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HISTORICAL REPORT

VALLEY FORGE PROPOSED NATIONAL PARK

Prepared by

Roy Edgar Appleman

Regional Historian

Second Regional Office

Bronxville, N. Y.



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Mid-Atlantic Regional Office
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106
Ph. 215-597-9970



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
MID-ATLANTIC REGION
143 SOUTH THIRD STREET
PHILADELPHIA, PA. 19106

WE ARE PLEASED TO MAKE THIS
MATERIAL AVAILABLE TO YOU

Ms. Loretta Treese Feb. 13, 1991
337 Paoli Woods
Paoli, Pa. 19301

Dear Ms. Treese:

Enclosed is a photocopy of the contents
of the folder: "HISTORICAL REPORT
VALLEY FORGE PROPOSED NATIONAL PARK

Prepared by

Roy Edgar Appleman

Regional Historian

Second Regional Office

Bronxville, N.Y."

Contents of the file have been stapled
together to reflect how they were filed,
but I have put everything in chronologi-
cal order with 1940 on top of the pile.

After we spoke, I looked more carefully
at Unrau's Administrative History. He
does cite Appleman's report correctly in
note 49, p. 251. Note 76 refers to Form
10-317 dated Jan. 6, 1937, not to the
Appleman report itself.

Good luck in your project. Let me know
if I can be of further help to you.

Cliff Tobias

Clifford Tobias, Ph. D. Regional Historian



THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE THANKS YOU FOR
YOUR RECENT INQUIRY.

THE ENCLOSED INFORMATION IS SUPPLIED
WITH OUR COMPLIMENTS.

WE REGRET WE ARE UNABLE TO FURNISH
THE MATERIAL REQUESTED. OUR SUPPLY IS
EXHAUSTED.

YOUR REQUEST IS FOR INFORMATION THE
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE DOES NOT HAVE
AVAILABLE TO SEND YOU. EVEN SO, WE ARE
ENCLOSING MATERIAL WE HOPE WILL BE USEFUL.

ATTACHED IS A LISTING OF PUBLICATIONS.

WE ARE PLEASED TO LEARN OF YOUR INTEREST
IN OUR ACTIVITIES.

CRM/VARGO FILE

cc - BRADSON / LLOYCE VARGO
w/ c/s encls.

Name Valley Forge National Historical Park P

Location Chester County, Pennsylvania

Owner 1506 acres State-owned;
3494 acres, privately owned.

Address _____

Sponsor _____

Address _____

Period Revolutionary War

Description and importance During the winter 1777-1778 the Continental Army under command of George Washington camped here, while the British occupied Philadelphia. Here during the awful winter months, Baron von Steuben drilled the ragged and half-starved men. Many of the great names of early American history are to be found among those who lived at Valley Forge that winter-- George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, Mad Anthony Wayne, General Stirling, Pulaski, and many others. The historical remains, including a fine old colonial house and a school house dated 1714, are extensive and interesting

Condition Good Care State Park

Open to public Yes

NPS field report. By R.E. Appleman NPS research report.

HABS measurements. Supplementary material.

Bibliographic references

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References to published photographs

.....

References to maps

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Comments Mr. Appleman: Valley Forge undoubtedly has

the calibre required for a National Park area. He

strongly recommends that an attempt be made to have this

site transferred from the State to the National Govern-

ment (Mr. Richard Beamish, Secretary of the Commonwealth

of Pennsylvania, indicated that the State might be

willing to turn Valley Forge over to the United States).

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Name of recorder Eileen Ito

Position Jr. Research Clerk Date Jan. 6, 1937

Valley Forge

copy

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

HISTORICAL FILE

1/19/40

Valley Forge Park Commission,
Valley Forge, Pa.

January 9th, 1940.

Mr. Herbert E. Kahler, Supt.
Morristown National Historical Park,
Morristown, New Jersey.

Dear Mr. Kahler:

I regret that I was not able to contact you when you made your recent visit to Valley Forge Park, particularly as the personnel at the Jockey Hollow reservation was so kind to me during a visit at that site about two years ago.

With reference to your inquiry regarding the restored Revolutionary Soldiers' Hut at Valley Forge, it occurs to me that the most satisfactory assistance that we could render would be, first, to give you a copy of the specifications on which our restoration was based.

The hut at Valley Forge Park was donated by the Pennsylvania Society Sons of the Revolution, altho the work was done by park labor. As a result of considerable research Mr. D. Knickerbocker Boyd, Architect, a member of that Society, provided the specifications under date of April 29th, 1935 - the copy of which I refer is enclosed herewith.

It might be interesting as a guide if you knew exactly the cost. The park supplied the logs, other materials cost \$100.09, and the item of labor amounted to \$379.65, making the total cash outlay \$439.74, which as I have indicated, does not include the cost of the logs.

If I have not covered all of the data you would like to have do not hesitate to ask for additional information. Kind personal regards and best wishes for 1940.

Sincerely yours,

(Sgd.) Gilbert S. Jones

SECRETARY
VALLEY FORGE PARK COMMISSION.

S P E C I F I C A T I O N S .

RECEIVED

JAN 11 1940

MORRISTOWN NATIONAL
HISTORICAL PARK

for

LOG HUT

at

VALLEY FORGE.

HISTORICAL FILE

myw 1/19/40

April 29th, 1935.

Levels and Grades. The top of the south stone wall (and bottom of first log) at the road side front end (South) shall occur at a level six inches (6") below the nail now driven in the stake at the South-west corner of the site. The front and back lines of the hut shall be moved back toward the North one foot (12") from the position as staked out on April 27th and the sides shall be moved one foot (12") toward the West.

The top of the stone walls on the East and West sides shall be down one log lower than the front wall. The top of stone wall on the chimney end (North) shall be down one log lower than the side walls.

The inside floor shall be of earth, puddled and tamped, with the level flush with the top of the stone wall at South front.

The outside grade shall be determined after the stone work is completed and in general shall be a fill of several inches at the South front to perhaps a foot at the North end on each side.

Any sodding or seeding will be the subject of later discussion.

Excavation and Stone Work. Excavate trenches one foot six inches (18") in width by two feet (24") deep below the existing grade. These trenches to be fourteen feet (14' - 0") from East to West and sixteen feet (16' - 0") apart from North to South. The foundation for the chimney to be six feet six inches (6' - 6") in width, projecting three feet six inches (3' - 6").

Fill all trenches with local stone laid in hap-hazard manner in mortar composed of one part Portland cement, three parts sand and one quarter part lime. From the grade line up, the outside of all walls are to batter in till they are approximately twelve inches (12") at the top with a rough 2" champher on the top outside edge. The facing stone are not to be built to a line and the mortar is to be kept well back in some joints and is to be allowed to ooze out in others. There shall be no pointing done and the effect to be aimed at is to be that which would have been obtained by soldiers laying stone work in a hurry in cold weather. The mortar for the fireplace and the chimney shall be one part cement, one part lime and six parts sand and the inside of the fireplace shall be dashed with mortar and roughly trowelled.

Form a throat to the fireplace using stone masonry till the flue is reached at which point use 18" x 18" fire clay flue lining against which the chinking for logs of chimney will be built as logs are laid.

Log side Walls, Door and Windows. Build the side walls of barked logs, whole and sound, of local growth, exclusive of poplar, each log to approximate ten inches (10") in diameter at butt end and eight inches (8") at narrowest end. Allow approximately 2" space between logs laying with alternate thickest and thinnest diameters adjacent to each other. The bottom of the first log in each case is to be squared off with axe or adze to present about four to five inches of flat surface to rest on top of stone wall - except at ends which project beyond stone wall where the logs shall be full round, projecting about fifteen inches (15") to the extreme of axe cut end. All logs to be blocked apart as laid with pieces of well seasoned 2" x 2" cut about 3" long and spaced about one foot (12") apart and well nailed in place (These will later be covered up with the mortar chinking). At frequent intervals drive nails partly into the logs as additional support for the mortar chinking.

