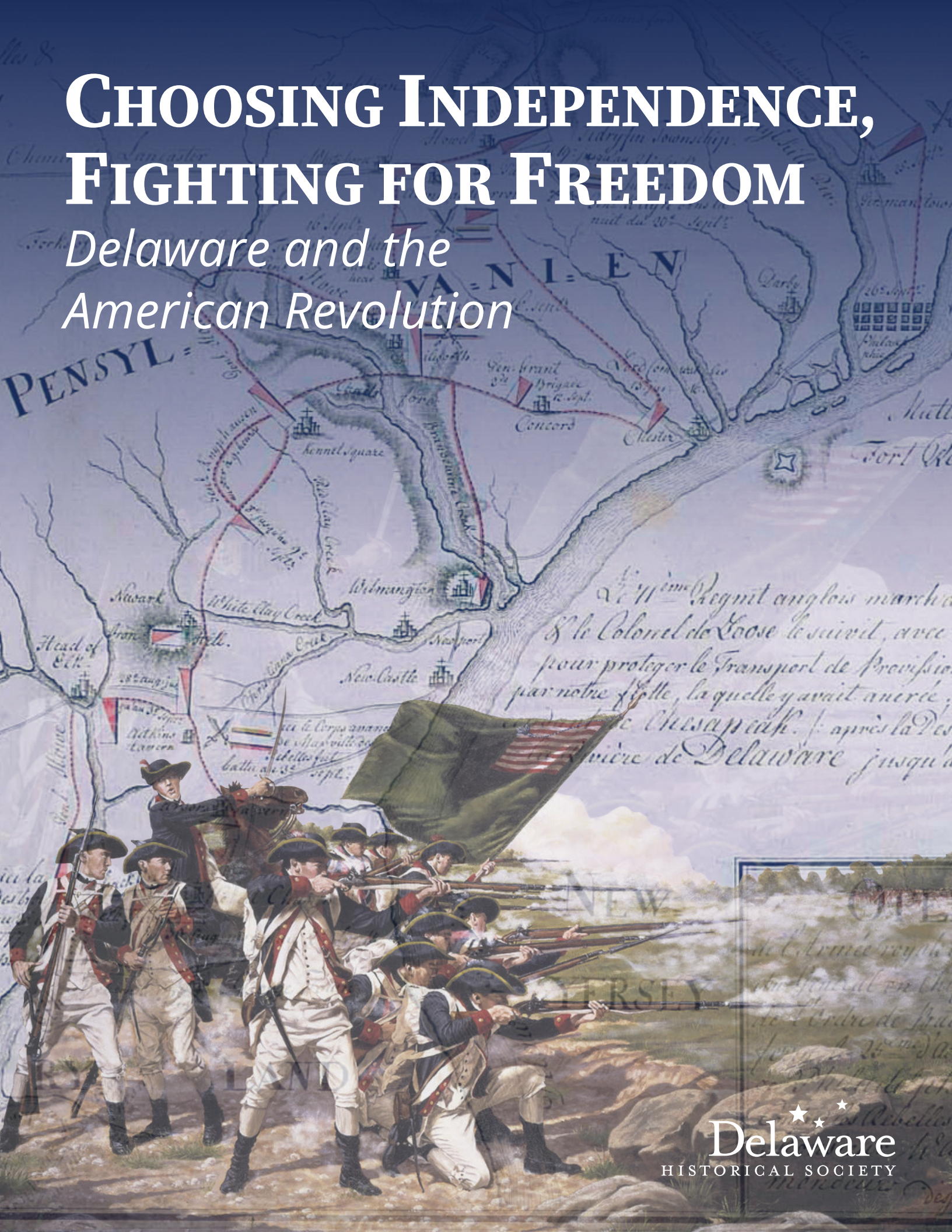


CHOOSING INDEPENDENCE, FIGHTING FOR FREEDOM

*Delaware and the
American Revolution*



Delaware
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Choosing Independence, Fighting for Freedom

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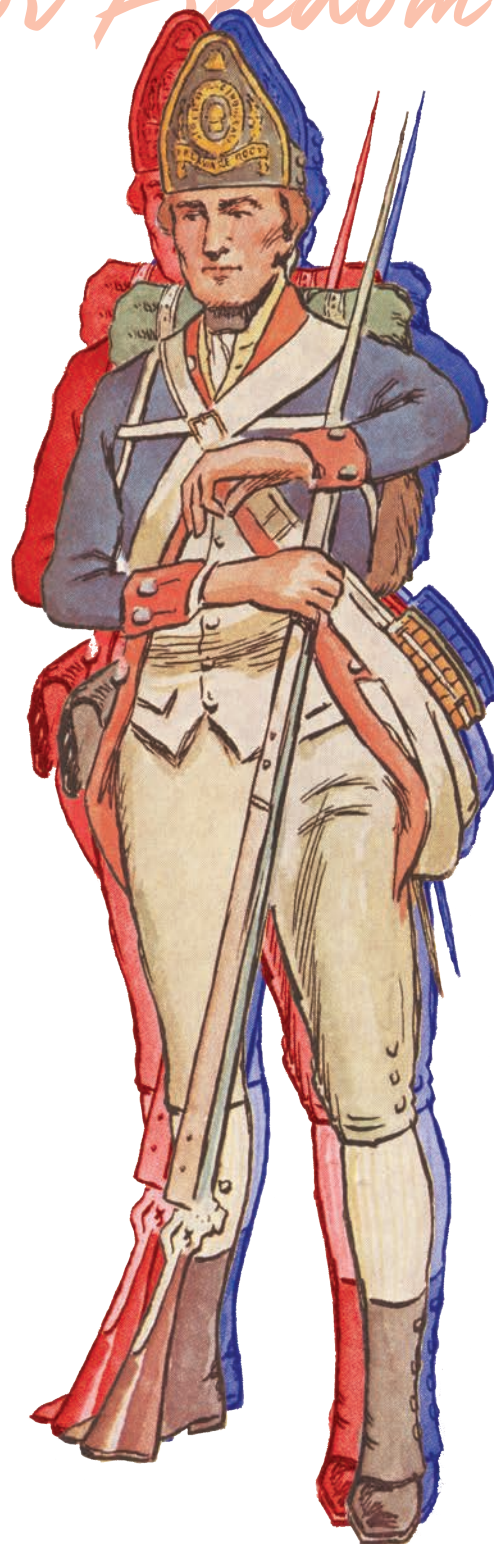
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Image Courtesy of Operations of the royal army in North America under the orders of Sir William Howe, Knight of the Order of Bath. From the descent at Elk Ferry 25 August until taking possession of Philadelphia 26 September, 1777 against the american Rebels commandeed by Mr. Washington and other commanders. Designed by Ensign Cochenhausen" Map. Marburg State Library in via the website of the West Jersey History Project.



