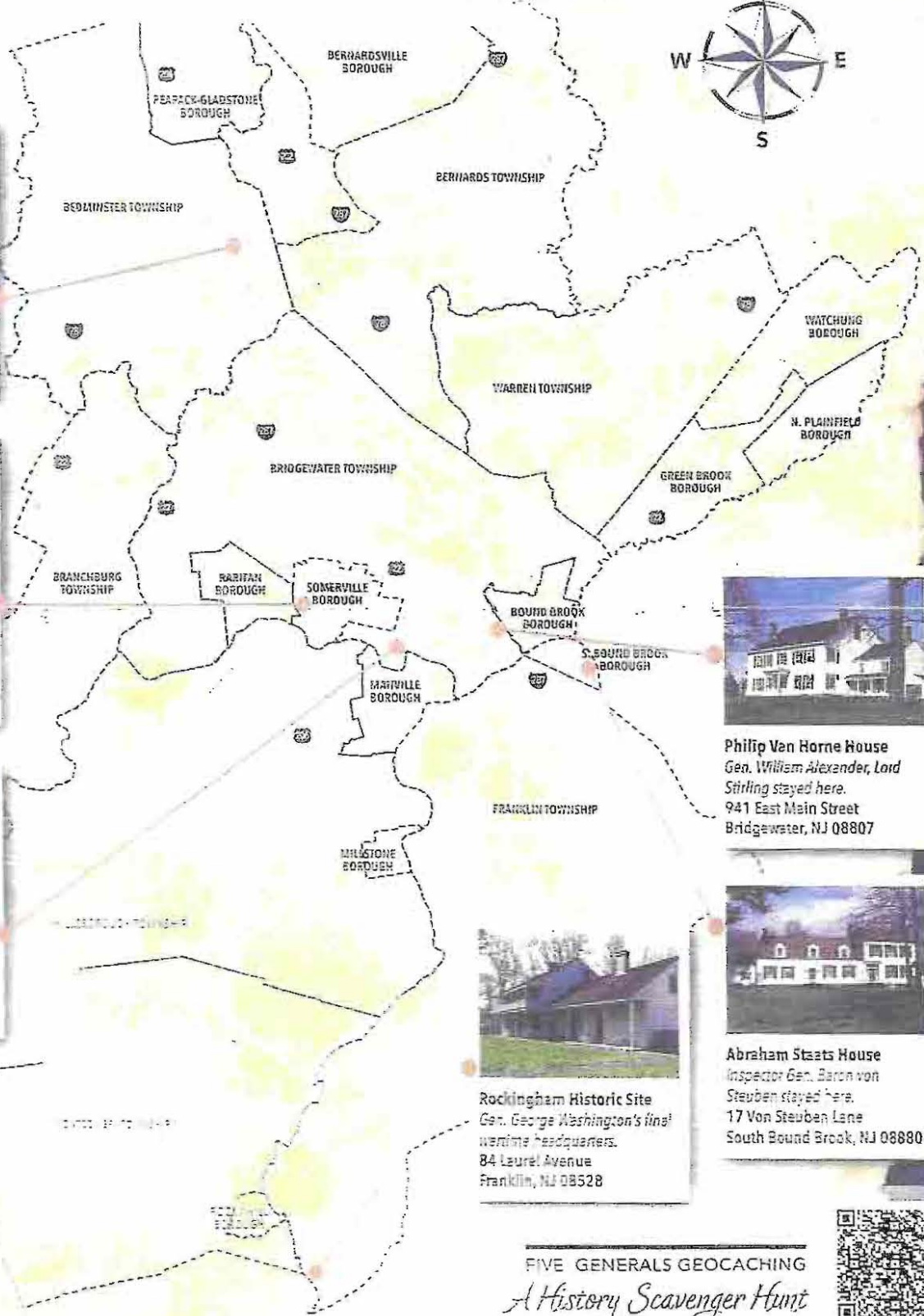
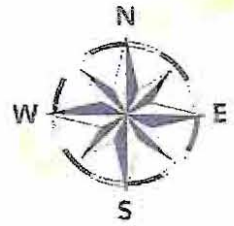


SOMERSET COUNTY'S FIVE GENERALS HOUSES



Jacobus Vanderveer House
 Gen. Henry Knox stayed here.
 3055 River Road
 Bedminster, NJ 07921
 Located in River Road Park.



