers*, 179.

⁸⁵ Regimental Orders, January 12, 1779 and General Orders, February 4, 1779, Brower, 6th Pennsylvania Regiment Orderly Book, Society of the Cincinnati.

⁸⁶ Division Orders, March 10, 1779, *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ Mayer, *Belonging to the Army*, 125.

⁸⁸ Kathleen M. Brown, *Foul Bodies: Cleanliness in Early America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 169.

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⁹⁰ Von Steuben to unidentified recipient, April 4, 1782, General Collection, Society of the Cincinnati

⁹¹ Brown, *Foul Bodies*, 160.

⁹² Lee, *Barbarians and Brothers*, 200.

⁹³ Anonymous sketch of Stark's Brigade huts, Park Collection, Morristown National Historical Park.

⁹⁴ Charles L. Fisher, "Archaeology at New Windsor Cantonment: Construction and Social Reproduction at a Revolutionary War Encampment," *Northeast Historical Archaeology* 12 (1983): 17-18; Edward S. Rutsch and Kim M. Peters, "Forty Years of Archaeological Research at Morristown National Historical Park, Morristown, New Jersey," *Historical Archaeology* 11 (1977): 21.

⁹⁵ Brown, *Foul Bodies*, 176.

⁹⁶ Neimeyer, *America Goes to War*, 8-26.

⁹⁷ James Kirby Martin, "'A Most Undisciplined Profligate Crew': Protest and Defiance in the Continental Ranks, 1776-1783," in Ronald Hoffman and Peter J. Albert, eds., *Arms and Independence: The Military Character of the American Revolution* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1984), 128.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 128-29.

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¹⁰⁰ Joseph Plumb Martin, *Private Yankee Doodle: Being a Narrative of Some of the Adventures, Dangers, and Sufferings of a Revolutionary War Soldier*, George F. Scheer, ed. (Fort Washington, PA: Eastern National, 2006), 151.

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¹⁰² James Kirby Martin, "Protest and Defiance," 128.

¹⁰³ For the impact of urban spaces on colonial and revolutionary riots, see Benjamin Carp, *Rebels Rising: Cities and the American Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Benjamin Irvine, "The Streets of Philadelphia: Crowds,

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¹⁰⁴ Martin, *Private Yankee Doodle*, 152.

¹⁰⁵ Samuel Richards, *Diary of Samuel Richards, Captain of Connecticut Line, War of the Revolution, 1775-1781* (Philadelphia: Leeds and Biddle, 1909), 66.

¹⁰⁶ Martin, *Private Yankee Doodle*, 182.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 183.

¹⁰⁸ Return Jonathan Meigs to Washington, May 26, 1780, George Washington Papers, Online Edition <https://www.loc.gov/item/mgw423673/> (retrieved April 9, 2018).

¹⁰⁹ Irvine to Reed, May 26, 1780, in William B. Reed, ed., *Life and Correspondence of Joseph Reed*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Lindsay and Blankston, 1847), 2: 201.

¹¹⁰ Richards, *Diary*, 66.

¹¹¹ Martin, *Private Yankee Doodle*, 185.

¹¹² Meigs to Washington, May 26, 1780, Washington Papers, Online Edition <https://www.loc.gov/item/mgw423673/> (retrieved April 9, 2018).

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¹¹⁵ Irvine to Reed, May 26, 1780, in Reed, *Correspondence of Joseph Reed*, 2: 201.

¹¹⁶ Meigs to George Starr, May 27, 1780, American Revolution Collection, Box 11, Folder F, Connecticut Historical Society.

¹¹⁷ Reeves to unknown, January 14, 1781, in Enos Reeves, “Extracts from the Letter Book of Enos Reeves, of the Pennsylvania Line” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 21 (1897): 77.

¹¹⁸ For an overview of the Pennsylvania Line mutiny, see Carl Van Doren, *Mutiny in January* (New York: Viking, 1943), 41-53.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Sylvannus Seeley Diary, January 1781, Lloyd W. Smith Collection, Morristown National Historical Park.

¹²¹ Enos Reeves to Unknown, January 14, 1781, in Enos Reeves "Letterbook," 78-79.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Jacob Arnold to Israel Shreve, January 1, 1781; Anthony Wayne to Israel Shreve, January 2, 1781, Israel Shreve Collection, University of Houston Library Special Collections, Houston, Texas.

¹²⁴ Benjamin Gilbert to his father, February 1781, in John Shy, ed., *Winding Down: The Revolutionary War Letters of Benjamin Gilbert of Massachusetts, 180-1783*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1989), 34-35.

¹²⁵ Robert Howe to unknown, February 2, 1781, Andre de Coppet Collection, Box 17, Folder 6, Princeton University Firestone Library.

¹²⁶ Samuel Shaw to Winthrop Sargent, February 12, 1781, in Shaw, "Revolutionary War Letters," 317.

¹²⁷ Thacher, *Journal*, 240-41; Benjamin Gilbert to his father, February 1781, in Shy, *Winding Down*, 34-35; Van Doren, *Mutiny in January*, 204-227.

¹²⁸ Brigade Orders, February 16, 1781, New Jersey Brigade Orderly Book, Park Collection, Morristown National Historical.

¹²⁹ Timothy Pickering, Regulations for Hutting, November 4, 1782, cited in Janet Dempsey, *Washington's Last Cantonment: High Time for a Peace* (Monroe, NY: Library Research Associates, 1987), 47; Timothy Pickering, Sketch of Hut Model, Pickering Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

¹³⁰ William Heath, *Memoirs of Major General William Heath*, (New York: William Abbatt, 1901), 374.