Cover Image: Battle of Long Island, a National Guard Heritage Painting by Domenick D'Andrea, courtesy the National Guard Bureau

CHAPTER 1



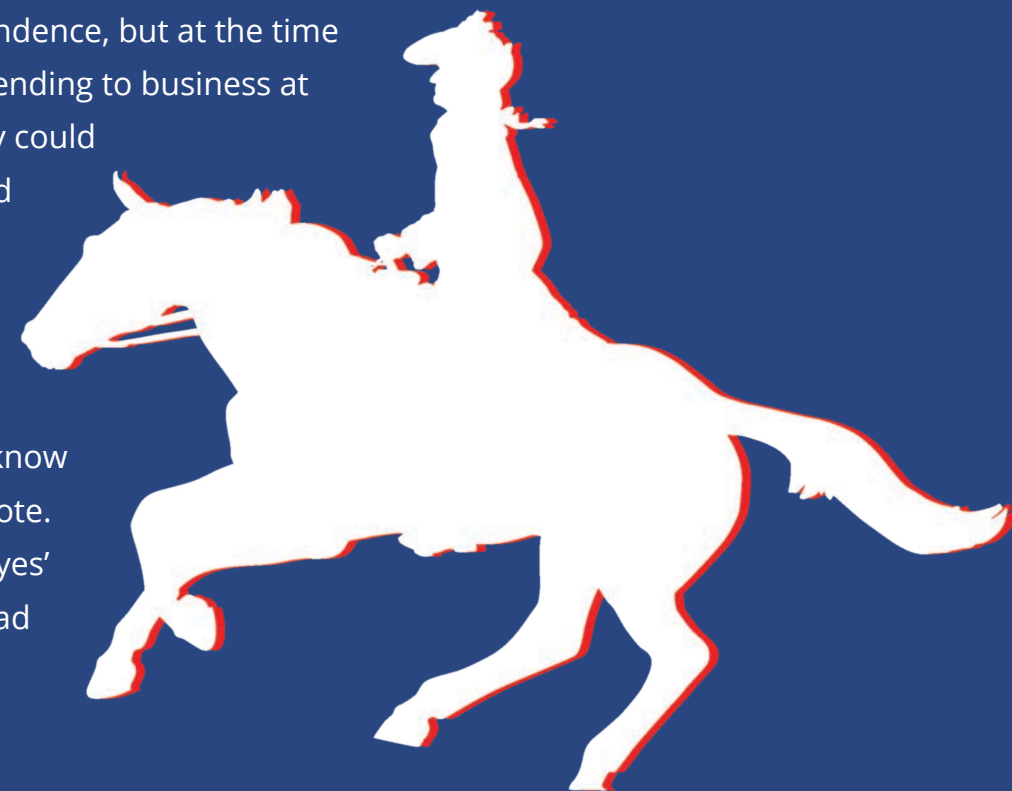
Caesar Rodney's Midnight Ride

In the spring of 1776, delegates from all thirteen colonies met in Philadelphia to decide what to do about the increasingly bitter argument over taxation without representation and the violence that it had caused. Some delegates wanted to continue trying to reason with King George of Great Britain. Others thought that it was time to break away from Great Britain and become a separate nation. Richard Henry Lee of Virginia proposed a resolution that the colonies “are, and of right ought to be free and independent states.”

The delegation from Delaware consisted of three men: Thomas McKean, George Read, and Caesar Rodney. McKean was an ardent patriot; he wanted to vote “yes” for independence. George Read felt that the colonies were not prepared for independence and certainly could not win a war with Great Britain; he wanted to vote “no.”

Caesar Rodney was for independence, but at the time he was 80 long miles away, attending to business at his home in Dover. Each colony could have only one vote, determined by the majority opinion of the delegates who were present in Philadelphia.

Benjamin Harrison wanted to know how each colony intended to vote. He asked, “Will Delaware vote ‘yes’ for independence?” George Read replied, “Delaware cannot cast a vote at this time.”