Wellate House & Old Dutch Parsonage
 Gen. George Washington stayed here.
 71 Somerset Street
 Somerville, NJ 08876



Van Veghten House
 Quartermaster Gen. Nathaniel Greene stayed here.
 9 Van Veghten Drive
 Bridgewater, NJ 08807



Philip Van Horne House
 Gen. William Alexander, Lord Stirling stayed here.
 941 East Main Street
 Bridgewater, NJ 08807



Abraham Staats House
 Inspector Gen. Baron von Steuben stayed here.
 17 Von Steuben Lane
 South Bound Brook, NJ 08880



Rockingham Historic Site
 Gen. George Washington's final wartime headquarters.
 84 Laurel Avenue
 Franklin, NJ 08528

FIVE GENERALS GEOCACHING

A History Scavenger Hunt





Major General Nathanael Greene-Catherine Littlefield Greene

Nathanael Greene born August 7, 1742 - June 19, 1786, (sometimes misspelled Nathaniel), in Potowomut, Warwick, Rhode Island, to Nathanael, a preacher in the Society of Friends (Quakers), and Mary (Mott) Greene. He was a Major-General of the Continental Army in the American Revolutionary War. He is known for his successful command in the Southern Campaign, forcing British Lieutenant General Charles Cornwallis to abandon the Carolinas and head for Virginia.

Nathanael, Jr. and his brothers were trained by their father as ironmasters. The family business at this forge prospered and this led to the establishment of a second ironworks in Coventry, ten miles from the Potowomut forge on the south branch of the Pawtuxet River. This business grew, and by 1768, over 100 families lived in the vicinity of their Coventry forge. Nathanael made his home at the Coventry forge in 1770 and ran the family business. A setback occurred in 1772 when a fire destroyed the Coventry forge. Although efforts to rebuild were slow, the forge was eventually rebuilt. Today, there is no evidence of a forge.

An avid reader since boyhood, Nathanael had no formal education. Due to the family's Quaker religious beliefs, Greene's father discouraged book learning, as well as dancing and other activities. Nonetheless, Greene convinced his father to hire a tutor, and he studied mathematics, the classics, law, and various works of the Age of Enlightenment. At some point during his childhood, Greene gained a slight limp that would remain with him for the rest of his life.

Nathanael believed that a war was inevitable between the colonists and the mother country, Britain, and he became increasingly alienated from the British. At the same time, Greene drifted away from his father's Quaker faith, and he was suspended from Quaker meetings in July 1773. Afterward Greene helped organize a local militia known as the Kentish Guards of East Greenwich. Because of his limp, Greene was not selected as an officer in the militia. This military unit, organized by charter of the Rhode Island General Assembly, was trained by a British sergeant, a deserter, who Nathanael had persuaded to join the colonists' cause.

When the war began, Greene was a militia private in his home state of Rhode Island, the lowest rank possible. After the Battle of Lexington and Concord on April 18, 1775, the legislature of Rhode Island established the Rhode Island Army of Observation and appointed Greene to command it. In June 1775, after the Battle of Bunker Hill, the Second Continental Congress established the Continental Army and appointed George Washington to command all colonial forces and Greene was appointed a Brigadier General. He participated in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania campaigns. On March 24, 1778, General George Washington appointed him Quartermaster-General in the army of the United States.

In June 1778, he commanded troops at the Battle of Monmouth. He spent the winter of 1778-1779 at the Van Veghten House in Bridgewater, New Jersey for the Middlebrook Cantonment where, in March of 1779, there gathered Washington, Greene, Baron Von Steuben, General Henry Knox, and General Benjamin Lincoln to plan the ensuing campaigns. In the fall of 1780 General Washington put him in charge of the Southern Campaign, making him the second-in-command of the entire Continental Army. His success with the Southern Campaign, forcing British Lieutenant General Cornwallis to abandon the Carolinas and go north, allowed General Washington to surround Cornwallis at

Yorktown, Virginia. With the sea blockaded by the French, and Washington's troops surrounding Yorktown, Cornwallis had no option other than surrender, which occurred on October 19, 1781. Yorktown was the last major battle of the Revolutionary War. The surrender of Cornwallis, and the capture of both him and his army, prompted the British government to negotiate an end to the conflict. The war was officially over on September 3, 1783 with the signing of the Treaty of Paris in Paris, France.