¹³¹ Charles L. Fisher, "Archaeology at New Windsor Cantonment," 19.

CONCLUSION

The reduced size of the Main Army by late 1780, the exhaustion of resources in northern New Jersey, and the imperative to safeguard West Point, led Washington to shift the majority of the Main Army to the Hudson Highlands for its next winter encampment. With the Northern Theater quiet in the fall of 1780, Washington turned to the question of winter quarters much earlier than in previous years. The commander-in-chief held a council-of-war on September 6, 1780, to solicit his subordinates' opinions regarding the army's conduct for the following months. While he questioned whether or not to detach more forces to the South and pondered an attack on New York, no debate over the form of winter quarters occurred.¹ The log-hut city stood unquestioned. Each of the ten subordinates' responses Washington received expressed a desire to begin constructing winter quarters earlier than previous years. Brigadier General Anthony Wayne suggested that work begin immediately. Lafayette proffered the latest date, December 1. After the army's experience over the previous three winters, commanders realized that the best way to ensure their men had adequate housing before cold weather arrived was to quit the field as early as possible.²

Washington had developed a methodology of selecting winter dispositions since late 1777. By 1780, this had become routine. In mid-November, he ordered the Pennsylvania Line, under Wayne, to return to the vicinity of Morristown to secure New Jersey and protect the lines of communication leading to the south and west. By November 27, officers from the quartermaster's department had selected a site at Jockey Hollow, reusing huts constructed the previous winter, and Wayne received his orders to

move into winter quarters. Drawing on past years' experience, Washington's instructions to Wayne prioritized getting into shelter quickly, economizing the use of supplies, particularly forage, and minimizing inconveniences to civilians.³

The New Jersey Brigade was to form a link between Wayne's detachment at Morristown and the majority of the Main Army at West Point. Following good castrametation practices, the New Jerseyans were to camp "as near as possible for convenience of wood and water," while remaining close enough to defend the pass at Smith's Clove. Given these criteria, the New Jersey Brigade took position at Pompton, roughly equal distance to Wayne's detachment at Jockey Hollow and the main body along the Hudson, while a small outpost garrisoned Suffern, New York, at the entrance to the Clove.⁴ The Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island units cantoned east of the Hudson, while the Massachusetts Line garrisoned West Point itself.⁵ Despite its diminished size, the Continental Army for the third consecutive year adopted a familiar strategic plan. Brigades occupied an arc of cantonments in defensible terrain outside of New York.⁶

The West Point area housed the bulk of the army for the 1780-1781 winter, and here too log structures provided most of the army's housing. Taking advantage of a stationary posting in the Hudson Highlands, Lieutenant Colonel Henry Dearborn's 1st New Hampshire Regiment began "talk of hutting" in mid-October, with hut construction beginning on October 27.⁷ Given the extra time allotted to construction, Dearborn proudly wrote that the New Hampshire Brigade had on November 10 moved into huts "the best ever built in America."⁸ In December 1780, James Thacher and Stark's Brigade were once again ordered "into the woods," to build their huts.⁹ The Continentals

improved upon their earlier record in getting under cover quickly, as Thacher reported his hut finished by January 3. The army's smaller size, and improved organization and administration mitigated the worst of the privations experienced in past years. Thacher remarked "We have now no longer reason to complain of our accommodations; the huts are warm and comfortable, wood in abundance at our doors, and a tolerable supply of provisions."¹⁰ Men of Stark's Brigade re-used Massachusetts-built huts near West Point the following winter, indicating their sturdy construction.¹¹

For the 1781-1782 winter following the victory at Yorktown, the Continental Army dispersed throughout the Middle States. The arrangement of forces continued to follow the previously established pattern, with Continental brigades apportioned between the Hudson Valley and northern New Jersey. The New Jersey Brigade took position in the vicinity of Morristown, making use of the hut complex at Jockey Hollow for the third consecutive winter. The New York Brigade stood to the north, near the New Jerseyans old cantonment at Pompton, guarding the New York-New Jersey border area. Two Connecticut brigades, the Rhode Island Regiment, and two Massachusetts brigades cantoned in the Hudson Highlands, sheltering in the barracks at West Point and the various huts built during the preceding winters. Only a single light dragoon regiment guarded Connecticut.¹² The sound quality of the shelters built during the preceding winter meant many soldiers returned from the Yorktown campaign to comfortable quarters without having to exert themselves in erecting new lodging.¹³

For the war's last winter, the Main Army concentrated once again along the Hudson River and erected its final log-hut city at New Windsor. In design, order, and cleanliness, the huts at New Windsor surpassed those of the New Jersey encampments,

marking the culmination of an American approach to quartering troops. General Orders of October 1782 expected troops to “cover themselves commodiously.” Washington once again emphasized “regularity,” in their construction, but also “convenience, and even some degree of elegance.” Commensurate with the army’s earlier experiences, discipline in hut construction was to be regularly enforced. Any huts “built irregularly,” would be “demolished”¹⁴

For the late-war army on the Hudson Valley, building a log-hut city now stood as accepted doctrine for winter quarters. This standardization emerged out of two years of experience gained in the New Jersey Highlands. Having distilled the best practices for hut design and camp layout from the habits of his various brigades and regiments, Washington set down guidelines for successful quartering. Line officers effected these orders through their attention to detail, enforcing disciplinary punishments on delinquent construction, and better planning, while von Steuben’s *Order and Discipline* provided officers with a reference resource in print. As one historian of the Continental Army has observed, rigorous training, sufficient supplies, sound housing, and proficient administration brought Washington’s men to their peak effectiveness in the Hudson Highlands during 1782.¹⁵ The built form of Patriot quarters reflected this effectiveness, with the log-hut city now firmly ensconced at the center of an American way of castrametation.