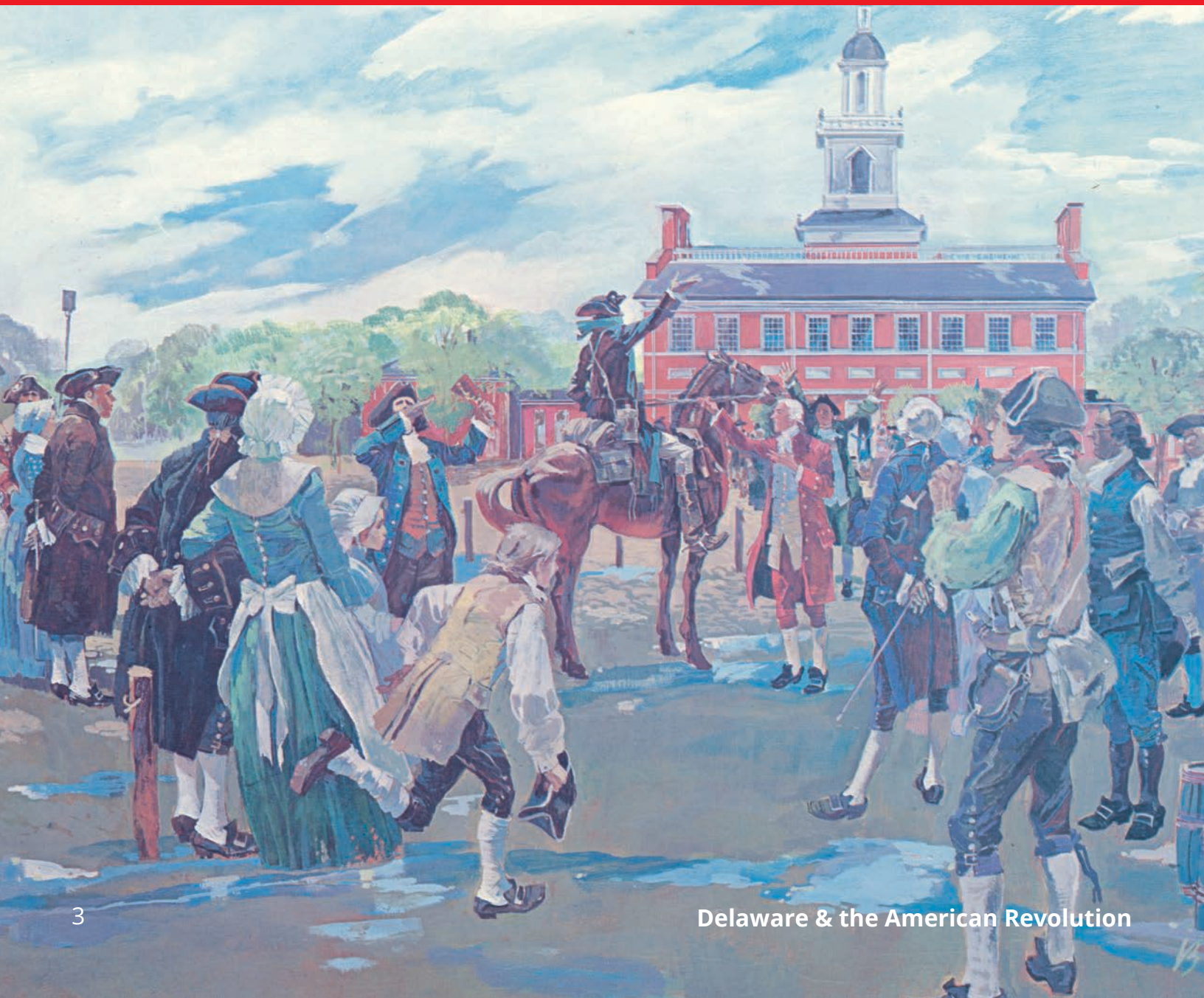


Why couldn't Delaware cast a vote?

Harrison's poll was taken on July 1, 1776; the vote for or against independence was scheduled for the next day! Thomas McKean, the second delegate from Delaware, knew he must do something fast if Delaware was to have a voice in whether the colonies were to become the United States of America. He summoned a messenger.

Thomas McKean said, "Take this message to Caesar Rodney in Dover. Hurry!"

The messenger mounted his horse and galloped toward Dover, arriving at Caesar Rodney's house in the middle of the night. He knocked on the door.



Delaware & the American Revolution

The breathless messenger said, "I have an urgent message from Mr. McKean!" Rodney read the message and realized that he needed to get to Philadelphia fast. The 80-mile trip ordinarily took about a day and a half, but Rodney knew he must get to Philadelphia in less than half that time if he wanted to vote the next day. He mounted his horse and galloped north, through dark of night, driving rain, and thunder and lightning.

When Rodney arrived in Philadelphia, the three Delaware delegates quickly conferred, just in time for Delaware's vote to be counted.

When Benjamin Harrison called upon the Delaware delegation, Caesar Rodney proudly announced, "Delaware votes 'yes' for independence!"

Caesar Rodney's midnight ride to Philadelphia helped to ensure that all the colonies were united and the vote for American independence was unanimous. Not a single colony voted "no."

The small state of Delaware played an important role in choosing independence.

Delaware & the American Revolution



Philad. July the 4th 1776

Sir I have inclosed you a Summons directed to the Sheriff to ~~call~~ Summon the Member for our County to meet in Assembly at Newcastle on the 22^d day of this Instant. which I hope you will have put into his hands as soon as possible after it comes to yours - I arrived in Congress / tho detained by Thunder and Rain / time Enough to give my Voice in the Matter of Independence - It is ~~now~~ determined. by the Thirteen United Colonies. without even one decenting (sic) Colony. We have now Got through with the Whole of the Declaration. and Ordered it to be printed. so that you will soon have the pleasure of seeing it - Hand. bills of it will be printed. and sent to the Armies. Cities, County Towns &c. To be published or rather proclaimed in form - Don't neglect to Attend Closely and Carefully to my Harvest and you'll oblige

Yours &c.
Caesar Rodney

Excerpts:

Philad...a July the 4th 1776

Dear Sir

I have enclosed you a Summons directed to the Sheriff to Summon the Member for our County to meet in Assembly at Newcastle on the 22 day of this Instant which I hope you will have put into his hands as soon as possible after it Comes to yours — I arrived in Congress / tho detained by Thunder and Rain / time Enough to give my Voice in the matter of Independence — It is determined by the Thirteen United Colonies without even one decenting (sic) Colony. We have now Got through with the Whole of the declaration and Ordered it to be printed. so that you will soon have the pleasure of seeing it — Hand. bills of it will be printed. and Sent to the Armies, Cities, County, Towns etc. To be published or rather proclaimed in form — Don't neglect to attend Closely and Carefully to my Harvest and you'll (?) oblige (?)

Yours etc.,
Caesar Rodney

Interpreting the document

The basics:

1. Who wrote it? To whom?
2. Where was it written?
3. When was it written?
4. Why was it written?

CHAPTER 2

The details:

Caesar Rodney is explaining the events of the 2nd Continental Congress and the vote for independence to his brother. What is he saying was the result?

How does Rodney describe his ride to Congress?

Name the two tasks Rodney asks his brother to complete:

1.

2.

Think about it:

Orders were given for the Declaration of Independence to be read in each of the Thirteen Colonies. How do you think Delaware citizens reacted to hearing the Declaration?

Why do you think this letter is a good primary source for historians? What insight does it provide them?

The Fighting Begins

The Declaration of Independence was signed in July 1776 and with it the Revolutionary War began. But a war doesn't begin overnight. What preparations do you think the colonies were undergoing in anticipation of a war with Britain?

The 1st Delaware Regiment

News of the impending War for Independence did not come as a surprise to most Delawareans. In December of 1775, the Continental Congress ordered the Lower Counties of Delaware to establish a regiment. By the end of January 1776, eight companies had been formed under the command of Colonel John Haslett. Three months before the signing of the Declaration, the British warship HMS Roebuck lurked in the Delaware Bay. The 1st Delaware Regiment participated in a skirmish in Lewes to prevent the HMS Roebuck from attacking merchant ships delivering goods to the colony. But the warship continued up the Delaware River. Colonel Haslett left one company at Lewes and sent two Delaware Regiment companies to Wilmington to prevent further attacks by the British Navy. In July of 1776 the 1st Delaware Regiment was ordered to Philadelphia in preparation to defend New York from the British.

Sons of the Blue Hen and Game to the End

The 1st Delaware Regiment had a reputation for being the best equipped and best dressed regiment in the Continental Army. They were also said to be some of the fiercest fighters during battle. Henry "Light- Horse Harry" Lee, praised the Delaware Regiment in his memoirs, saying, "The state of Delaware furnished one regiment only; and certainly no regiment in the army surpassed it in soldiership."