Without Nathanael Greene's success in the south, the outcome may have been quite different. He emerged from the war with a reputation as George Washington's most gifted and dependable officer. After the war ended, the Greeses faced enormous debts incurred during the war. Greene had taken out loans to provide money for provisions for his troops because an agent sent to purchase the provisions absconded with the funds. The provisions had to be provided, so Greene pledged repayment expecting Congress to compensate him. The governments of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia each voted Greene liberal grants of lands and money, including an estate called "Boone's Barony" in Bamberg County, South Carolina, and Mulberry Grove Plantation near Savannah, Georgia. The creditor demands for the reimbursements obliged the General to sell some properties. Congress did vote the funds, but it was not until 1792, several years after Greene's death, that the matter was finally resolved. Major General Nathanael Greene and his family settled on Mulberry Grove Plantation in Georgia, but he did not live long enough after the signing of the Treaty of Paris to see the later success of the new country he helped fight for. Worn out from the fighting and not used to the heat of the south, he died on June 19, 1786 on his Mulberry Grove, Georgia plantation of sunstroke.

Catherine Littlefield born February 17, 1755- September 02, 1814 in New Shoreham, Rhode Island to John and Phoebe (Ray) Littlefield. Nathanael Greene married Catharine Littlefield in July 1774. She joined Gen. Greene at his military headquarters whenever possible. They had five surviving children. After the war they finally settled on a plantation called Mulberry Grove, near Savannah, Georgia. Catharine Littlefield Greene survived him by 28 years, dying September 2, 1814 on Dungeness Plantation, Cumberland Island, Georgia. She had her own "claim to fame" by her mentoring of Eli Whitney, the inventor of the Cotton Gin. He developed this idea while tutoring her children at her plantation at Mulberry Grove. It has been suggested that Eli Whitney received the patent for the cotton gin and the sole credit in history textbooks for its invention only because social norms at that time prohibited women from registering for patents.

The **Van Veghten House**, located in Bridgewater, Somerset County, New Jersey, on the banks of the Raritan River, played an important part in the Revolution and some notable events in the life of General Greene. The owner of the house, Derrick Van Veghten, was an ardent Patriot, and in 1778 he offered his property to the Continental Army for quartering of troops during the Middlebrook Cantonment. Opposing troops usually did not fight during the winter due to weather, food and supply shortages. They would set up encampments starting about October to rest and train the troops and wait for the spring. Three of the Colonial troops winter quarters were Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, 1777-1778, Morristown, New Jersey, 1779-1780 and the Middlebrook Cantonment, Bridgewater, New Jersey from October 1778 to June 1779. During the Middlebrook Cantonment, the house itself served as the headquarters for Quartermaster-General Greene, and a brigade of the Pennsylvania line encamped in the fields surrounding the house in January 1779. On March 17, 1779, "a pretty little frisk" (dance) was held in the house, with General George Washington in attendance. General Greene wrote in a letter to his friend Jeremiah Wadsworth that General Washington danced with Mrs. Greene "upwards of three hours without setting (sic) down." In appreciation of the Van Veghten's hospitality, the Greeses, upon leaving the house, presented Mrs. Van Veghten with a mahogany tea table, which is now located at the Van Cortlandt House in New York City.

Middlebrook: Ever Hear of It?

If you haven't, don't feel bad. Many haven't, or they may know that it has something to do with a location near Bound Brook or maybe a small stream that runs into the Raritan River. But, the importance of Middlebrook in the defense of American independence is not widely known or appreciated. Yes, Middlebrook is both of these things. Even Wikipedia says so:

Middlebrook is an unincorporated section of Bound Brook that was once a colonial village. It was named after a small tributary of the Raritan River. The Middle Brook flows down from the Watchung Mountains. Now you know approximately where Middlebrook is. This is your introduction to what Middlebrook was and why it is important to the story of American independence. Think of it as Middlebrook 101.

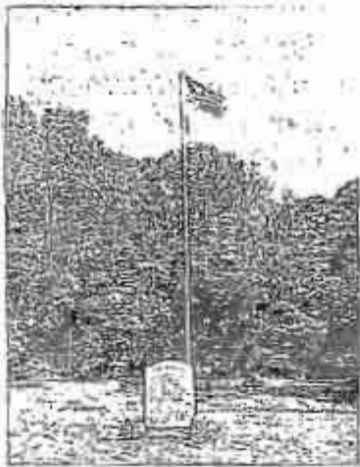
The term "Middlebrook" with reference to the American Revolution may refer to one of two different seasonal stays of the Continental Army (Americans forces as opposed to the British) in Somerset County in 1777 and 1778-79. They are sometimes differentiated by these dates or by their chronological order (First vs. Second). Or sometimes, no distinction can be made, since Washington returned with the army and reoccupied some sites. This introduction will distinguish them as much as possible using the dates. We will include "First" and "Second" as appropriate, if that makes it clearer and easier to keep the timeline straight.