Huts featured less prominently in the Southern campaign. The milder climate of the Carolinas enabled armies to remain in the field throughout the winter. Highly mobile operations in early 1781 abrogated the need to erect permanent shelter for Patriot forces under Major General Nathanael Greene and Brigadier General Daniel Morgan. During

the last year of the war in the South, however, the declining tempo in operations left much of the Southern Army in a stationary mode. After the British evacuation of Charleston at the outset of 1783, Greene's men held in place near that town. Like Washington's Main Army along the Hudson, Greene's contingent needed comfortable accommodations in which to await the formal end of hostilities. Lodging the army in Charleston itself risked the spread of disease and also the multiple frictions with the civil populations that urban quartering fostered. Greene's officers therefore chose to build a log-hut city at James Island, South Carolina.

Northern experience in hut-building influenced the Southern Army's conduct. Pennsylvania Captain Walter Finney, veteran of the New Jersey cantonments, recorded his men began to cut timber for their shelters on January 3, and moved into their completed huts just five days later. The Pennsylvania Line outpaced their inexperienced southern comrades. Finney admitted "the other troops were not so expeditious."¹⁶ Another Pennsylvanian, Ebenezer Denny, described the camp as neat and orderly, with "not a stump left" to obstruct parade grounds or company streets. In an apparent innovation from northern castrametation, the southern army used excess timber and brush to erect a barrier around the camp that, according to Denny, "served instead of sentinels" to guard the cantonment.¹⁷

The James Island cantonment helped foster confidence in the rank-and-file amongst the nation's military leaders and local civilians. On March 20, the entire force assembled for review by Greene and all available general officers, both Continental and militia. The army demonstrated its skill in marching, firing by platoons and companies, and bayonet drill. On April 23, the camp provided the venue at which Continental

officers, soldiers, and Charleston civilians celebrated the announcement of peace. Like the festivities held at Middlebrook and Morristown in honor of the French alliance, the 1783 affair at James Island included dinner, artillery salutes, and fireworks. According to Finney, “everything was conducted with order and decorum.”¹⁸

The James Island huts also helped incubate rank-and-file protests. In May, soldiers from the Maryland Line emulated their Northern brethren by using the camp as a site of protest against their lack of pay. Enacting a plan Finney described as “previously concerted,” the Marylanders marched out of their huts with their muskets and packs and assembled on the camp parade. Greene arrived in camp and convinced the soldiers to cease their would-be mutiny. Just as at the northern log-hut cities, the protest came to an end when the men returned to their huts under orders. Shortly thereafter, news arrived of a formal peace treaty. The armies at both James Island and New Windsor began to disband.¹⁹

The log-hut cities built at Valley Forge, Middlebrook, and Morristown stood as distinctly North American departures from contemporary European castrametation practices, a characteristic that remained at odds with several Continental Army commanders. While visiting Middlebrook in February 1778, Benedict Arnold described the camp as “these few dirty acres,” that were “peopled by villainous men.”²⁰ Lafayette referred to the huts at Valley Forge as “little shanties that are scarcely gayer than dungeon cells.”²¹ Nathanael Greene retained his distaste for the huts’ rude appearance and how that reflected on the army. Comparing the Continentals’ shelter unfavorably with European methods, he lamented, “I believe we are the first army that ever built

themselves winter quarters at the close of a campaign,” and continued to refer to hutting as a “disagreeable” task for the army.²²

Other Continental officers came to embrace huts. For younger men, the shelters reflected a sense of accomplishment and lay at the heart of a new military identity. Passing through the remains of the 1777-1778 encampment at Valley Forge, Lieutenant Enos Reeves lamented the dilapidated state of the camp ground in late 1781. He credited the site, however, with being the birthplace of to the “first huts of the whole army.”²³ Resulting largely from its successful winters in New Jersey, by 1781 Reeves could look back on Valley Forge with a pride that would have seemed misplaced after the damp, disease ridden winter of 1777-1778. Officers understood the log-hut cities as reflective of the new nation’s republican identity. James Thacher praised the soldiers for providing “for their officers and themselves comfortable and convenient quarters, with little or no expense to the public.”²⁴ The New England surgeon thereby contrasted the army’s methods of hutting with the occupation of private homes or expensive construction of barracks that had characterized British policy, and the early-war quartering policy favored by Continental generals. Despite Nathanael Greene’s misgivings, he appreciated the huts’ alignment with the country’s republican values, as well as the army’s vision for itself within that system. He recognized that huts were economical, since the army could “barrack the troops in a short time, and with little expense.” He believed discipline “could not be preserved if they were to be cantoned in the villages.”²⁵ The log hut city fulfilled in a more economical fashion a similar function to the barracks-building programs early-modern European states imitated to end their reliance on tension-fraught garrison towns.