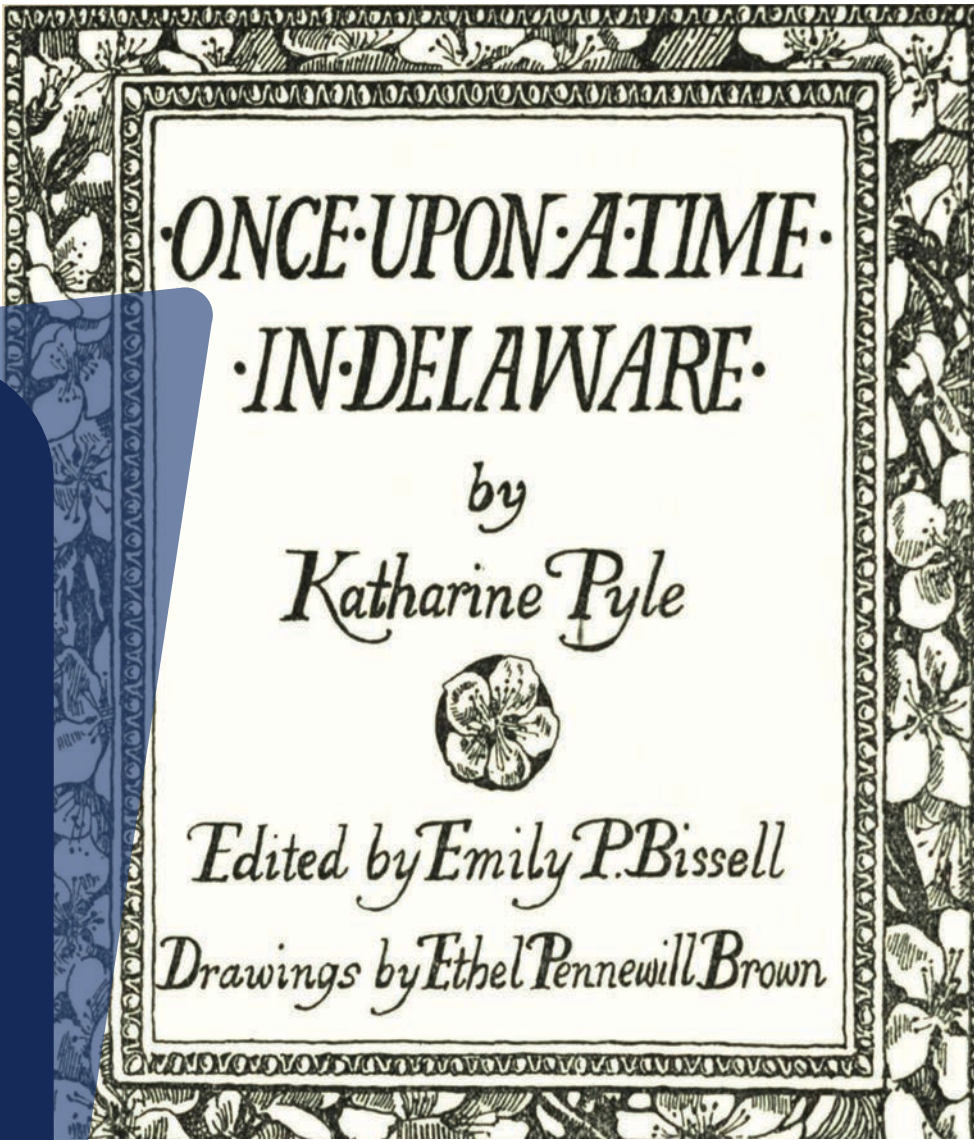
Why do you think the 1st Delaware Regiment had the nickname "Sons of the Blue Hen"?

"The Fighting Blue Hen", E. Paul Catts, 1976



Once Upon a Time in Delaware by Katherine Pyle, edited by Emily P. Bissell

Published 1911 by The Delaware Society of the Colonial Dames of America. The Colonial Dames of America is a patriotic society of women, descended from Colonial ancestry.



"To All Delaware Children

Dear Girls and Boys:

These true stories are written just for you. They tell how once upon a time brave men and women came across the ocean and landed here in the wilderness, among the Indian tribes; how they made farms and towns and cities and formed a state; and how they fought for the freedom and the peace that Delaware now enjoys. Only thirteen out of the forty-eight states of our Union are original colonies, and Delaware is one of these famous thirteen. You are the young citizens, therefore, of an historic state. To you it will fall, some day, to uphold the honor of Delaware. May you be as patriotic and as brave as the Delaware settlers who conquered the wilderness and the Delaware soldiers who laid down their lives for liberty and right. - The Delaware Society of the Colonial Dames of America."

Excerpt:



One evening when the men were resting around the fires, one of their comrades came out from a tent carrying two game-cocks by the legs. Somehow he had managed to bring them up from Delaware with him. They were of a bluish grey color, and were of a breed well known in Kent County, and called “Blue Game Chickens.” When the soldiers saw the two cocks they shouted for joy. “A chicken-fight! A chicken-fight!” they cried. “We’ll have a chicken-fight. Where did you get them?” The birds were thrown into the middle of the ring. For a moment they stood looking about

Think about it:

When was this book written?

Who published the book?

Who is the intended audience?

What is the purpose of the book?

Is *Once Upon a Time in Delaware* a reliable source? Why or why not?

with their bright eyes. Then they lowered their heads and ruffled their feathers. The next moment they flew at each other and fought furiously but before they could injure each other they were separated and shut up in boxes. “That’s the way we’ve got to fight,” cried a soldier. “We’re sons of the old Blue Hen, and we’re game to the end.” “That’s what we are,” shouted the others. “We’re the Blue Hen’s Chickens, the fighting breed. “ And from that night that was the name by which the plucky Delaware regiment went— The Blue Hen’s Chickens.

African Americans in the Revolutionary War

What were the colonists fighting for during the American Revolution?

The American Revolution centered around ideas of liberty and equality, yet the institution of slavery was a significant part of American society and economy. Half a million enslaved people remained in bondage throughout the colonies. Slavery was the exception to the rights of freedom proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence. In 1776, Delaware outlawed importing slaves, but slavery remained legal within the state.

With talk of independence, many enslaved African Americans saw the Revolution as a potential road to freedom. However, that didn’t mean they all sided with the Patriot cause.