First Middlebrook refers to the spring encampment of the Continental Army, commanded by General George Washington, during the American Revolution near the Middle Brook in Bridgewater Township, New Jersey (between Martinsville and Bound Brook) in 1777.

Second Middlebrook refers to a **cantonment** that took place during the winter of December 1778 through mid-June of 1779. A cantonment is a protracted quartering of an army, usually in huts, in a specific location, typically for the duration of the winter. The cantonment was more extensive geographically and covered much of Somerset County including parts of present day South Bound Brook, Manville, Bridgewater, Somerville, Raritan, and Pluckemin.

Adapted from and referenced in the Wikipedia entry "Middlebrook Encampment."

Middlebrook 1777



A portion of the first encampment site, known as the Washington Campground, was added to the National Register of Historic Places on July 3, 1975. The Campground is located **in the Martinsville section of Bridgewater Township**. The encampment site includes part of the ridge of the First Watchung Mountain. Its position provided a natural fortress not only protecting the Continental Army but also overlooking the plains towards New Brunswick, which British forces occupied in 1777. A surviving earthen redoubt believed to date to the 1777 encampment is also located on the mountain within nearby Washington Valley Park. A sign commemorating the encampment also stands in a now-developed area, at the corner of Chimney Rock and Gilbride Roads in Bridgewater. The strategic strength of the army's excellent defensive position on the Watchung or Blue Mountain ridge contributed ultimately to the success of the Continental Army by lengthening

the war and wearying the British forces during both of the army's stays at Middlebrook.

This was a spring encampment. During the winter of 1776-1777, Washington initially quartered the Continental Army at Morristown, New Jersey. After an outpost garrison at Bound Brook was surprised and routed by the British during the Battle of Bound Brook on April 13, 1777, Washington moved his army closer to Bound Brook to prevent further surprise incursions into the Raritan Valley. The army established its encampment on May 28 and stayed there until July 2. A total of 8,298 soldiers were housed in the Middlebrook encampment, but 2,660 of them were sick or disabled, unable to fight. In contrast, the British maintained a force of about 17,000 near New Brunswick, New Jersey. From the

heights of the Watchung Mountains, Washington could monitor and counteract British movements. When British General Howe decided to move against Philadelphia, concern over the threat by the nearby Continental Army made him choose the safer sea route instead of the faster land route. On June 30, Howe moved his troops to Staten Island to prepare for his Philadelphia campaign. Only then, Washington left Middlebrook and moved the army to Pompton Plains, New York.

First flag: June 1777

Most historians agree that it was at the Middlebrook encampment that the first official flag of the United States was unfurled shortly after Congressional authorization on June 14, 1777. This event is commemorated annually since 1889 on July 4 with a changing of the flag, a reading of the Declaration of Independence, and the delivery of an historical address at the Washington Camp Ground. By special Congressional order, a Thirteen Star Flag is flown 24 hours a day at the Washington Campground. The flag that is currently used is the Hopkinson flag.

Middlebrook Cantonment

1778-1779

Washington used the area around Middlebrook and much of central Somerset County for the Middlebrook Cantonment or Second Middlebrook during the winter of 1778-79. He brought between 8,000-10,000 troops to the area between November 30, 1778, and late January 1779, arriving himself in early December. The main cantonment stretched across a broad swatch of Somerset County, including sites in present-day South Bound Brook, the Finderne section of Bridgewater, Manville, Somerville, and Raritan, as well as Pluckemin to the north. Smaller contingents of troops were cantoned at Elizabethtown, Minisink, the New York Highlands, and Danbury, Connecticut. In each of their separate



camp at Middlebrook, soldiers constructed huts from logs covered with clay, but improving on the construction, layout, and organization compared to the previous winter at Valley Forge. The hutting constructed at Pluckemin for the artillery camp was more elaborate. Washington himself rented the Wallace House (now a New Jersey State Historic Site) in present-day Somerville for six months to serve as "Headquarters Middlebrook" and paid Wallace \$1,000 for this inconvenience. General von Steuben lived at the Staats House in South

Bound Brook. General Henry Knox lived at the Jacobus Vanderveer House near Pluckemin with the Continental Artillery encamped at the Pluckemin Artillery site on the hills above Pluckemin. Nathanael Greene lived at the Van Veghten House in the Finderne section of Bridgewater. General William Alexander, Lord Stirling, and on occasion, General Richard Henry Lee, occupied the Philip Van Home House in Bridgewater. All five headquarters are publicly owned National Register sites. The main body of the much larger British army was based in New York City that winter. Washington again used the security of the Watchung heights to monitor their troop movements and maintain a strong defensive position. The cantonment ended on June 3, 1779 when Washington led his army north to Highlands, New York and General John Sullivan began the 1779 summer campaign against the Iroquois Nation.