Perhaps the most striking convert to hutification was Major General Horatio Gates. In 1777, Gates had opposed the use of rudimentary huts at Ticonderoga and beseeched Washington for tents. He had been among the log-hut city's opponents in late 1778. Yet at New Windsor he declared that the cantonment under construction promised soldiers more comfortable quarters than those that "any city in the continent would afford them." Gates also recognized the log-hut city's place in comparative context. He referred to the New Windsor encampment as something "new in the art of war," unknown in contemporary experience and unrecorded by military enlightenment authors.²⁶

Foreign observers expressed similar judgments of the log-hut city's novelty and practicality. A February 1779 letter on the artillery park at Pluckemin that appeared in the *Pennsylvania Packet* praised the Continentals' winter quarters. The author, "a foreign gentleman" who took the pseudonym "Z," wrote that "the military village is superior" to others he had visited. The camp's "regularity, its appearance, and the ground on which it stands, throws over it a look of enchantment, although it is no more than the work of a few weeks." "Z" pointed out that the log-hut city had "everything to recommend it," in an American environment abundant in wood. Log huts could be built quickly using local timber cut by hand, providing an advantage over barracks, which would have required additional labor to saw and transport. Consequently, the log-hut city freed civilians for "the culture of our lands, or other useful employments." The log-hut city so impressed the foreign gentleman that he claimed "the great philosopher king of Prussia thinks it no dishonor to copy General Washington in the mode of quartering his

troops.” While this comment likely stretched the truth, it nevertheless indicated the novelty of the Middlebrook camp compared to how European armies wintered.

The Marquis de Chastellux, upon visiting Continental positions in the Hudson Highlands in 1780, declared that the Patriots, “like the Romans in many respects, have hardly any other winter quarters than their wooden towns or barricaded camps.” The Frenchman praised the Continentals for the speed and skill with which they erected their huts, and highlighted the structures’ chimneys and small doors for preserving warmth during the colder months.²⁷ At New Windsor in late 1782, Chastellux pronounced the huts then under construction there as “spacious, healthy, and well built.” He again complimented the Patriots for the sound placement and quality of the shelters. The Marquis also pointed out that the Rebels’ skill at “putting together wood,” and the absence of iron in the huts’ construction allowed for much more rapid build times than would have been the case with European barracks.²⁸

In instances in which the United States raised a large forces for service near its coastal cities, the army returned to the familiar method of hutting its men through the winter. In 1798, the country began to raise new forces to defend the country during its undeclared war with France. In July of that year, Congress authorized the creation of the New Army, with a strength of 12,000 men in twelve regiments. President John Adams placed George Washington in charge of this army with the rank of lieutenant general, with Alexander Hamilton as his second-in-command. Still lacking substantial quartering infrastructure in coastal areas, American officers turned to huts and hastily repaired barracks for winter quarters.²⁹ In December 1798, Washington recommended against housing recruits in “great cities” for fear of causing disorders and exposing “the morals

and principles of the soldiers.”³⁰ Instead, log-hut cities would provide suitable shelter as recruits assembled during the following year.

American leaders relied on experience garnered in the War of Independence to guide their construction of hut complexes in 1799. In August of that year, Hamilton implored Aaron Ogden, commanding troops in New Jersey to make “an early preparation for winter quarters.” As no barracks were available to house Ogden’s men, Hamilton recommended the method he had experienced during the last war. He declared “it may be found most eligible to hut the troops during the ensuing winter.” The logic guiding the geographic placement of hut encampments remained consistent. As the Americans feared a French descent on one of the country’s coastal cities, the army needed to place its quarters in secure positions in the surrounding areas. For Ogden’s troops, Hamilton suggested a site near New Jersey’s Raritan River at Green Brook that would put three regiments within a few days’ march of both New York and Philadelphia. This would place Ogden’s men near the Middlebrook hut sites of 1778-1779.³¹

During October 1799, soldiers built huts in Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Virginia. Their commanders drew on the castrametation knowledge developed during the War of Independence. Washington outlined specifications for huts that copied exactly those used at Middlebrook and Morristown: sixteen feet square, made of logs, and accommodating twelve men each. Eight non-commissioned officers were apportioned to a hut, while captains and regimental staff officers each received a hut to themselves. Reflecting wartime experience, Hamilton prescribed using boards for hut roofs, with a strong preference for those cut in Albany for their uniform fourteen-foot length that made

for convenient hut dimensions.³² Washington stated explicitly that “troops should be huddled in the manner they were in the late war.”³³

Despite the familiar nature of the structure, young officers revealed their inexperience by not heeding basic castrametation tenets. In Virginia, Thomas Parker earned Hamilton’s censure for failing to place his hut sites close to timber stocks.³⁴ As the nation prepared for a potential war, Washington’s friend, Henry Hill, alluded to the Continental Army’s huts of the last conflict in praising the hardiness of American soldiers. He told Washington: “Another Frederick shall judge of them under your command, like that Prince who exclaim’d on hearing of your huts in the woods provided for winter quarters, ‘By my faith such men will yield no easy conquest!’”³⁵

Ultimately, the New Army erected three log-hut cities in the fashion of the War of Independence. Recruits from Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey and Delaware embodied in the 11th, 12th, and 13th regiments encamped at Green Brook, near Scotch Plains, under Lieutenant Colonel William S. Smith, President Adams’ son-in-law. Smith’s force was known as the Union Brigade. New Englanders of the 14th, 15th, and 16th regiments built a cantonment at Oxford, Massachusetts, near Worcester. The 8th, 9th, and 10th regiments, recruited from Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania, entered winter quarters near Harper’s Ferry, Virginia, under the command of Major General Charles Cotesworth Pinckney. Soldiers of the 5th, 6th, and 7th regiments, recruited from various Southern states, were originally intended for a log-hut complex to be built at Augusta, Georgia, but were instead kept in dispersed at smaller posts throughout the South. Recruitment shortfalls left the regiments understrength. The brigade

encampments at Oxford, Green Brook, and Harper's Ferry likely housed fewer than 1,000 men each.³⁶