Delaware Public Archives

Number	Date of Enlistment	Names.	feet	Size	age	Complexion	Where Born.	Colour of Hair	Where Inlisted	
			inches	inches						
33	Aug. 13	Dan'l Walker.....	6	1½	24	fresh	Mill Creek Hd.....	do.	ditto.	do.
34	14	Pa'l Bowman.....	5	5	19	Do.	Christ Hd.....	do.	ditto.	do.
35	14	Jno. Bradley.....	5	3½	30	dark	County Derry.....	do.	ditto.	do.
36	14	Da'd Carnahan.....	5	7	24	pale	Carlisle Penna.....	do.	ditto.	do.
37	14	Theo Drew.....	5	5½	21	fresh	Cou'y Terone.....	brown	ditto.	
38	14	Cato Fegin.....	5	7½	22	dark	Mill Creek Hd.....	black	do.	
39	14	Ja'b Hance.....	5	4½	19	fresh	Dragon Nick.....	brown	do.	
40	14	Wm. Walker.....	5	4	21	fair	Cou'y Doun Ir'd.....	do.	do.	
41	15	Geo. Fink.....	5	7½	40	dark	Germany.....	do.	do.	
42	15	Sa'l Harriss.....	5	7½	17	pale	New Castle Co.....	do.	do.	
43	15	An'r? Drummond.....	6	1½	19	fresh	Cou'y Antrim.....	do.	do.	
44	15	Jas. McGuffich.....	5	10½	20	do.	Cou'y Doun.....	do.	do.	
45	16	Jas. Donly.....	5	6	26	fresh	Cou'y Antrim.....	brown	do.	
46	16	Dan'l Venemon.....	5	6½	20	pale	Penn Neck.....	Red.	do.	
47	18	David Clemens.....	5	9½	25	do.	Cou'y Doun.....	dark	do.	
48	19	Jos. Robinson.....	5	8½	20	do.	Cou'y Derry.....	red.	do.	
49	20	Hen'y Best.....	5	6	22	dark	Germany.....	black	do.	
50	22	Jno. Barr.....	5	7½	19	fresh	North Irland.....	do.	—	
51	23	Wm. Dixon.....	5	10½		pale		brown	do.	
52	23	Wm. Lennard.....	5	8½	30	brown	Mar's Hook.....	do.	do.	
53	27	Hen'y Neelus.....	5	4½	22	fresh	Cou'y Donegall.....	do.	do.	
54	27	Wm. McMullin.....	5	6	18	pale	Cou'y Antrum.....	do.	do.	
55	29	Jas. Collins.....	5	7	25	fair	North Irland.....	do.	do.	
56	29	Nath'l Smith.....	5	7	16	do.	Christ. Hund.....	do.	do.	
57	30	Sam'l Bowler.....	5	9½	45	dark	Barbadoes.....	do.	do.	
58	30	Mich'l Slaughter.....	5	8½	31	pale	Germany.....	do.	do.	
59	30	Wald'n Waldravn.....	5	8	19	fair	Christ Hund.....	do.	do.	
60	30	Philip Grimes.....	5	8½	21	do.	Cou'y Doun.....	do.	do.	
61	Sept. 1	Wm. McFeely.....	5	5	22	pale	Cou'y Derry.....	Black	do.	
62	Sept. 1	Rob't. Morrison.....	5	5	27	pale	New Castle Co.....	Black	do.	
64	15	Timo'y Coin.....	5	9	26	dark	North Irland.....	dark	do.	
68	in all									

THOMAS KEAN, Capt.
GEO. BUSH, 1st Lieut.

In the early phase of the war, African Americans were not allowed to join the Continental Army because of slaveholders’ fears of arming the enslaved with guns. But when the British began offering freedom to any enslaved person who fought for their cause, the Continental Army eventually opened recruitment to African Americans.

In Delaware, Cato Fagan is one of two known black men who served on the American side in the Revolution. He enlisted in the “Flying Camp”, a short-term unit, in August 1776. In June 1777 he enlisted in Captain John Learmonth’s company in the Delaware Regiment and served until he deserted a year later. In both units he held the rank of private.

LIST OF NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS AND PRIVATE SOLDIERS
FROM FIRST OF JANUARY, 1777

PERSONS NAMES	TIME OF ENLIST-MENT	January, 1777	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January, 1778	February	March	April	May	June	July
D																				
John Duffin	23 July 79																			
Anthony Delarose	Jany. 80																			
James Dawson																				
E																				
David Ellis																				
Joseph Emerson																				
John Everite																				
Jenkin Evans																				
Edward Edwards																				
Willm. Engley																				
Barthol. English																				
Willm. Evans																				
Willm. Emory																				
Michl. Elwood	9 Aug. 79																			
Jno. Eashom	26 Feb. 77																			
Robert English	17 Feb.																			
Danl. Ellis	18 June 77																			
Jas. Emerton																				
F																				
Alexr. Flowers																				
James Ferguson																				
George Fink																				
Robert Ferguson	27 Nov. 77																			
William Fish																				
Cato Feagon																				
Thomas Flinn	30 Aug. 79																			
Johnson Fleetwood																				
Bartley Flinn																				
John C. Foplis																				
Willm. Forbus																				
Hugh Fleming																				
Charles Figgs	5 Mch. 78																			
Willm. Fleming	21 Jan. 77																			
Willm. Foster	1 Do																			
Garret Fagon																				
Thos. Firman																				
Charles Freeman	3 Oct. 79																			
Patrick Flinn	in 76																			
Willm. Finch	2d Feb. 77																			
Christopher Fisher	5 Nov. 79																			
Jacob Finley	20 July 77																			
Elis Flowers																				
Jno. Forbus																				

Delaware Public Archives

Would it be different if they were
a free person or enslaved?

Think about it:

Why would African Americans,
free or enslaved enlist in the
Continental Army?
The British Army?

What do you think determined
which side an African American
fought for?

War Comes to Delaware

In late August 1777, the British were determined to capture Philadelphia, the headquarters of the Continental Congress, and George Washington, commander of the Continental Army, was equally determined to stop them. While General William Howe and 18,000 British troops were camped at Head of Elk (Elkton, MD), preparing to March through Delaware, Washington moved 11,000 Continental troops to Wilmington to stop them. The stage was set for the only Revolutionary War battle in the state of Delaware.

Image Courtesy of Delaware Historical and Cultural Affairs



To Brigadier General Rodney

Sir

The Congress having called upon the State of Delaware for the proportion of Militia, to assist in defeating the hostile Designs of the Enemy in this quarter, - You are, without loss of time, to use your utmost exertions towards accomplishing that necessary purpose, and for assembling and arranging in the best order possible, the quota assigned your State at Middle town and in its neighborhood. - When assembled, they are to cooperate more immediately with the Militia from the Eastern Shore of Maryland, in watching the motions of the Enemy and taking every opportunity of harassing them, by alarming them frequently with light parties, beating up their Pickets, and intercepting as often as it can be done, whatever parties they may send out to procure Supplies of forage, horses, cattle, provisions and necessaries of every kind; which will equally serve to distress them and shelter the Inhabitants from their Depredations, and ought therefore to be an object of your peculiar care. - The more effectually to distress them in this respect, I would have you to remove such grain, cattle, horses, Stock and other articles of subsistence, that lie so contiguous to them, as to be in more immediate danger of falling into their hands out of their reach, and to continue doing this as they continue their progress through the country. - You will also withdraw every kind of carriage which might serve to facilitate the Transportation of their Baggage and Stores to a distance from their Camp, than which you can do nothing that will be more injurious to them, as there is nothing they are more in want of.