The ends of all logs shall project from six inches (6") to about fifteen inches (15") with axe cuts of irregular shape and an occasional sawed end or combination of saw and axe cut. Each log is to be chamfered on the top and **notched** on the bottom to fit over one another. Before each top log is placed in position the chamfer on the log below is to be heavily puttied with Pecora or similar caulking compound. Before logs are laid at door and windows, the jambs shall be set in place, the same to consist of not less than 3" x 6" roughly hewn oak with rabbit cut out for the door and the window sash. The sill to door to consist of stone slabs like the steps leading down to same and the sills to two windows are to consist of sloping cuts out of the logs with depressed rabbit in the stone sill for door (which opens in) and raised rabbit on the wood sills for window sash (which open out). The wood jambs are to be cut down against these sills. The top log of each side wall is to be approximately 6 ft. 6 in. to the top from the floor and these two logs are to be long enough to project two feet (24") at front and back to receive barge logs of gables.

Door. The door is to be of split wood with tight knots showing, about 1½" in thickness, with battens of the same on the inside, to be hung on wooden hinges made similar to those in adjoining guard houses, but heavier, and with a wooden latch and lift. The head of door opening to be adzed out of the lintel log.

Windows. The sash shall be hand made in accordance with details to be furnished. Each shall be hinged at the top with raw-hide thongs and open out. The heads of window openings to be adzed out of lintel logs. The sash are to be "glazed" with airplane cloth, yellow in color.

Chinking of Logs. Between all logs fill the spaces with mortar consisting of one part Portland cement, one part lime and six parts yellow jersey gravel or yellow local bank sand. As the mortar is placed insert small stones among the projecting nails and between the wooden strips that keep the logs apart and thoroughly embed the stones and wooden strips so that they do not show. Before the mortar sets strike off the exposed surfaces inside and out with a scooped shaped garden trowel to give the appearance of clay chink-

about 2½". The lower bunks to be four feet six inches (4' 6") wide, the upper bunks three feet wide (3' 0"), all six feet six inches (6' 6") long. Above the supports, and to which they shall be secured, place two thin logs from eave log to eave log, to also act as collar beams. At all available places in side wall logs inside the hut drill and drive in tapered wooden pegs as if to hang clothing from.

Staining. Before any chinking is done give all surfaces of all logs one good coat of creosote stain. Apply same stain to all surfaces of fence rails before they are used as roofing. On completion give all exposed surfaces of roof sheathing one coat of oil stain, dark brown in color. Apply the same to all surfaces of door, sash and jambs.

Furnish and do everything necessary to finish the hut in a manner suitable to the spirit and intent of its erection as a replica of the huts constructed by the brave men who suffered the hardships of the winter of 1777-78. Leave the premises clean and orderly.

Erect one tall thin tree, near roadway, as a flag pole. Secure pulley at top and stanchion below with double length of suitable woven cord for a flag to be furnished and infurled by the Pennsylvania Society of the Sons of the Revolution on completion of the hut on or before June 18th 1935.

D. Knickerbocker Boyd, Architect
Architects' Building,
Philadelphia, Penna.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
STATE PARK DIVISION

Aug. 1935

Mr. Melvin B. Borgenson
Regional Officer
State Park E.O.W.,
72 W. Pondfield Road
Bronxville, N.Y.

72 W. Pondfield Road
Bronxville, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Borgenson:

Subject: Historical Report on Valley Forge
Proposed National Park Area.

1. Historical Importance of the Site.

Valley Forge is a name that reaches back to the birth of the American Nation. It was here in the winter of 1777-1778 that a small group of men, scarcely 3000 in number, the remnant of Washington's army, displayed a fortitude and courage that must have been inspiring to their leaders. It was at Valley Forge that the American Colonial army was really born, for prior to this time there was little organization among the colonial troupes. At Valley Forge, during the awful winter months, Baron von Steuben drilled the ragged and half starved men, until by spring the army, which had grown by recruits and new enlistments to about 12,000, could face the British regulars and manoeuver against them with skill.

Many of the great names of early American history are to be found among those who lived at Valley Forge during that cold and gloomy winter, George Washington, Lafayette, Baron von

Steuben, Alexander Hamilton, Mad Anthony Wayne, General Stirling, Pulaski, and many others. Without Valley Forge there could have been no Gettysburg, and without Gettysburg there could have been no permanent union. Troops from practically all the original thirteen states were represented at Valley Forge. Descendants of these men are now scattered among the forty-eight states which make our nation, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, From Canada to Mexico. Surely, if any spot has a deep seated and honorable claim to National pride, it is Valley Forge.

Valley Forge undoubtedly has the calibre required for a National Park area. Of all the sites in Pennsylvania which have come to my attention, it is best adapted and suitable for a national park area. The State of Pennsylvania now owns Valley Forge, with an acreage of 1506 acres. Many desirable bits of acreage are still privately owned, and for the proper development of the area as a national park, they should be purchased by the government. The Valley Forge State Park has been only slightly developed due to a lack of funds. The site is very beautiful and at the present time is unspoiled by too many markers and a general cluttering up of the old historic site. I strongly recommend that an attempt be made to have this site transferred from the State government of Pennsylvania to the National government.

2. Historical Remains on Site.

The historical remains in Valley Forge are extensive and very interesting. A fine old colonial house, well preserved, known as Washington's headquarters, stands along the banks of Valley Creek. It has been provided with furniture and sundry

articles typical to a mansion house of our early colonial period.

Several other buildings are included in the park area, among them being the old colonial barn, now used for the Superintendent's office. A museum building is close by the Washington headquarters and the old barn. All these buildings have been preserved in their original appearance.

Some distance from the above mentioned group of buildings is a quaint old one-room school house, dated 1714. This date was uncovered only recently, when a modern coating of mortar of some kind was removed from the walls to restore the building to its original appearance. In the school house the benches for the pupils extend along the walls on two sides of the room. Quaint fittings give the old school house an atmosphere that makes it one of the most interesting things, culturally, to be seen in the park.

There are many miles of old earth works and trenches, well defined, within the park area. There are also many sunken areas or pits which mark the spots where the cabins of the soldiers stood. They are in rows or streets in military fashion.

3. Scenic qualities of area.

The scenic qualities of the area are superb. From the highest point in the park, Mt. Joy, panoramic views may be had of the famous Chester Valley and the broad ancient thoroughfare of the Schuylkill Valley.

The topography of the landscape is rolling hills,

with fine growth of hardwood and laurel, (the chestnut trees were killed off by a blight about 20 years ago). The grass grows a verdant green in a heavy luxuriant carpet. Wide expanse of meadows, well kept, set off the darker spots of forest in a most pleasing manner.

4. Detailed Description of Scenery and Topography if Needed.

Comment not required.

5. Type of Work Required to Develop Area.

The park is well kept and general labor would not be greatly in demand for additional development. In some instances skilled workmen would be needed to undertake desirable restoration. Few, if any roads, are needed. Some foot-trails might be constructed to advantage, altho there are already some foot and bridle paths in existence in the park. The park should have very few of these trails. Relief labor could be used only to a limited degree in the further development of Valley Forge Park.

6. Historical Work Accomplished, Records, Research.

Considerable research of a practical kind has been done thus far, in the restoration of certain buildings, especially the Headquarters House, and in locating the foundations of the old Valley Forge and Joy Forge. A very fine piece of work has been done in restoring, in what appears to be a most authentic fashion, a typical troop hut, on the site of one of the sunken pits.

In preparing the restoration of the Headquarters House an inventory of the furnishings of the mansion was found in the walls, relating back to the time it was owned by the Hughes family, before the Continental troops occupied the area as a winter camp ground. This inventory was used in restoring the equipment of the house. The furnishings, described in the old inventory, were bought of antique dealers in Philadelphia.

The old school house has been restored in a most fascinating manner, although it needs a little cleaning. An old tin-plate stove stands in the center of the room, at the farther end of the room is the raised platform and pulpit-like desk of the teacher, a little blackboard is in the back wall, the benches and continuous narrow table run nearly the length of the two side walls. A very unusual hand carved chair, cut out of a solid block of wood, and evidently very old, stands just below the teacher's platform.

The museum has been fitted out in a haphazard fashion and could be much improved. A great many of the articles there displayed are not authentic to Valley Forge, but are general items typical of the late 18th century. There is a good collection of old Washington prints adorning the wall on one side of the small museum. Much out of place, in my opinion, are three groups of photographs depicting the pageants and celebration in 1928 of the 150th anniversary of Valley Forge. The museum is perhaps the most inadequate and disappointing part of Valley Forge Park.