Just as huts had in the last war, the Additional Army's winter quarters served as venues for garnering popular support for the military. Upon Washington's death in December 1799, Hamilton ordered the cantonments to hold funeral ceremonies. At the Oxford cantonment, soldiers paraded in the carefully choreographed service outlined in Hamilton's orders. Local civilians, militia officers, members of the Society of Cincinnati, and brethren of nearby masonic lodges joined in the procession. The Union Brigade at Green Brook performed honors for Washington's funeral on December 26, 1799, and was similarly joined by an estimated 4,000-5,000 civilians. A procession held at Harper's Ferry in February 1800 received similar participation from local inhabitants. Log-hut cities remained militarized spaces in which military pageantry cultivated civilian support.³⁷

Despite Washington's and Hamilton's attentiveness, the inexperienced officers and men of the New Army failed to heed the lessons of the last war. The Union Brigade at Greene Brook proved wasteful in its consumption of fuel, and faced a wood shortage by early 1800 when the army disbanded. Undisciplined soldiers had also fouled their sources of drinking water, spreading illness through the ranks. Adjutant General William North, inspecting the cantonment in the spring, believed the three regiments would need to relocate to escape the unhealthy conditions within the log-hut city. Before the army broke up, smallpox broke out at Green Brook.³⁸

The experience of the New Army revealed the importance of discipline and experience to the successful implementation of the doctrine of hutification. Senior officers such as Washington and Hamilton could order the construction of log-hut cities following methods adopted during the War of Independence. They could not, however, enforce regulations for sanitation and the conservation of fuel without a practiced corps of field and line officers. The Federalist political appointees that provided the leadership for the New Army's regiments did not possess such qualities.

Notwithstanding the difficulties encountered in 1799, log huts again housed the army in the field during the War of 1812. American troops deployed to the border with Canada spent much of their time stationary along the northern frontier. In this sparsely-inhabited area too few civilian settlements existed to provide sufficient billets. Men therefore needed huts for protection from the elements. In December 1812, for example, the Northern Army split its forces to ease winter subsistence and shelter, keeping one brigade at Plattsburg, New York, and another to Burlington, Vermont. The force in Vermont enjoyed the cover of partially-built barracks. These structures lacked chimneys at the outset of winter and the plaster in the walls remained wet.³⁹ The men at Plattsburgh sheltered in huts. Construction of huts under Colonel Zebulon Pike began only on November 28 and continued through January. Exposure to harsh northern climates led to a rise in camp illness, killing over 100 of Pike's 2,000 men in December alone.⁴⁰ The army proved slow to re-learn the lessons of castrametation bequeathed to it by its Continental forebears. During the winter of 1813-1814, the Northern Army, now under Major General James Wilkinson, again took nearly two months to build its huts for winter quarters "to make ourselves comfortable," in the words of one participant.⁴¹ Once

more the army lost men to exposure and disease, with a third of its 6,000 unavailable for duty during December. Wilkinson himself lodged in a mansion eighteen miles distant from camp.⁴²

The daily experiences of officers and men in winter camps resembled that of the Continental Army. Captain John Scott of the 15th Infantry Regiment, a native of Morris County, New Jersey, described his unit “building huts” outside of Plattsburg in December 1812, and expected his to be completed in “three to four weeks.” Much like the soldiers of a previous generation, Scott’s regiment had “not one tent,” and the New Jersey captain relied on a blanket and a “a few sticks” for shelter from the snow, which lay six feet deep. He did not expect to write his correspondent again until his hut was finished.⁴³ Yet, on January 16, 1813, Scott reported that construction on the officers’ huts had not yet begun, with the exception of the nearly completed regimental colonel’s. Enlisted men had moved into their huts on January 1, though half of the structures still lacked chimneys two weeks later. Evidently, the Continental Army practice of building enlisted men’s huts before officers’ endured. The huts’ designs’ differed from those used at Morristown, and more closely resembled the large huts of Pickering’s model erected at New Windsor. Scott described the Plattsburg huts built for individual companies as containing four rooms of twenty feet squared each. Officers occupied one of the rooms until their own huts were finished. Much like the Continental Army, December and January saw the 15th Regiment’s time “all occupied in getting wood and endeavoring to finish the huts.” Indeed, Scott dated his letters from “cantonment at Saranac” indicating the impressive stature of the structures the army built.⁴⁴ Just as in New Jersey from 1778 to 1781, American forces in the Champlain Valley contended with desertion, small-scale

skirmishes with the enemy, and illicit trade.⁴⁵ Unlike the New Jersey winters, however, the War of 1812 army, operating in a sparsely populated region, lacked the intimate civilian contact the Continentals had experienced in Morris and Somerset counties. Scott routinely ended his letter enquiring about the status of the “Ladies of Morris,” back home.⁴⁶

The American way of castrametation, first developed during the War of Independence, found formal articulation in print during the mid-nineteenth century. The *Military Dictionary*, written by Colonel Charles H. Scott and published in 1861, inspector-general of the United States Army, included extensive entries on military housing. In defining the word billet, Scott quoted the Third Amendment to the Constitution, stating “no soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house without the consent of the owner; nor in time of war, but in the manner to be prescribed by law.” While billeting remained the most common manner of quartering troops in Europe, Scott pointed out that the United States had prescribed no law detailing how the practice should unfold within its borders.⁴⁷ In contrast, Scott’s entry for camps covered eight pages. He included several distinctions in types of camp, including definitions for barracks, tents, and cantons. Beyond the latter term’s eighteenth-century understanding of when troops were “distributed at any time among villages,” Scott now included the definition of “when placed in huts at the end of the campaign.”⁴⁸ He defined huts themselves as “frequently constructed by troops retiring to winter quarters,” with special distinction given as “the quarters occupied by United States troops on our frontiers.”⁴⁹ The dictionary’s plan for a hut included instructions on cutting windows and doors in to the

structure, and the accompanying illustration bore a resemblance to its revolutionary forebears' depictions.⁵⁰

Distilling the castrametation knowledge acquired in the previous century, Scott also highlighted the importance of access to “good water” and firewood; the latter article would ensure “warm encampments, even in the most bitter weather.”⁵¹ Terrain permitting, huts were to be arranged in neat lines of company streets; “the general thus has whole extent of his camp in view, and order can be better preserved.”⁵² An orderly layout and sound construction would also contribute to a sanitary camp. To further ensure health, Scott emphasized the digging of drainage ditches and burning of refuse.⁵³ Scott left to commanding officers the decision to canton the army together, or in detached corps.