One more precaution in this way I must recommend to you to use - which is, if there should be any Mills in their neighborhood, to take away the Runners and have them removed out of their reach. - This will render the Mills useless to them and will be little or no detriment to the Inhabitants, more especially to the well affected, who it is probable will, for the most part, quit their homes, where they appear, and to whom they can be restored at a proper time.

While you are attentive to annoying and distressing the enemy, you will not neglect any expedient necessary for your own Security - for this purpose, you will take posts the most advantageous and the least liable to surprise, you can find, and will station proper Guards at every post by which you are accessible, obliging them to observe the strictest Vigilance and order. - You will find scouting Parties by day and Patrols by night

going from Post to Post, and towards the Enemy, extremely useful, both to discover every thing, that is passing with them, and to guard yourself from any attempt to surprise you.

If the Enemy should march towards Philadelphia, as is expected, you will hang constantly upon their right flank and rear, in such a situation as to be always ready to communicate and cooperate with this army.

When you arrive at the place of your destination, time to time; and of your numbers and situation from certain advice of every occurrence of Importance, that comes to your knowledge.

Apply to the Quarter Master and Commissaries of Provisions and forage and settle a plan with them for furnishing you duly with such Supplies, as you will have occasion for, in their respective Departments.

As General Maxwell will want Persons well acquainted with the country to remain with him, in the capacity of Guides, you will leave with him thirty or forty men fit for the business, out of the Battalions that are now advanced towards the Enemy. - These should be select men, who have a thorough knowledge of the country, intelligent and of known attachment and fidelity to the American cause.

I need not urge it upon you how essential your utmost care and activity are upon this occasion. You are fully sensible of its importance, and that the season loudly calls for the greatest efforts of every friend to this country. - We have no time to spare, and cannot be too soon prepared, as we have reason every moment to expect the enemy will prosecute their march towards the object they have in view.

Given at Head Quarters - Wilmington.
This 31st August. 1777.

G. Washington

Excerpt:
To Brigadier General Rodney

Sir

You are, without loss of time, to use your utmost exertions...for assembling and arranging in the best order possible, the quota assigned your State, at Middle-town and in its neighborhood. When assembled, they are to cooperate more immediately with the Militia from the Eastern Shore of Maryland, in watching the motions of the Enemy and taking every opportunity of harassing them, by alarming them frequently with light parties, beating up their Pickets, and intercepting as often as it can be done, whatever parties they may send out to procure Supplies of forage, horses, cattle, provisions and necessaries of every kind;... The more effectually to distress them in this respect, I would have you to remove such grain, catt[le], horses, stock and other articles of subsistence, that lie so contiguous them, as to be in more immediate danger of falling into their hand[s] out of their reach and to continue doing this as they continue the[ir] progress through the Country. You will also withdraw every kind of carriage which might serve to facilitate the Transportation of their Baggage and Stores to a distance from their Camp, than which you can do nothing that will be more injurious to them, as there is nothing they are more in need of.

...[I]f there should be any Mills in their neighborhood, to take away the Runners and have them removed out of their reach. This will render the Mills useless to them...

Given at Head Quarters Wilmington
This 31st August. 1777.

G. Washington



VOCABULARY:

Quota	the number of soldiers a militia was assigned to recruit. The Continental Congress asked Delaware to provide 1,000 militiamen to serve under George Washington
Militia	an army composed of ordinary citizens to provide defense against an enemy
Harass	to create an unpleasant or hostile situation, annoy persistently, bother
Light parties	refers to light infantry, soldiers whose job was to delay the advance of the enemy. The light infantry traveled light and moved quickly
Pickets	soldiers or troops placed on a line forward of a position to warn against an enemy advance
Forage	plant material; sometimes hay, eaten by grazing animals
Subsistence	the food necessary to sustain life
Contiguous	next to or near
Facilitate	to make easier

Interpreting the document

The basics:

- 1. Who wrote it? To whom?
- 2. Where was it written?
- 3. When was it written?
- 4. Why was it written?

The details:

Commander-in-Chief George Washington ordered General Rodney of the Delaware Militia to harass (bother) the enemy. Name three things Washington ordered Rodney to do:

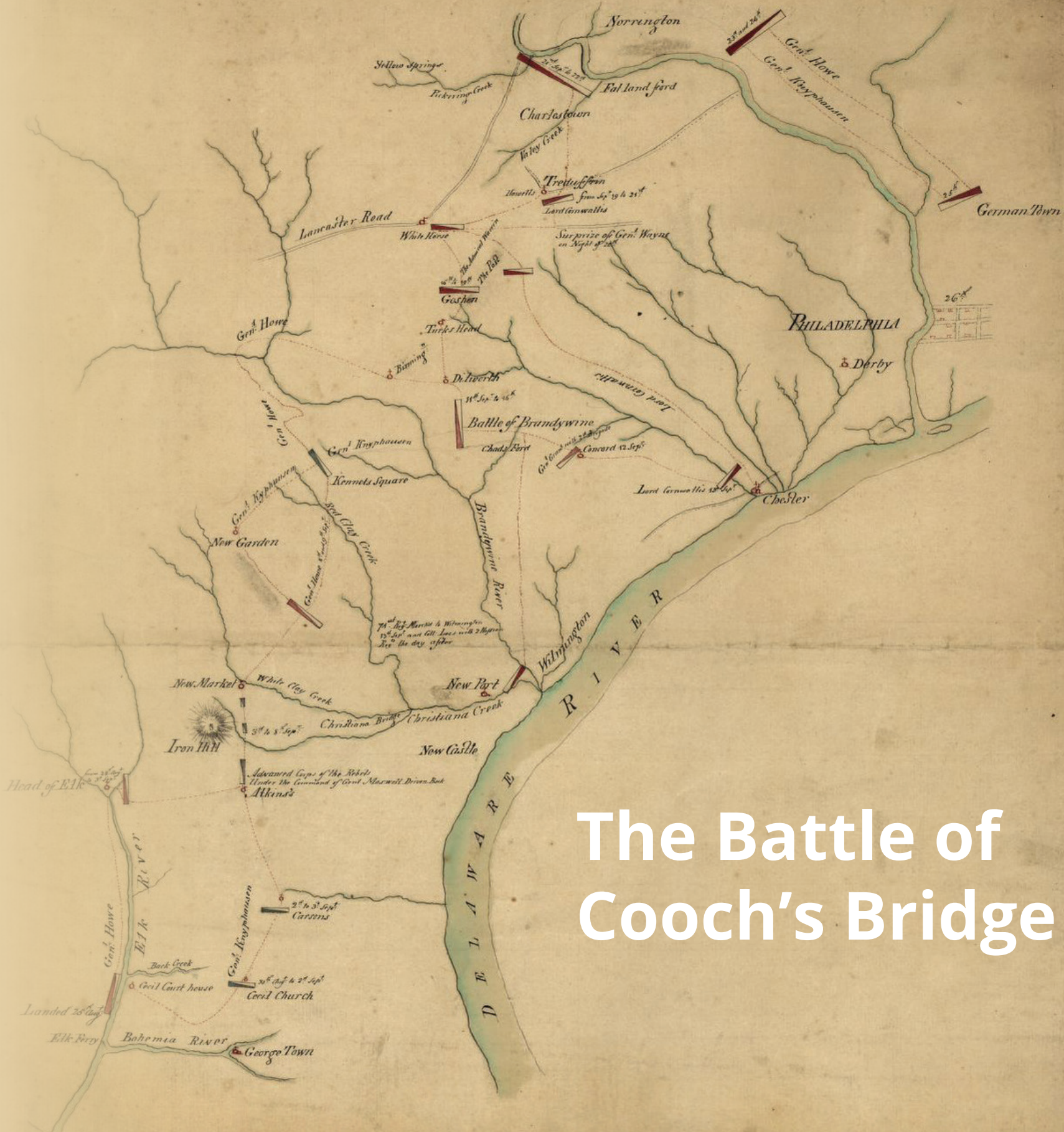
- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What kind of supplies did the British need according to Washington?