Various other sites related to Middlebrook are accessible to the public and were likely used during both 1777 and 1778-79. These include Washington Rock State Park, an observation site on top of the Watchung mountain ridge in Green Brook and Washington Valley Park in Bridgewater (nearby, but separate from, the Washington Campground). All five colonial homes that served as headquarters to the Generals during the cantonment were preserved at various times by local organizations beginning in 1898 with the Wallace House and all are now National Register Sites open to the public. See their respective websites for more specific information. A driving tour of the Middlebrook Cantonment area is available from the Heritage Trail Association and a "Five Generals Tour" is organized by Heritage Trail with the cooperating sites of the Middlebrook Cantonment on the Sunday of Washington's Birthday weekend.

Middlebrook Cantonment - why here?

George Washington and his Grand Army used this location and the surrounding area to confine the British to New York City and ultimately win the war.

Most historians attribute winning the war to various battles won by the Continental forces (while ignoring the significant losses).

Battles that many claim led to winning the war include:

The crossing of the Delaware - turning the tide of a series of disastrous defeats and the fall of New York.

Battle of Millstone - A notable skirmish during the New Jersey foraging wars where the militia demonstrated their military relevance.

Battle of Saratoga - the first major Continental Army victory that is believed to have encouraged the French to enter the war.

Battle of Monmouth County - the first encounter between both Grand Armies in which the British were the first to leave the battlefield.

Battle of King's Mountain - the victory against loyalist forces that turned the tide on the Southern Campaign.

Battle of Cowpens - a victory against British loyalists that underpinned the change in fortune in the Southern theater.

Siege of Yorktown - the final major battle of the war claimed to have convinced the British to concede to the demands of the Colonies.

Our contention is that it was a war of attrition and not attributable to any single battle, or even a series of battles. On this basis, nowhere was strategically more important in ultimately securing American victory, than the Watchung Hills overlooking occupied New York City. It is here near a little hamlet called Middlebrook in Somerset County New Jersey, during the winter of 1778/79 that we believe the future outcome of this war was decided.

The revolutionary war ended in a stalemate, with the British forces confined to New York City. The Continental Army was kept alive by a critical supply route that was protected by the Watchung Hills. The optimal location for the winter encampment of the Grand Army identified by Nathanael Greene was forward of the Watchung Hills at the point closest to the two primary routes coming up from Pennsylvania. The encampment was also positioned between the two primary routes over the Hills to Morristown.

Valley Forge was a disaster primarily due to poor supply planning. The 4th winter encampment at Jockey Hollow was chosen as clearly it is a superior defensive position to Middlebrook. It is well nested inside Fortress Watchung. The Van Veghten farm is roughly 25 miles from Trenton, and a similar distance from Morristown. Moving the encampment from Middlebrook to Morristown roughly doubled the distance over much more challenging winter terrain. Not surprisingly the supply chain at Jockey Hollow was far less reliable.

Now if we consider this dimension from a British perspective. Under what circumstances could the British army extend their influence beyond New York City, with Washington's army occupying the Hills? If the redcoats headed up the Hudson river to join the party at Saratoga, George Washington would have waited until they were well past Westpoint, and then attacked the British supply line at Stoney point. He would throw the full might of his primary army against any garrison that Howe might have left behind at this important pass. Howe's army would have starved to death in the time it took him to turn around and head back. He could not move North unless Washington moved first.

Howe could also not extend his supply line across land to Philadelphia along either King's highway or Old York road, as his supply line would encounter the same fate once his troop had crossed the Delaware River.

Howe knew from his experiences in Boston and Bound Brook that he could not attack Washington's forces in the Hills. And he knew that Washington would not face him out on the open plains. Did he realize 6 years earlier than the rest of his colleagues that this was a war in futility?

Based on the assumption that the war was all about supply lines and frustrating the enemy's ability to advance, our contention is that no place was more significant than this point in the hills closest to Trenton.