Eighty years after the Continental Army departed its encampments in New Jersey and New York, similar structures arose across landscapes in Maryland, Virginia, and Tennessee. The American Civil War once again pitted sizeable armies against one another in the densely populated eastern states. Again American armies turned to the log hut encampment for quarters during stationary periods. Much like the Main Army in New Jersey in 1779 and 1780, the Army of Northern Virginia's encampments of 1862 and 1863, for example, dwarfed the cities of its host state and ranked among the largest population concentrations in the Confederacy.⁵⁴

Union soldiers likewise built timber shelters in the southern countryside. During the winter of 1862-1863, the Army of the Potomac erected up to 30,000 huts for its winter quarters near Falmouth, Virginia. The region's forests “disappeared” in the words

of one newspaper report as a result of the army's quest for building material and fuel. Just as in the War of Independence, logs formed the huts' walls and chimneys. The Army of the Potomac differed in that it used tent cloth for roofs. Hut dimensions and layouts varied to a greater extent than the Continental Army's. While Civil War huts proved smaller, only eight by ten feet, they housed a mess of only four men rather than twelve. The memory of the Revolutionary War encampments loomed large in Civil War soldiers' understandings of their own experiences with winter quarters. One recent study has found mention of Valley Forge in more than 1,000 Union soldiers' writings from the winter of 1862-1863.⁵⁵ For most soldiers, the majority of their service occurred not on the battlefield, but within the confines of the log-hut encampment. Log-hut cities lay at the heart of the United States soldier's wartime experience in both the War of Independence and the Civil War.

By providing shelter, minimizing civilian antagonisms, streamlining discipline and supply, and keeping concentrated a sizeable army in close proximity to the enemy, log-hut cities contributed to the success of Patriot strategy during the War of Independence. When the war began, Rebel soldiers suffered from a lack of adequate shelter. Through 1775 and 1776 the Patriots struggled to find suitable accommodations, never having sufficient numbers of tents, barracks, or billets in civilian homes and public buildings. The British capture of New York denied the Continentals' access to the largest concentration of buildings in the region. Through 1777 and 1778 Washington and his subordinates responded to the difficult housing conditions in which they found themselves. They implemented the smallpox inoculation program which minimized the

threat of that disease whenever soldiers and civilians resided in close quarters. At Valley Forge they turned to log huts for lodging. These provided the army with lodging that could be built quickly and cheaply wherever it was needed. Through subsequent winters in New Jersey the Rebels grew more discerning in their selection of camp sites and improved their methods for building huts. Continental generals also adapted their winter dispositions to suit changing logistical and strategic conditions. In the war's final year, Washington highlighted a lack of shelter among the myriad of other difficulties his army had overcome. In a 1783 letter to Colonel Theodorick Bland, the commander-in-chief declared that the Continentals had spent the last six years in the field, "without any other shelter from the inclemency of weather than tents, or such houses as they could build for themselves without expense to the public."⁵⁶

Log-hut cities helped define the American military experience during the War of Independence. From late 1778 through mid-1779, the Continental Army spent fourteen months in camp and five on active campaigns that yielded Sullivan's expedition against the Iroquois and two small skirmishes on the Hudson Valley. Thus, the log hut, rather than the line of battle, best illustrates the life of the average soldier for much of the war. Log-hut cities served as the spatial setting for several of the worst enlisted-men's mutinies during the war. Encampments also remained the most visible manifestation of the new nation's most prominent institution, thereby framing civil-military relations in New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut. Finally, encampments surely stood as the most impressive physical undertaking of the revolutionary republic. Housing 10,000 men, the Morristown encampment exceeded the size of New Jersey's largest settlement, Elizabethtown, by nearly tenfold, and would have ranked fifth in the nation had it been a

permanent city. Although Valley Forge remains the best-remembered of these encampments, the struggles experienced therein left the subsequent use of log huts in doubt. The adoption of this definitive form of American quarters succeeded due to the adaptations and improvements made during the New Jersey encampments of 1778-1779 and 1779-1780.

The Continental Army was not the only force in military history that dealt with the problem of shelter. The Patriots' encampments do, however, stand out as the most well-known winter quarters of any army. Both Valley Forge and Jockey Hollow are preserved by the United States National Park Service. New Windsor, New York; Redding, Connecticut; and Somerville, New Jersey (the modern town standing near the ground once occupied by the Middlebrook camp), all host state parks commemorating the winter quarters built at those places. The existence of such parks testifies to the hold that the Continentals' winter-time struggles have had on popular audiences.

This dissertation has shown that cantonments played a larger role in the war than simply serving as a backdrop for the leadership and forbearance that have characterized depictions of the Valley Forge and Jockey Hollow winters. Instead, hut complexes stood as distinct innovations that formed a crucial component to Continental strategy. The log-hut city represents one of Washington's most important and original contributions made to the art of war. Above all, the dissertation has sought to reveal the importance of shelter to armies in both their operations their relationships with civilian society. Historians will hopefully find the study of war and shelter in other eras and locales a fruitful field for future scholarship.