Name two ways the Patriots could prevent the British from getting the supplies they needed.

- 1.
- 2.

What impact would the lack of supplies have on the British army?



Operations of the British army, from the 25th August to 26th Sept. 1777
Montrésor, John. Geography and Map Division. Library of Congress.

On September 3, 1777, the Continental and British armies met in battle at Cooch’s Bridge. The battle lasted for most of the day, resulting in General William Maxwell and the rest of the American army retreating to Wilmington. It had been a hard day of fighting, many were injured and low on supplies, but the war continued on.

What do you think life was like for soldiers on either side of the battle?

Think about it:

How did the military campaign in 1777 affect private citizens living in Delaware?



CHAPTER 4

Civilian Perspectives:

When most people think of the American Revolution they think of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the Boston Tea Party, great generals like George Washington and the many battles that took place. But soldiers, politicians, and revolutionaries weren’t the only people who participated and were affected by the American Revolution.

VOCABULARY:

Patriot	a supporter of America independence
Tory	one who is loyal to the government of Great Britain
Quaker	a member of the Christian denomination of the Religious Society of Friends; one who is against violence to solve problems

Read the following biographies and determine which category these real-life citizens belong in: Patriot, Tory, Quaker, or Uninvolved.

Cheney Clow

I built a log fort near Kenton and gathered together between 400-500 men to support my fight against the Americans. We planned to capture the Delaware government in Dover. We never got to it, though. Americans raided our fort, capturing 50 of our men. It didn’t stop me, I continued to plot against the patriots from Maryland and I joined the British army. I was back in Delaware when I was captured and held in jail.

Am I a patriot, a tory, a Quaker, or uninvolved?

How do you know?

John Cowgill

I live near Smyrna. My religion does not believe in violence and war, and because of this I do not accept the Continental paper money printed by the so-called Patriots. Simply because of this, I have been called an enemy to my country. People have been told to have nothing to do with me. The teacher even sent my children home from school! A group of armed men in Dover put a sign on my back that said, “On the Continental Currency depends the fate of America” and carted me through the streets.

Am I a patriot, a tory, a Quaker, or uninvolved?

How do you know?

Do you agree with how John Cowgill was treated?

Ann Hazzard

I have a farm in northeast Sussex County. Since my husband died, it is just me and five slaves to do the heavy work in the fields. I haven’t given much thought to the Revolution.

Am I a patriot, a tory, a Quaker or uninvolved?

How do you know?

How do you think the American Revolution affected farmers?

Henry Fisher

I live in Lewes. The Pennsylvania government pays me to send them information about British and Tory activities in my area, and I’m glad to help out. I’ve sent letters telling about trade between the British and Tories, British ships in Delaware Bay, and the activities of Tories in Lewes during the 1776 elections. They roamed the streets drinking toasts to the King and keeping Patriots from voting.

Am I a patriot, a tory, a Quaker or uninvolved?

How do you know?

Philip

I’m not fighting in this war, but it has changed my life. I am enslaved and my former master, Thomas Robinson of Sussex County, has fled to Canada because he is a Tory. I am now enslaved by his brother.

Am I a patriot, a tory, a Quaker or uninvolved?

How do you know?

Widow Allee

Since Abraham, my husband, died I have been alone. In August, 1781 I heard that the American army needed wheat so I provided some to them. It’s what I could do for the cause.

Am I a patriot, a tory, a Quaker or uninvolved?

How do you know?

Thomas Robinson

I own a store in Indian River, Sussex County. I am angry because I think the politicians are a bunch of men with fancy ideas and a lot of talk about independence. With their talk, they are pushing the common people like me into danger and trouble. For speaking up against them I was charged with treason and found guilty. I was called an enemy to the country! The judges told everyone to stop dealing with me and my store. They took my property and I fled to Canada to get away from it all.

Am I a patriot, a tory, a Quaker or uninvolved?

How do you know?

What did the Battle of Cooch’s Bridge mean for all the people involved?

Below are two scenarios and a list of questions and possible responses.
Read the scenarios and think about how you would respond if you were a patriot, a tory, a Quaker, or an uninvolved person.

Question Prompts:
What would you do if a soldier came to your home looking for this item?

How will the loss of this item affect you and your family in the coming months?

Does this incident affect your loyalty—Patriot, Tory, Quaker, or Uninvolved—or your actions during the remainder of the war?

Possible Responses:
I will help. I support the cause.
I will help. I feel sorry for him.
I will not help the enemy.
I will not help. This is too big a hardship on my family.
I will not help. Soldiers should mind their own business.

A British Soldier has Lost his Cookpot

I’m a British soldier, one of 18,000 under the command of General Sir William Howe. We’re in America to put down this senseless American rebellion and restore order and safety for loyal British subjects. It is the evening of September 3, 1777. Early this morning my mess-- that’s six soldiers who travel, eat, and camp together-- broke camp at Head of Elk in Maryland, with orders to march toward Christiana Creek in the colony of Delaware. It was my turn to carry the cookpot for the mess, a loathsome duty indeed. In addition to my haversack, canteen, bedroll, cartridge box and musket, I had to strap on that awkward iron pot. With every step, that blasted pot swung against my hip or crashed into my canteen. I begged my mess mates to take a turn carrying the pot, but they all refused. I can’t say as I blame them; no one wants to volunteer for “iron bondage.”