A soldiers hut, built exactly on the original founda-

tions, 14 feet x 16 feet, and reaching 8 feet to the ridge, with a very low roof, is one of the most fascinating and unique restorations in the park. It was completed only in June of this year. The restoration was financed by the Pennsylvania Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution. The floor of the hut is packed clay, two feet below the surface of the ground. I was told by the Superintendent of the Park, Mr. Sheas, who supervised the restoration, that the floor was found packed hard, just as it now appears when debris and earth that filled in the old site was removed to the two foot level. Inside the log, stone, and plaster hut are eight slab ^{bunks} vessels, four below and four above, arranged along the two sides of the hut, leaving a wide passage way the length of the building. The lower bunks each hold two persons, while the upper bunks sheltered only one each. Thus the hut would provide quarters for twelve men. A narrow stone fireplace is at the end of the hut. When the excavation was made for the restoration charcoal was found in the exact spot where the hearth is now located. The cooking was done outside the huts, and many small depressions still mark these spots. In one month since the restoration was completed, 10,000 visitors have visited this old soldiers hut.

In 1928, by drilling test holes along and across Valley stream and its adjacent banks for a considerable distance, the foundations and remains were found of old Joy Forge, which dates back to 1742, and Valley Forge, from which the area receives its name. Both these old historic forges, representative of the early colonial iron industry, were burned by the British in 1777. The silt had covered the ruins of Joy Forge

to a depth of 16 feet and Valley Forge to a depth of 7 to 9 feet. Both the sites have now been excavated to the foundations of the old ruins and it is now possible to restore the old forges. Even the old water wheel pits, the water races, and the old dam site have been found. The money has not been forthcoming for any further work, and the project remains as it stood in 1928. The scientific manner in which the above work has been carried out, I believe to be very commendable.

There are no local records in the park, although I have been informed by the Park Superintendent that Mr. Myers, Secretary of the Valley Forge Park Commission, has a considerable private collection of letters, diaries, and documents relating to Valley Forge.

7. Archaeological Possibilities.

The archaeological possibilities of the site are extraordinary if one includes the excavation of old sunken pits to the foundations of old buildings that existed during the winter of 1777-78. Near the end of the winter there were almost 1000 soldier huts in the area, as well as various outposts and officer quarters. Many of these sites are still easily located. It is unlikely that excavation would yield anything of value in material remains, as the army undoubtedly took everything of importance when it left the winter quarters in the spring of 1778. Old fortification lines could be better established and marked than they are at present. There are few markers in the park.

8. Museum Possibilities.

The museum possibilities of the area needs no discussion. They are very great and a museum properly established and equipped could be made extremely fascinating.

9. Tradition and Legends.

Naturally, the historical records of Valley Forge, are pretty full and accurate. Nevertheless, legends attach to the region. One of the earliest of which I know concerns the naming of the two high confronting hills in the park vicinity, one of which is in the Park area. The legend runs that William Penn very early in the history of the colony visited the region and climbed to the top of a hill which was surmounted by rough loose stones and boulders, making walking very difficult. This hill he called "Mt. Misery." Crossing Valley Creek he mounted the opposite hill, which was carpeted with grass amid a stately growth of forest and from which he had his first view of the beautiful upper Schuylkill Valley. From sheer delight he called this elevation "Mt. Joy." These names remain today.

10. Value of Area Compared to Others.

There is only one Valley Forge in the United States. Trevelyan, the English historian, has called it the most famous military camp in the world. It cannot be compared in terms of equality, for similar purposes, with any other area in the United States.

11. Relation of Historical Site to Others
in Vicinity.

Valley Forge forms an important unit in any attempt to preserve historic sites relating to the Revolutionary era. Nearby is Brandywine and Germantown. Not far away are Trenton, Princeton, the Delaware Crossing and many other famous spots of military fame.

12. History of Project.

The Valley Forge Park was created in 1893. It has had a slow growth since that time. In 1903 it comprised only 225 acres. Small areas were added from time to time, the largest additions coming in 1918-1919. The present area of the park is 1506 acres. A commission only a few years ago recommended the enlargement of the park to 5000 acres, and asked that an appropriation of \$500,000 be made by the State legislature for this purpose. No favorable action has been taken by the State legislature. Within the park the lowest price paid for land to date has been \$160 an acre, and the highest \$24,000 for one acre. Former Governor Pennypacker has been the park's greatest benefactor and friend. It was his special interest. Since his death State interest has somewhat declined in developing the park possibilities. H.P. Oberholtzer, the historian, is one of the men most interested at present in the development of Valley Forge Park.

Many desirable bits of acreage remain outside the park limits. The old ⁱⁿⁿ barn, which stands only a hundred yards from Washington's Headquarters is privately owned, and the center of commercial activity. The ⁱⁿⁿ ~~House~~ with 1/3 of an acre of ground is held for \$100,000. Outside the present park limits are the head-

quarters of Generals Lafayette, Anthony Wayne, Stirling, and several less well known commanders of the army that wintered at Valley Forge.

The appropriation made by the State of Pennsylvania for the upkeep of the park is \$25,000 annually. This is not sufficient to undertake any extended work, and little more than provides for the cutting of grass and general maintenance of the park.

The Park has not been ruined, but on the contrary, is very lovely indeed. In my opinion, it compares to its own advantage with Gettysburg. In recent years one million people have annually visited Valley Forge.

The few canon placed around the park should be removed, as in most instances I believe they are not authentic to Valley Forge. Valley Forge is a national heritage and should be a national park.

An extended development in the park might be the building, on the old sites, of a soldiers' village with the well marked streets, the huts to be patterned after the one which was recently erected, and which was described in the foregoing pages. The park needs markers and descriptive legends very badly. Foot trails could be made to advantage along certain historic parts of the old camp ground.

I wish to acknowledge a deep debt for most of the foregoing information regarding the development of Valley Forge Park, to Mr. Jerome J. Sheas, for 26 years Superintendent of

Mr. Melvin B. Bergenson - 11

Valley Forge

Valley Forge Park, a man who loves the historic spot, and who gave me freely and gladly of his time and knowledge. It was a pleasure to view the memorable camp site in his presence.