Conclusion Notes

¹ Council-of-War, September 6, 1780, in John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799*, 39 vols. (Washington DC: US Government Printing Office, 1931-1954), 20: 8.

² Council-of-War, October 31, 1780, in *Ibid.*, 272-74.

³ Washington to Wayne, November 27, 1780, in *Ibid.*, 406.

⁴ Washington to the New Jersey Brigade Commanding Officer, November 27, 1780, in *Ibid.*, 408.

⁵ Washington to Congress, November 28, 1780, in *Ibid.*, 418.

⁶ George Clinton to Alexander McDougall, October 3, 1780, in Hugh Hastings ed., *The Public Papers of George Clinton, First Governor of New York*, 10 vols. (New York: Wynkoop, Hallenback, and Crawford, 1899-1914), 6: 274.

⁷ Henry Dearborn, *Revolutionary War Journals of Henry Dearborn, 1775-1783*, Lloyd Brown and Howard Peckham, eds. (New York: Da Capo, 1939), 207.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 210.

⁹ James Thacher, *A Military Journal during the American Revolutionary War, from 1775 to 1783; Describing Interesting Events and Transactions of this Period; with Numerous Historical Sketches of Several General Officers* (Boston: Cottons & Barnard, 1827), 236.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 240.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 297.

¹² William Heath to George Clinton, November 30, 1781, in Hastings, *Clinton Papers*, 7: 529-31.

¹³ Roger Welles to Solomon Welles, December 10, 1781, American Revolution Collection, Box 11, Folder J, Connecticut Historical Society.

¹⁴ General Orders, October 28, 1782, in Fitzpatrick, *Writings of Washington*, 25: 303.

¹⁵ Robert K. Wright, "Nor is their Standing Army to be Despised: The Emergence of the Continental Army as a Military Institution," in Ronald Hoffman and Peter J. Albert, eds., *Arms and Independence: The Military Character of the American Revolution* (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1984), 72.

¹⁶ Walter Finney, "The Revolutionary War Diaries of Captain Walter Finney," Joseph Lee Boyle, ed., *South Carolina Historical Magazine* 98 (April, 1997): 149.

¹⁷ Ebenezer Denny, *Military Journal of Major Ebenezer Denny* (Philadelphia: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1859), 50.

¹⁸ Finney, "Revolutionary War Diaries," 150.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 151.

²⁰ Benedict Arnold to Peggy Shippen, February 8, 1778, Joseph Reed Papers, New York Historical Society, New York City, New York.

²¹ Quoted in John Trussell, *Birthplace of an Army: A Study of the Valley Forge Encampment* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Historical Society, 1976), 21.

²² Greene to John Hancock, December 20, 1778, in Richard K. Showman, Dennis R. Conrad, and Roger N. Parks eds. *The Papers of Nathanael Greene*, 13 vols. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1976-2005), 3: 121.

²³ Enos Reeves, "Extracts from the Letterbook of Enos Reeves," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 21, no. 4 (1897): 235.

²⁴ Thacher, *Journal*, 155-56.

²⁵ Greene to Charles Pettit, December 17, 1778, in *Ibid.*, 121.

²⁶ Quoted in Janet Dempsey, *Washington's Last Cantonment: High Time for a Peace* (Monroe NY: National Temple Hill Association, 1987), 46.

²⁷ Chastellux, *Travels in North America*, 1: 42.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 366.

²⁹ Richard H. Kohn, *Eagle and Sword: The Federalists and the Creation of the Military Establishment in America, 1783-1802* (New York: Free Press, 1975), 214-18.

³⁰ Washington to McHenry, December 13, 1798, in Harold C. Syrett, ed., *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton*, 27 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961-79), 22: 350.

³¹ Hamilton to Ogden, August 22, 1799, in *Ibid.*, 23: 340.

³² Hamilton to McHenry, October 3, 1799, in *Ibid.*, 493.

³³ Washington to Hamilton, October 26, 1799, in *Ibid.*, 568.

³⁴ Hamilton to Thomas Parker, October 21, 1799, in *Ibid.*, 542.

³⁵ Henry Hill to Washington, July 4, 1799, in Dorothy Twohig, ed., *The Papers of George Washington: Retirement Series*, 4 vols. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1998-1999), 4: 372.

³⁶ Gerald E. Kahler, "Washington in Glory, America in Tears: The Nation Mourns the Death of George Washington, 1799-1800," PhD diss., William and Mary College, 2003, 293; Kohn, *Eagle and Sword*, 248.

³⁷ Kahler, "Washington in Glory," 293-94; *Walpole (New Hampshire) Farmer's Museum, or Lay's Preacher's Gazette*, January 27, 1800.

³⁸ Kohn, *Eagle and Sword*, 248.

³⁹ Allan Everest, *The War of 1812 in the Champlain Valley* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2010), 93

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 93.

⁴¹ Rufus McIntire to John Holmes, December 3 1813, McIntire Letters, New York State Library, Albany, New York.

⁴² Everest, *Champlain Valley*, 136.

⁴³ John Scott to David Thompson, December 1812, quoted in John Scott, "The Letters of Captain John Scott, 15th US Infantry: A New Jersey Officer in the War of 1812," John C. Frederiksen, ed., *New Jersey History* 107 (Fall/Winter 1989): 61-82; Rufus McIntire, writing at French Mills in the winter of 1813-1814, similarly excused leaving out important information from a letter due to having been "very busy in building huts," Rufus McIntire to John Holmes, December 3, 1813, McIntire Letters, New York State Library.