We had marched only a few miles when the American rebels opened fire from the woods on either side of the road. During the skirmish, I threw the infernal cookpot in a ditch to lighten my load. By the end of the day, the Americans retreated and my mess settled down to camp for the night. We were all tired and hungry. Two soldiers gathered wood for a fire; another found some salt pork to boil for our supper and asked me, “Where is our cookpot?” When I didn’t answer immediately, all eyes turned on me. The cookpot was my responsibility: I needed to find it or get a new one. I went back to the scene of the fighting, but the cookpot was nowhere to be found. So I am determined to replace that pot with one from a local farm, even if I have to take it by force. I’ll go to one of the farmhouses south of Newark, not knowing the loyalty of its inhabitants. I plan to ask for their cookpot, but should they resist, I’m prepared to take it by force. After all, soldiers have to eat... *The history: In his diary, a British soldier complained about carrying his cookpot, characterizing it as “iron bondage.”*

A cookpot was a very important household item. It was necessary for cooking meals and was made of iron, a material that needed to be manufactured. To lose a cookpot would have been a great hardship. It’s possible that a family only had one and it would cost a lot of money to replace.

How would giving a cookpot away affect you?

How would you respond if you were a patriot?

How would your response be different if you were a...
Tory?

Quaker?

Uninvolved?

An American Soldier is Injured During Battle

I am an American soldier. I was part of the troops under Colonel William Maxwell that were ordered to harass the enemy as they moved through Delaware. If I do say so, we slowed those invaders down, though we weren't able to stop them. At the battle of Cooch's Bridge in Delaware I fired my musket until I was out of cartridges and then fought the British with sword and bayonet. I was wounded in the shoulder, the side and the leg by a British bayonet. I'm in need of bandages to bind my wounds, but the army's supplies are being used for men who are hurt worse than me. Perhaps I can find my own bandages at a nearby home.

In the yard of a local farmhouse I see a linen chemise draped over a bush. Obviously the housewife has washed it and set it out to dry. It would be perfect to rip up for bandages, but I'm sure, if the housewife is like country folk everywhere, it is the only extra chemise she has. If I take it, she will have only the clothes on her back for quite some time. Nevertheless, my wounds must be treated or I may bleed to death. I'll have to risk making an enemy of a civilian so that I can survive to fight another day.

A chemise was a type of woman's undergarment, much like a long shirt, that would be worn under regular clothing. It was very common for a woman to only have two chemises. If one was lost, a woman would need to either make her own, or go with only one. Would losing your chemise be a hardship?

How would you respond if you were a Quaker?

How would your response be different if you were a...

Tory?

Patriot?

Uninvolved?

Look back at the scenarios with the British and American soldiers. How do you think a free African American would respond? What if they were enslaved?

One's loyalty—Patriot, Tory, Quaker, or Uninvolved—might affect their response to military presence and demands. Even so, when war comes through your backyard, loyalty to one side or another, or attempts to stay uninvolved, may not protect you from harm.

Some historians estimate that only three out of ten Delawareans supported independence in 1776. If these statistics are correct, how could the fight for independence ever succeed?

Over time, most people living in the United States came to accept independence as a good thing. How could a person who was against independence in 1776 be convinced that the United States of America was a good idea after all?



The Battle of Long Island,
a National Guard
Heritage Painting
by Domenick D’Andrea,
courtesy of the National
Guard Bureau.

Spend a few minutes looking closely at the painting. Use a magnifying glass or your phone camera to look closely at different sections of the painting.

On a separate piece of paper, write down 5 things you notice about the painting.

What is happening in the painting? What do you see that makes you think that?

Who do you think is portrayed in this scene?

What is the setting for the artwork-- the time and place?

What part(s) of the painting makes you think that?

What do you think is the main idea of the painting? What is the artist trying to convey?

What elements contribute to the theme of the painting?

When do you think this was painted? What do you see that makes you think that?

The Battle of Long Island occurred in August 1776. The battle was part of the British campaign to capture New York. The 1st Delaware Regiment fought in the battle with George Washington’s Continental Army. According to the National Guard web site, “Colonel Henry “Light-Horse Harry” Lee, a hero of the Revolutionary War and father of Robert E. Lee, once commented that during the war “the state of Delaware furnished one regiment only; and certainly no regiment in the army surpassed it in soldiership.” At the Battle of Long Island, the actions of the Delaware Regiment kept the American defeat from becoming a disaster. Indeed, the soldiers from tiny Delaware, fighting alongside the 1st Maryland Regiment, may well have prevented the capture of the majority of Washington’s army, an event which might have ended the colonial rebellion then and there.” *

The painting depicts the 1st Delaware Regiment during the Battle of Long Island. The artist, Domenick D’Andrea, is a contemporary artist (an artist living today) who was commissioned by the National Guard to paint a scene from the battle.

Does this information change your view of the painting? Why or why not?

Many historians have agreed that this painting is not an accurate image of the battle or of the 1st Delaware Regiment soldiers and have noted many inaccuracies (or mistakes). Let’s look at the painting again.

What do you think are some of the inaccuracies in the painting?



- 1. Bayonet scabbard worn on right side when it should be on the left.
- 2. Hats are cocked on the right side when they should be cocked on the left.
- 3. The breeches should have buttons in the front.
- 4. The green flag is most likely a militia flag of Delaware in 1777 and would not have been used in 1776.
- 5. The cartridge box should be on right hip, not the left.
- 6. The canteen should be on left hip, not the right.
- 7. Officers only wore red plumes in their hat when on parade, not in battle.
- 8. The horse’s proximity to the soldiers is dangerous and would never have been so close to soldiers on foot in battle.
- 9. Coat turnback should be red, not white. **

Think about the historical inaccuracies in the painting. Does this change your impressions of the painting? Why or why not?

Do artists painting scenes from long ago have an obligation to paint with historical accuracy?

How does the perspective of the artist or author of a work shape our understanding of historic or current events?

Why do you think it is important for viewers/readers to consider the artist or author of a source?

* <https://www.nationalguard.mil/Resources/Image-Gallery/Historical-Paintings/Heritage-Series/The-Battle-of-Long-Island/>
** Thank you to Chris Mlynarczyk and John Foskey, members of the 1st Delaware Regiment Living History Corporation, a modern group of living historians with attention to detail and historical research, for their research and information on the inaccuracies in *The Battle of Long Island*.



Villages
Villages
Batailles &
Escarmouches

Chemin de Lancaster

PENSYL

Admiral Warren

Surpr

VA

le sept

Concord

Chesler

le 11

le 11

le 11

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le 11

le Colonel de
pour protéger le
par notre flotte, la
condant de Ches
la Rivière de D

NEW

YERSEY

Delaware
HISTORICAL SOCIETY