Very truly yours

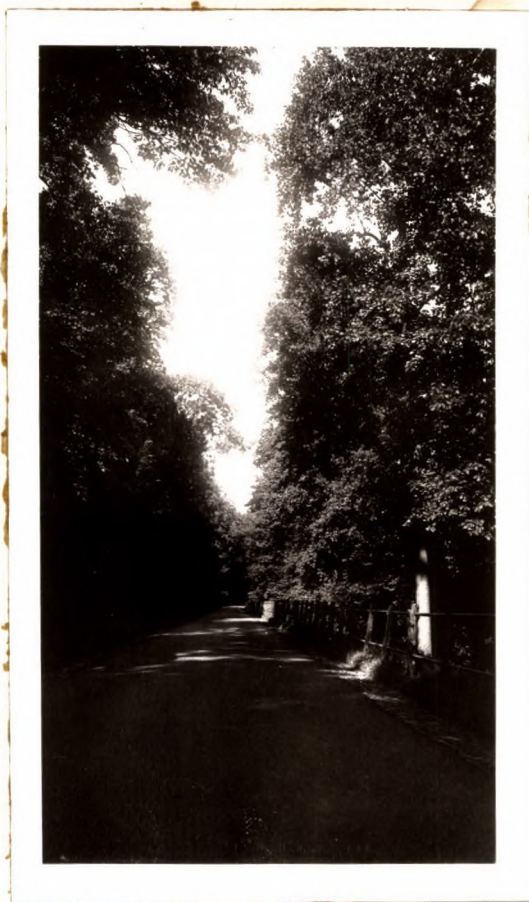
Roy Edgar Appleman
Regional Historian

CC/Washington P.F. Lee
Inspector Stevenson ✓
File

REA:IE



NATIONAL MONUMENT VALLEY FORGE
STATE PARK



ROAD IN VALLEY FORGE
STATE PARK



ANTHONY WAYNE STATUE
VALLEY FORGE STATE PARK



OLD STONE BREASTWORK VALLEY FORGE STATE PARK



WASHINGTON HEADQUARTER'S HOUSE VALLEY FORGE STATE PARK



RESTORED SOLDIER H UT VALLEY FORGE STATE PARK

Historians
 HISTORICAL FILE
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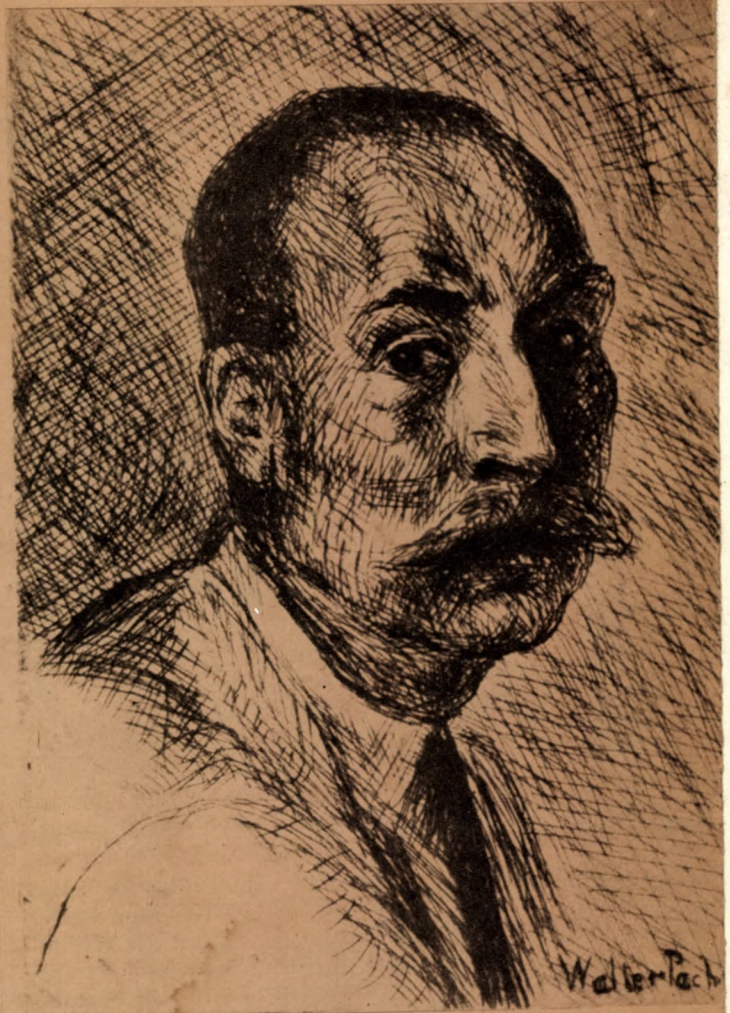
Fred North Whitehead.
 (Photo by Notman.)



The key notion, then, from
 of fact, the, then, from
 which a philosophy of life should
 be constructed, Mr. Whitehead
 maintains in these lectures, is
 that the energetic activity which
 growth and ex-
 us. The past
 the "reality" of matter, is "the
 emotional intensity entertained in
 life." Thus Professor Whitehead
 would bridge nature and life and
 start all further philosophizing
 from such a premise.

CHRISTOPHER JANUS.

Where does
 vited to an-
 are one con-
 who doubts
 nd conditions
 it just as the
 The past
 the physicist studies—which is
 tics apply to
 ough we find
 we call life is
 nator of the
 The key notion, then, from



A Self-Portrait of Walter Pach.

QUEER THING, PAINTING. By
 Walter Pach. 33 Illustrations.
 335 pp. New York: Harper &
 Brothers. \$4.

By EDWARD ALDEN JEWELL

UNLIKE "Ananias, or the
 False Artist," this new-
 est book of Mr. Pach's is
 not of a challengingly con-
 troversial nature. It will probab-
 ly not make any one in the art
 world see red. Queer thing any-
 how, in a way, seeing red over
 art issues, although of course
 when such issues are vitally a

on the walls; the pho-
 gives you a dozen lik-
 your father for a tho-
 part of the price that a
 portrait painter would
 for one, * * * while a
 any movie house will give
 all kinds of landscape, Sun-
 or Winter, native or exotic
 with effects of light and

Professor

MODES OF THOUGHT.

Handwritten scribble

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
MORRISTOWN NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
MORRISTOWN, NEW JERSEY

December 30, 1936.

*Valley Forge
- WPA
Restoration
Project*

The Director,
National Park Service,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Director:

I attach a copy of a letter received today from Mr. Samuel S. Ellis concerning the proposed W.P.A. project for the restoration of Valley Forge. In the fifth paragraph of his letter he asks for a list of the regional and district offices which was attached to Operating Procedure No. O-4. I do not have an extra copy of this list and if your office can send this list to Mr. Ellis I will appreciate it.

Sincerely yours,

Elbert Cox,
Superintendent.

CC: Mr. Weig ✓
(with letter)

EC:MH

Federal
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
For The
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

John H. Rankin, Director
Districts Nos. 4 and 5

232-248 North Eleventh St.
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

December 28, 1936.

Mr. Elbert Cox, Superintendent,
National Park Service,
Morristown National Historical Park,
Morristown, N. J.

Dear Mr. Cox:

VALLEY FORGE PROJECT

The reason why you have not had a reply to your instructive letter of December 16 to Mr. D. Knickerbacker Boyd is because Mr. Boyd has left W.P.A., to resume private practice in the Architects Building, 17th & Sansom Streets, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Mr. Boyd has turned your letter over to me to answer and to request you to communicate with me in the future if you have anything pertaining to Valley Forge that you think would help us bring this proposed restoration to a successful conclusion.

The photographs of the work you are doing in Morristown arrived safely and will be of great assistance to Mr. C. N. Keyser when the work gets underway.

Your suggestion about writing to the National Park Service about data on the construction of outer earthworks is good and I have done so.

In the second paragraph of Operating Procedure, 9956 No. 0-4 reads, in part - "A list of the regional and district offices -- is given in Appendix A attached hereto." This was not attached. Can you send it to me?

Col. C. P. Franklin, Mr. Keyser and possibly myself, will take advantage of your kind invitation to visit Morristown some time in the near future and I shall let you know when to expect us.

In the meantime let me thank you for the assistance you have already given and if you can suggest anything else it will be greatly appreciated by

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) S. S. Ellis
Samuel S. Ellis.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
MORRISTOWN NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
MORRISTOWN, NEW JERSEY

December 16, 1936.

*Valley Forge
- Proposed NPA
Restoration Project*

The Director,
National Park Service,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Director:

Reference is made to Mr. Lee's letter of December 2, enclosing correspondence relating to a proposed W.P.A. project for the Restoration of Valley Forge Encampment. In accordance with the instructions contained in this letter I visited the Offices of the Works Progress Administration in Philadelphia on Wednesday, December 9, en route to Washington for the historical conference. I was accompanied by Assistant Historian Melvin J. Weig of the Bronxville Office who was riding with me to Washington and who I was glad to have in the conference. We went to the office of Mr. Boyd who had invited Mr. Charles C. Keyser, Project Engineer for Landscape Projects; Colonel Clarence P. Franklin, Superintendent in Charge of Medical Sanitation; and Mr. Samuel S. Ellis, to join the conference.

The gentlemen above listed are endeavoring to prepare a project to restore the Valley Forge Encampment, including approximately a mile and a half of outer entrenchments and the barrack huts which may have been used by the Pennsylvania Brigade. At the present time they are assimilating information from which such a project can be prepared. Mr. Weig and I explained to them the work of the National Park Service, with special emphasis on the difficulties of a complete restoration, outlining the policy of sample restoration and describing specific examples in which the policy has been followed. It is doubtful if the W.P.A. officers were sufficiently impressed with our explanation because their interest is primarily in writing projects to provide work for W.P.A.

The one specific question asked us - What method would have been used in building the trenches of the outer encampment, whether the dirt from the ditch would have been thrown outward or inward - I could not answer, but suggested sources to which they might turn for information on this point.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
MORRISTOWN NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
MORRISTOWN, NEW JERSEY

December 16, 1936.

Mr. D. Knickerbocker Boyd,
Administrative Assistant,
Works Progress Administration,
232 North 11th Street,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Dear Mr. Boyd:

In accordance with your request of last Wednesday I am enclosing a few photographs which are representative of the work being done by the National Park Service in Morristown National Historical Park. They illustrate the idea of simple restoration which, as I explained to you, is the policy followed by the National Park Service in its restoration program for historical areas. I would like to renew my invitation to you and Mr. Kayser to visit some of the areas in which the National Park Service has been working to view at first hand some of the projects which have been completed. The preference for the policy of simple restorations is based on several years of experience, which indicates rather conclusively that a complete restoration is not only more expensive in the initial construction but also burdensome to maintain and of no greater value for educational purposes. I might also mention the importance and value of a thorough archaeological investigation of a site before even a simple restoration is begun. This method has proved one of the most fruitful in our efforts to secure information about an area on which we planned restoration projects.

With reference to Mr. Kayser's question of how the outer earthworks would have been constructed, I confess that I am unable to give you authentic information. It occurs to me that this information might be found in a report of the engineer who was responsible for the plan of works, or in the official orders or personal correspondence of those engaged in their construction. If it is not possible to find this datum in the sources which I have suggested, the National Park Service might have information in its files that would throw some light on the subject.

-m1313

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Harrisburg, Pa.
November 30, 1936

District Office, District B,
National Park Service,
72 Pondfield Road West,
Bronxville, New York.

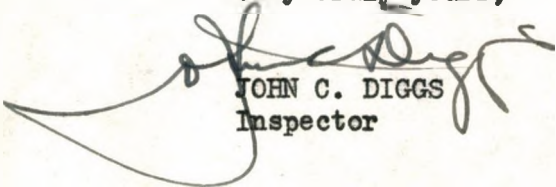
Subject: Development of Valley
Forge State Park

Dear Sir:

I am enclosing herewith two newspaper clippings in reference to the proposed development at Valley Forge State Park, one clipping from the "Harrisburg Telegraph" and the second from the "Philadelphia Inquirer".

It appears to me, as highly important, that the Department of Forests and Waters definitely establish a policy for the development of this area prior to making application for assistance from a Federal Agency for carrying out such development.

Very truly yours,


JOHN C. DIGGS
Inspector

JCD:GEP

**UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

**MORRISTOWN NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
MORRISTOWN, N. J.**

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

**PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE TO AVOID
PAYMENT OF POSTAGE, \$300.**

Mr. Appleman

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
STATE PARK DIVISION

RECEIVED

SEP 9 1935

September 5, 1935

2nd REGIONAL OFFICE

HISTORICAL
HISTORICAL

Second Regional Officer,
National Park Service,
72 W. Pondfield Road,
Bronxville, New York

Subject: Historical Report
Valley Forge Proposed National Park

Dear Sir:

We have received the report of Regional Historian Appleman on Valley Forge State Park in Pennsylvania. It is felt that the information submitted is complete so far as our present needs are concerned, and that a great deal of information of interest has been brought together in this report. In this instance, as in that of the George Washington Headquarters at Brandywine, we are pleased to have some background regarding the history of the project.

While no further action should be taken by the Regional Historian, we are holding this report for further consideration and for discussion with the Chief Historian should he wish information on this subject.

Sincerely yours,

Conrad L. Wirth
Assistant Director

By *Ronald F. Lee*
Ronald F. Lee
Historian
State Park Division

CC: Region II
Lee

RECEIVED
100532

MAY 20 1935

2nd REGIONAL OFFICE

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
BRANCH OF PLANNING
EXTENSION DIVISION

PROPOSED NATIONAL PARKS & MONUMENTS

(Form of report from Regional Officers)
To be typed throughout.

RECEIVED

MAY 24 1935

NORMAN T. NEWTON

Letter of transmittal: To be attached (summary and recommendation)

Name of Project: **Valley Forge National Historical Park**

Location - (state, county, distance and direction from known city)

State of Pennsylvania, Chester County, 80 miles from Philadelphia.

Area - Total 8,000 Acres _____ Square Miles.

Boundaries - (description, reference to maps to be attached)

Proposed:

Recommended:

Accessibility:

Railway:

Highway: **State Highway, Route 28.**

Airline:

Waterway:

Major characteristics - (Indicate those which are outstanding and attach additional information if necessary)

1. Scenic features - (topography, elevation, plant cover, water, etc):

The site has great scenic qualities. It is of foothill nature, with Valley Creek running thru the area. There are many beautiful pieces of woodland, and the meadow or grass land is well kept.

2. Historical or prehistoric features:

During the winter of 1777-1778 the Continental Army under command of George Washington camped here, while the British occupied Philadelphia. The military fortunes of the newly born republic were at their lowest ebb

3. Geological features: **during this winter.**

4. Recreational possibilities (if compatible with project)

National:

Local:

Opportunities for hiking, horseback riding, skiing, camping, fishing, tobogganing, and skating are present.

Estimated population within a radius of 50 miles: ~~2,000,000~~
 100 " ~~8,000,000~~
 200 " ~~8,000,000~~

5. Biological features:

Vegetative:

Very heavy and luxuriant growth of grass, with hardwood trees preserved in extensive areas.

Wildlife:

Trou, and various types of small game, such as rabbit.

Need for conservation:

The area to the extent of 1506 acres is already a state park, and therefore protected. There are many plots of land adjoining the park that should be publicly owned, as the sites of the Relative importance in comparison with areas of similar nature elsewhere:

headquarters of Generals Anthony Wayne, Sterling, Pulaski and others of note are outside the limits of the park at the present time. There is only one Valley Forge in our entire country. It is one of the most important historic areas of the Revolutionary War period of our history. It is unquestionably of the calibre required for a "National Historical Park."

Possible development -
 Recreational facilities (if compatible with project):

It is doubtful if it would be wise to open the park for recreational development.

Utilities -

Water supply:

The water supply is very good.

Parking space, capacity:

The parking space is adequate to present needs. Expansion might be Campground sites, capacity: needed in the future.

There are many sites suitable for campgrounds if it is desirable that they Light and power facilities: should be constructed.

There are power lines in the close vicinity of Valley Forge.

Sewerage disposal facilities:

Should have to be provided for any extensive camping development.

Capacity for handling of visitors:

Unlimited. There are good roads to most parts of the park at the present time.

Practicability of administration and protection:

Not unlike that of other parks. Entirely practical. The park has been administered by the state of Pennsylvania for nearly 40 years.

Other land uses -

Mining resources:

None

Agricultural resources:

Agricultural pursuits followed on land around edge of park.

Grazing:

Good grazing land.

Cultivated crops:

General on land outside park limits.

Timber:

Most of the area in the park is wooded. The trees are hardwood, chiefly oak.

Hunting & Fishing uses:

There are trout in Valley Creek.

Power Resources:

A limited amount of water power could be developed from Valley Creek, which in early years provided the power for two cold-blast charcoal burning iron furnaces.

Irrigation Resources:

Irrigation not needed.

Ownership:

Railways:	_____
State:	_____
Municipalities:	<u>1806 acres</u>
Private:	<u>3494 acres</u>
Total alienated lands	<u>5,000 acres</u>
Mining claims:	_____
Grazing permits and withdrawals:	_____
Power permits:	_____
Total permit acreage	_____
National forest lands:	_____
Public domain:	_____
Reclamation projects:	_____
Indian lands:	_____
Total public lands	_____
Total acreage	<u>5,000 acres</u>

Land values:

History of project:

Valley Forge was made a state park in 1895 with only a few acres. From time to time since then additional acreage has been added to the park, the largest additions being made in 1918-1919, until at the present time there are 1806 acres in the state owned park. The state of Pennsylvania in 1928 undertook to raise a fund of \$500,000 with which to round out the boundaries of the park but this project failed.

This matter was not investigated as the general public does not know that there is a movement under way to create a National Historical Park in this area. From what I was able to learn in an incidental manner I believe local sentiment would be favorable to a transfer of the area to the National Government.

Persons interested: _____

Itinerary (Sheet to be attached) I visited the area Thursday, August 6th, and was driven around the park by Superintendent Stone.

Bibliography:

List of photographs, maps and printed information submitted:
(Sheet to be attached)

Note: All maps which are specially prepared by the Regional Offices should conform to one of the following standard sizes:

Letter size - 18" x 24" - 24" x 36"

72 W. Pondfield Road
Bronxville, N.Y.

August 15, 1948

Mr. Melvin B. Borgenson
Regional Officer
State Park E.C.W.
72 W. Pondfield Road
Bronxville, N.Y.

Subject: Letter of Submittal with
Report of Valley Forge Proposed
National Park Area.

Dear Mr. Borgenson:

On August 5, in company with Mr. Sheas, superintendent of Valley Forge State Park, I made a tour and examination of the Valley Forge area. Mr. Sheas was very helpful in pointing out developments in the park, both those accomplished and those which it is proposed to undertake. He also gave me much information relating to the park which could not be obtained from any documentary sources.

I visited practically all the improvements which have been made in the park, and examined the remains of the trenches, redoubts, embankments, cabin pits and other evidences relating back to the winter of 1777 and 1778 when the American Colonial army under George Washington, occupied this site as a winter camp ground. The park is a wonderfully beautiful area, and is entirely suitable and desirable for a national park area.

I strongly recommend that an attempt be made to secure Valley Forge for a national park area. It has great historic significance and in no sense can it be viewed as a purely State project. Soldiers from practically all of the thirteen colonies engaged in the struggle for independence, lived here during the gloomy winters of 1777 and 1778. Their descendants are now scattered among the forty-eight states of our union. There is probably no area relating to our early history which would be more desirable as a national park than Valley Forge.

Very truly yours

CC/Washington, Weatherwax
RE: 11 " Lee

Roy Edgar Appleman
Regional Historian

File ✓

FEDERAL EMERGENCY RELIEF ADMINISTRATION
1734 NEW YORK AVENUE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE TO AVOID
PAYMENT OF POSTAGE, \$300

*Valley Forge
photos*

HISTORICAL



WORLD AND STARVING AS THEY ARE
WE CAN ONLY HOPE TO ADMIRE
THE INCOMPARABLE PATIENCE AND COURAGE
OF THE SOLDIER



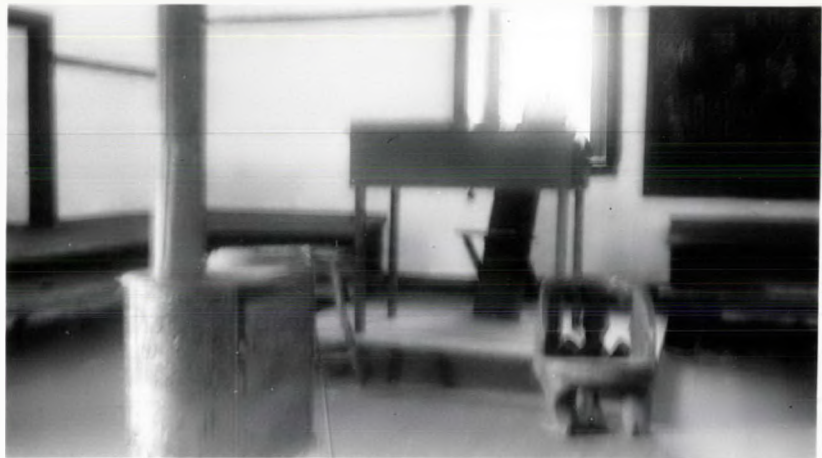


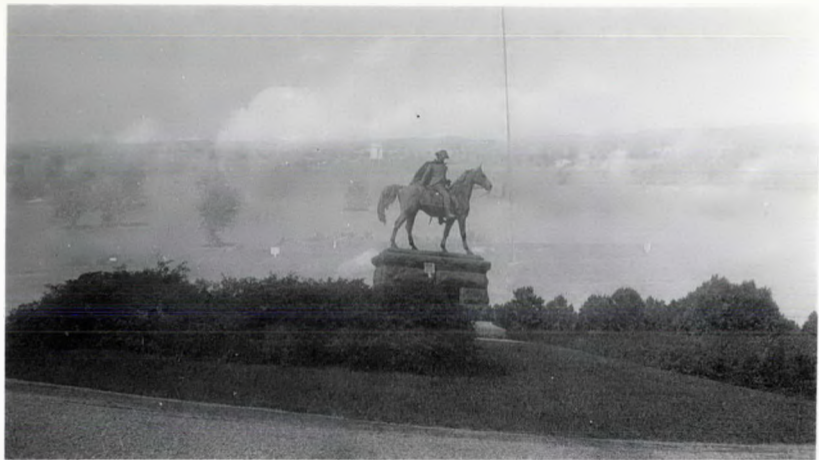
























Valley Forge

The camp ground of Washington's Army in the winter of 1777-78, is held and administered as a public park by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania through the Valley Forge Park Commission.¹ By successive enlargements the reservation has come to embrace about 1500 acres, comprehending the major part of the area occupied by the troops. Its name is hallowed by the great anxiety which then, at the most critical period in the history of the Revolution, attended the American cause, and by the physical distress endured by the soldiers while they remained here.

On September 11, 1777, on the field of Brandywine, Washington and his army had met the British, who had landed from ships at the head of the Chesapeake, in August, 1777, for an advance on Philadelphia, the capital of the Colonies which had declared their Independence. Retreating from this disastrous field another engagement, not more successful, had been fought on October 4th, at Germantown, whereupon General Howe, in command of the "Redcoats," a vanguard of whom, a few days earlier, had entered Philadelphia, comfortably settled down for the winter in that city.

Still watching the enemy, Washington meantime, about the first of November, went into camp at Whitemarsh, six miles north of the battlefield at Germantown. Hearing, probably through General Anthony Wayne, whose home was in the neighborhood, of the commanding position of the hills at Valley Forge, the army, after a halt of a few days at Gulph Mills, six miles east, nearer Philadelphia, was removed to this ground.

About 11,000 soldiers, nearly 3,000 of whom for want of shoes, and for other reasons, were unfit for duty, reached Valley Forge on or about December 19, 1777, and, felling trees, quickly raised several hundred huts of logs, chinked with clay and thatched with twigs, boughs, straw and tent cloth, put wooden bunks within them, and here found winter shelter.

How well the ground surveyed the western approaches of Philadelphia may be understood

¹Created by Act of the General Assembly May 30, 1893, "for the purpose of perpetuating and preserving the site on which Washington's army was encamped, December 19, 1777, to June 19, 1778; to restore it as nearly as possible in its original condition as a military camp, and maintain it forever as a public place or park, for the enjoyment of the people of the State."

by a visit to the observatory on Mount Joy, or to the sites of the redoubt now called Fort Washington, which overlooks the Great Valley in Chester County, and the old Star Redoubt, where the eye may sweep the Schuylkill River on its way to Philadelphia, as well as the roads beyond in Montgomery County. Over the river, as an aid to quicker movement in case of need, General Sullivan built a temporary bridge of logs, thrown across timbers which rested upon piers set in the bed of the stream. The hill, called Mount Joy, looking out over William Penn's Proprietary Manor of Mount Joy, a gift by him to his daughter Letitia very early in the history of Pennsylvania, sloping down to the east, was the strength of the position. A line of earth-works was thrown up on the brow of the hill. This was a back line, or inner line of defense, and behind it several brigades were encamped. The bastions on this line were the forts now distinguished as Fort Washington, Fort Huntington and the Star Redoubt. Beyond, further east, was a similar, a front or outer, line of breastworks. Distinct traces of these entrenchments may still be seen and are the most interesting features of the Park.

To raise the defenses and increase the shelter which they might afford in case of assault, tree trunks and stumps, fence rails, pointed stakes, brush and other obstructions were added to, or laid in front of, the mounds of earth and rock. These have long since disappeared.

The broad level space in the centre of the Park was the "Grand Parade." Here Baron von Steuben, after he arrived, drilled the tattered, unskilled soldiers, and increased their fitness for service in the campaigns which were to follow. On this ground, on May 6, 1778, the troops were reviewed and, with many a huzza and feu de joie, the news of the French Alliance, the turning point of the war, was celebrated.

The officers quartered themselves in the houses of the families, mostly Quakers, who hereabouts gained meagre livelihoods by cultivating fields cleared for tillage in the aboriginal forests. The most interesting of these headquarters buildings is Washington's. This is the house at the time owned by Isaac Potts, a young preacher of the Society of Friends, who had a grist mill the wheel of which was turned by Valley Creek, flowing in front of the house, near the point of its junction with the Schuylkill. Washington, who had been living under a marquee or tent in the camp, came, on the

eve of Christmas Day, to this house which the occupants vacated for his use. Within these simple walls throughout the winter he dwelt, conferred with his aides and his generals—Lafayette, Knox, Morgan, Wayne, Nathanael Greene, Alexander Hamilton, von Steuben, de Kalb, Muhlenberg and the rest—addressed his appeals to Congress and planned his future campaigns. Martha Washington came from Virginia and joined her husband at the camp in February, 1778. An attempt has been made to restore the house to the form and aspect which it had at that day.

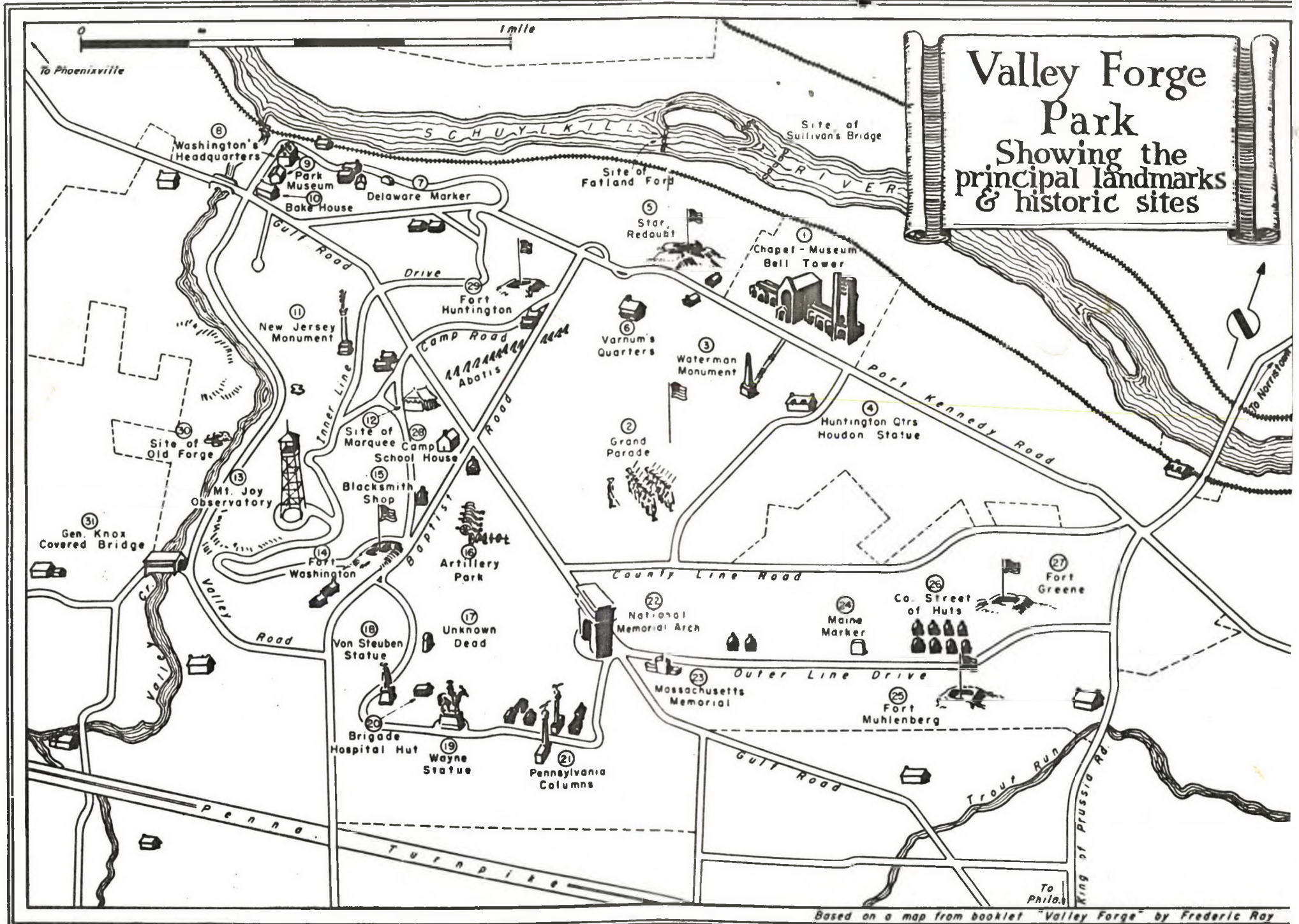
The Mount Joy, or Valley Forge, a small iron manufactory where smithies worked at their fires, which gave its name to the camp, was situated a few hundred yards farther up the creek. Burned by British raiders in September, 1777, it was not rebuilt until after the war. Like the grist mill the forge drew its power from a dam in the little stream. Most of the other houses occupied as commanders' headquarters (except General Varnum's) are on ground outside of, though adjacent to, the Park and are not open to inspection.

The army at Valley Forge, upon the coming of spring, began to reconnoitre the surrounding country. Immediately upon hearing of the evacuation of Philadelphia, detachments of "Continental" entered that city; the main body, with Washington in command, which had begun to move out of the camp on June 18, 1778, to flank the British and harry them as they retired across the Jerseys, gave their rear lines a vigorous blow at Monmouth.

While the army, upon its coming to the camp, is said to have numbered about 11,000 men, as a result of privation (they were "naked and starving" Washington wrote to Governor Clinton in February, 1778) and the outbreak of infectious diseases, so many died during the winter and were invalided to improvised hospitals in the neighborhood, that the command at one time is thought to have included few more than 5,000 effective men.

Issued by the Valley Forge Park Commission

Fred F. Hollowell	<i>Chairman</i>	James E. Fisher
Howard Richards	<i>Vice Chairman</i>	Dr. David H. Keller
Ellis Paxson Oberholtzer	<i>Secretary</i>	Mrs. Gustav Ketterer
Mrs. Bessie Dobson	<i>Alternus</i>	George M. Kime
Milton G. Baker		Albert Cook Myers
Mrs. Anthony Wayne		Curtis Sooy
Mrs. Cook		Lewis E. Staley
Mrs. Sallie C. DeMols		<i>Secretary of Forests and Waters, ex-officio</i>
		June 1, 1932



Valley Forge Park

Showing the principal landmarks & historic sites

Based on a map from booklet "Valley Forge" by Frederic Ray

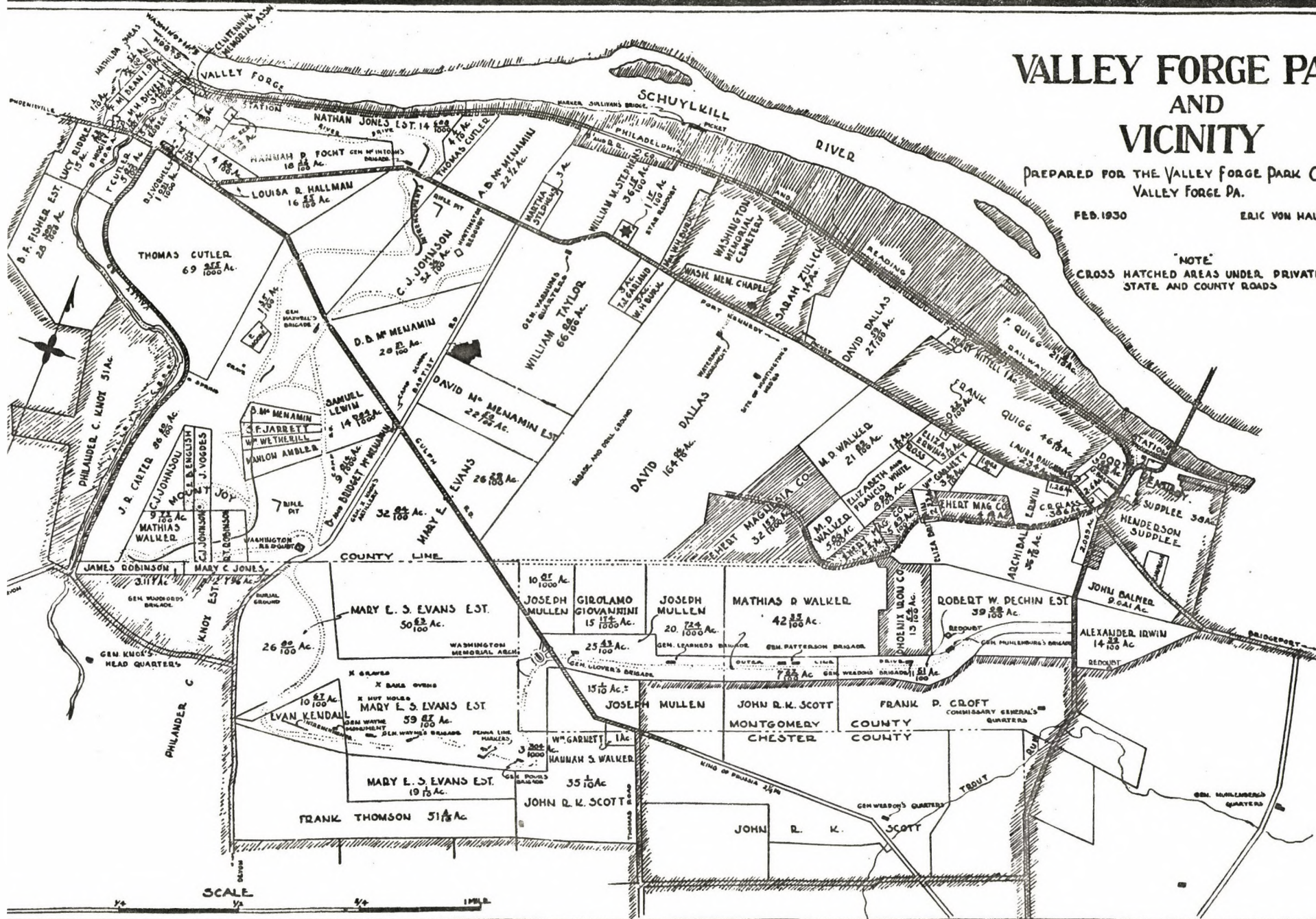
VALLEY FORGE PARK AND VICINITY

PREPARED FOR THE VALLEY FORGE PARK COMMISSION
VALLEY FORGE PA.

FEB. 1930

ERIC VON HAUSSWOLFF L. ARCHT

NOTE:
CROSS HATCHED AREAS UNDER PRIVATE OWNERSHIP
STATE AND COUNTY ROADS



Thurston
HISTORICAL FILE
myw, v. 9, 38
RRD 12/10
SM-12/19

THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW, December 4, 1938.

The Whole Story of the Hard Winter at Valley Forge

Mr. Wildes Thinks Its Importance Has Not Been Sufficiently Emphasized

VALLEY FORGE. By Harry Emerson Wildes. Illustrated. 337+xiii pp. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$3.50.

By E. L. DUFFUS

IN the year 1742 three Pennsylvanians of Dutch descent established a forge on the banks of a small stream emptying into the Schuylkill River, not far above Philadelphia, as we now reckon distances. Later John Potts took it over, using Negro slaves and white redemptioners and turning out "excellent hardware, nails, hinges, latches and small tools." Yet, for all this forced labor, the place came to be a symbol of human freedom, achieved under difficulties. It was known as Valley Forge, and to it, on Dec. 19, 1777, came George Washington with 11,000 Continentals and militia, of whom 4,000 were sick or wounded. Washington had been driven out of New York and across the Jerseys. The British General Howe had taken Philadelphia. The Continentals had been lucky to get away with their army intact after the fighting at the Brandywine and at Germantown. This was, as Mr. Wildes says in this simple, seemingly accurate and very moving book, the lowest ebb of the Revolution.

To most of us Valley Forge calls up pictures of bloody footprints in the snow, of a general saying his prayers behind some shrubbery, of a heroic people heroically suffering. The episode

given to borrowing chickens and other provender as long as the sources of supplies lasted. The situation was quite hopeless, yet out of it came, in the Spring, an unbeatable army.

Most of us may think of Valley Forge as an ordeal of many months. The worst of it was over by the middle of March, when food had begun to come in, and for a time the "unseasonable heat revived the spirits of the troops." But for three months Washington's army was in a condition in which it probably could not have resisted a determined attack by its enemies. One marvels, in reading Mr. Wildes's unemotional yet singularly effective account, how it held together at all.

It probably endured more than any other citizen army in history, without actual fighting. The only explanation of its persistence is that it was a triumph of will power—largely the will power of George Washington. This shy, dignified Virginia planter, whose portrait has come down to us with a mouthful of false teeth, had something in him that made plain, ordinary, hard-swearing, hard-drinking, undisciplined civilian soldiers stick with him. Steuben, that doughty Prussian veteran, drilled them within an inch of their lives after he took hold, but it was Washington who made them an army, and by sinking sectional and State jealousies in a common discipline made a nation.



Steuben Drills the Troops.

From the Copley Print of a Painting by Edwin M. Abbey. (From "Valley Forge.")

conducted and from careful attention to his sources (though he does not give a bibliography and does not go in for footnotes), has made the events of which the Valley Forge encampment was the center as real as yesterday's news. For him Washington's soldiers are as much flesh and blood as the men who fought at Gettysburg or in the Argonne Forest. They are not the impossible creatures of poetry and legend or primary school histories. They fought well when well-led and ran away when it seemed wise. They grumbled when things went well

were cold they took the farmers' fence-rails for fires.

They were not kind to Tories or to innkeepers who refused to chalk up drinks on the house. They suffered horribly for three months and were stoical about it, but yelled like hyenas when their officers made them take ten-minute baths in the icy Spring waters of the Schuylkill. They broke loose when news came of the French alliance, and Washington had to invent a "convenient indisposition" when they went charging down toward his headquarters, a little too hilarious for

rick's Day, and order was only restored when Washington gave a general holiday on the ground that March 17 was also the anniversary of the British evacuation of Boston.

But they were entitled to high spirits when opportunity came. They had been through hell. The shrieks of wounded men, operated on without anesthetic, followed every battle. Men marched in rags, sometimes barefooted, and did indeed leave blood on the road. At Valley Forge they built their huts in the snow, and Washington lived in a tent until all his soldiers were under some kind

Historians
HISTORICAL FILE
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Historians
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IN the year 1742 three Pennsylvanians of Dutch descent established a forge on the banks of a small stream emptying into the Schuylkill River, not far above Philadelphia, as we now reckon distances. Later John Potts took it over, using Negro slaves and white redemptors and turning out "excellent hardware, nails, hinges, latches and small tools." Yet, for all this forced labor, the place came to be a symbol of human freedom, achieved under difficulties. It was known as Valley Forge, and to it, on Dec. 19, 1777, came George Washington with 11,000 Continentals and militia, of whom 4,000 were sick or wounded. Washington had been driven out of New York and across the Jerseys. The British General Howe had taken Philadelphia. The Continentals had been lucky to get away with their army intact after the fighting at the Brandywine and at Germantown. This was, as Mr. Wildes says in this simple, seemingly accurate and very moving book, the lowest ebb of the Revolution.

To most of us, Valley Forge calls up pictures of bloody footprints in the snow of a general

given to borrowing chickens and other provender as long as the sources of supplies lasted. The situation was quite hopeless, yet out of it came, in the Spring, an unbeatable army.

Most of us may think of Valley Forge as an ordeal of many months. The worst of it was over by the middle of March, when food had begun to come in, and for a time the "unseasonable heat revived the spirits of the troops." But for three months Washington's army was in a condition in which it probably could not have resisted a determined attack by its enemies. One marvels, in reading Mr. Wildes's unemotional yet singularly effective account, how it held together at all.

It probably endured more than any other citizen army in history, without actual fighting. The only explanation of its persistence is that it was a triumph of will power—largely the will power of George Washington. This shy, dignified Virginia planter, whose portrait has come down to us with a mouthful of false teeth, had something in him that made plain, ordinary, hard-swearing, hard-drinking, undisciplined civilian soldiers stick with him. Steuben, that doughty Prussian veteran, drilled them within an inch of their lives after he took hold, but it was Washington who made



Steuben Drills the Troops.

From the Copley Print of a Painting by Edwin M. Abbey. (From "Valley Forge.")

conducted and from careful attention to his sources (though he does not give a bibliography and does not go in for footnotes), has made the events of which the Valley Forge encampment was the center as real as yesterday's news. For him Washington's soldiers are as much flesh and blood as the men who fought at Gettysburg or in the Argonne Forest. They are not the impossible creatures of poetry and legend or primary school histories. They fought well when well led and can

were cold they took the farmers' fence-rails for fires. They were not kind to Tories or to innkeepers who refused to chalk up drinks on the house. They suffered horribly for three months and were stoical about it, but yelled like hyenas when their officers made them take ten-minute baths in the icy Spring waters of the Schuylkill. They broke loose when news came of the French alliance, and Washington had to invent a "convenient indisposition" when they went

rick's Day, and order was only restored when Washington gave a general holiday on the ground that March 17 was also the anniversary of the British evacuation of Boston. But they were entitled to high spirits when opportunity came. They had been through hell. The shrieks of wounded men, operations without anesthetic, followed every battle. Men marched in rags, sometimes barefooted, as did indeed leave blood on the road. At Valley Forge they built their beds in the snow and