⁴⁴ Scott to Thompson, January 16, 1813, in Scott, "Letters of Captain Scott."

⁴⁵ John Scot to David Thompson, February 15, 1812, in *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Henry L. Scott, *Military Dictionary: Comprising Technical Definitions, Information on Raising and Keeping Troops, Actual Service, including Makeshifts and Improved Materiel, and Law, Government, Regulation, and Administration Relating to Land Forces* (New York: Van Nostrand, 1861), 85-86.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 132-45, quoted text on 132.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 345.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 139.

⁵¹ Ibid., 132-33.

⁵² Ibid., 133.

⁵³ Ibid., 133-34.

⁵⁴ David Gerald Orr, Matthew B. Reeves, and Clearance R. Grier eds., *Huts and History: The Historical Archaeology of Military Encampments during the American Civil War* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2006), xvi-xvii.

⁵⁵ Albert Z. Conner and Chris Mackowski, *Seizing Destiny: The Army of the Potomac's 'Valley Forge' and the Civil War Winter That Saved the Union* (El Dorado Hills, CA: Savas Beatie, 2016), xii-xiv.

⁵⁶ Washington to Bland, April 4, 1783, in Charles Campbell, ed., *The Bland Papers: Being a Selection of the Papers of Colonel Theodorick Bland Jr.*, 2 vols. (Petersburg: Edmund and Julian C. Ruffin, 1840), 2: 104.

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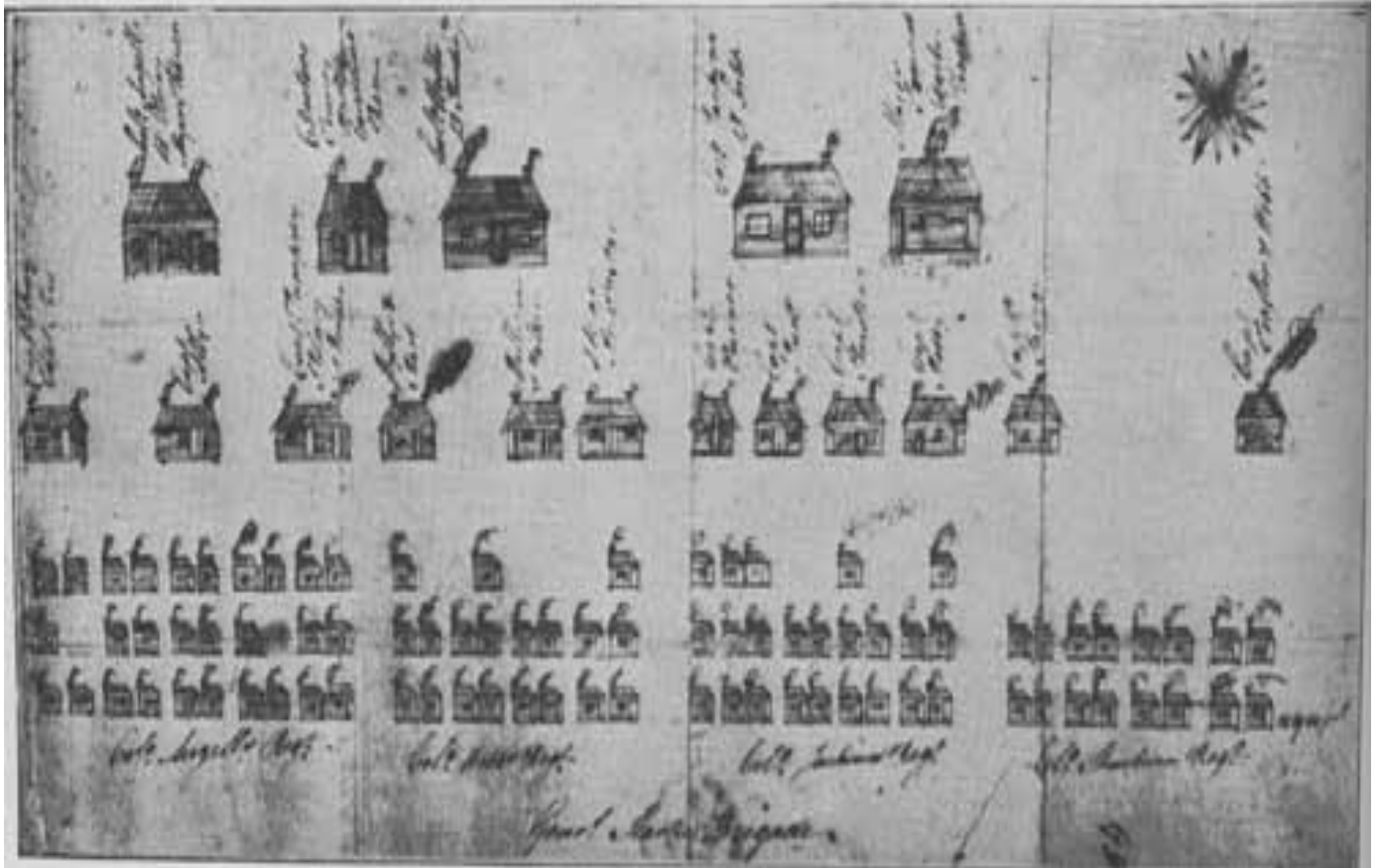
APPENDIX: IMAGES

IMAGE 1



CONTIENTAL ARMY POSTS IN NEW JERSEY
 MORRISTOWN NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

IMAGE 2



STARK'S BRIGADE DRAWING, 1780

MORRISTOWN NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK