

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

3/3

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable". For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name March Route of Rochambeau's Army: Ridgebury Road

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Ridgebury Road, from intersection with Old Stagecoach Road 1,600 feet south not for publication

city or town Ridgefield vicinity

state Connecticut code CT county Litchfield code 005 zip code 06877

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] March 17, 2003
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
John W. Shannahan, Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

[Signature] Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
6/6/03

March Route of Rochambeau's Army: Ridgebury Road
Name of Property

Litchfield County, CT
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
_____	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
_____	_____	Total
1	0	

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Rochambeau's Army in Connecticut, 1780-1782

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: road-related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: road-related

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A

walls N/A

roof N/A

other N/A

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**March Route of Rochambeau's Army:
Ridgebury Road
Ridgefield, Litchfield County, CT
(Rochambeau's Army in Connecticut, 1780-1782
Multiple Property Listing)**

Section number 7 Page 1

Description:

Ridgebury Road is the main road through the village of Ridgebury, located within the town of Ridgefield, Connecticut. The nominated portion is oriented in a north-south direction, beginning at the intersection with Old Stage Coach Road and running approximately 1,600 feet south, just past Hussar's Camp Place on the west, to a private road on the east side. The road is paved, approximately 24 feet wide, with a set of utility poles along the west side (Photograph 1). On the east side, the road offers long vistas of gently sloped open fields, separated by stone walls and tree lines (Photograph 2). At the north end there is a small apple orchard, with the remainder used for hay production.

The roadway is bordered by grassy shoulders, with stone walls on both sides, creating a total roadway width of approximately 50 feet. The stone wall on the east side is the more continuous and intact (Photograph 3). The west side stone wall, while more tumbled down and interrupted for driveways, is nevertheless discernible for nearly the entire length of the nominated portion (Photograph 4). There is modern residential development on the west side, but the houses are set so far back that they do not interrupt the perception of this portion of Ridgebury Road as a country road.

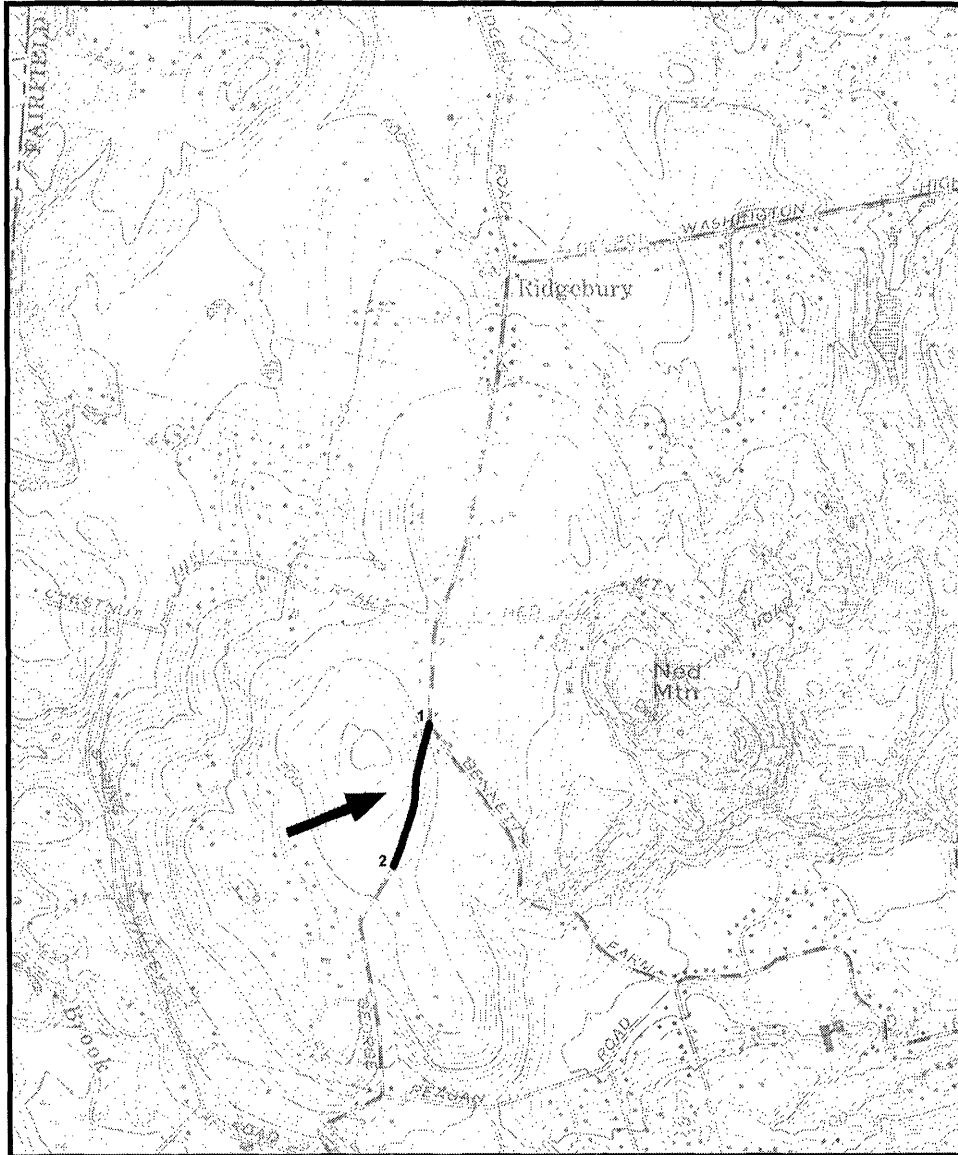
United States Department of the Interior
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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

March Route of Rochambeau's Army:
Ridgebury Road
Ridgefield, Litchfield County, CT
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Multiple Property Listing)

Section number 7 Page 2

Figure 1: March route along Ridgebury Road, as shown on U.S.G.S. Peach Lake Quadrangle, 1:24000



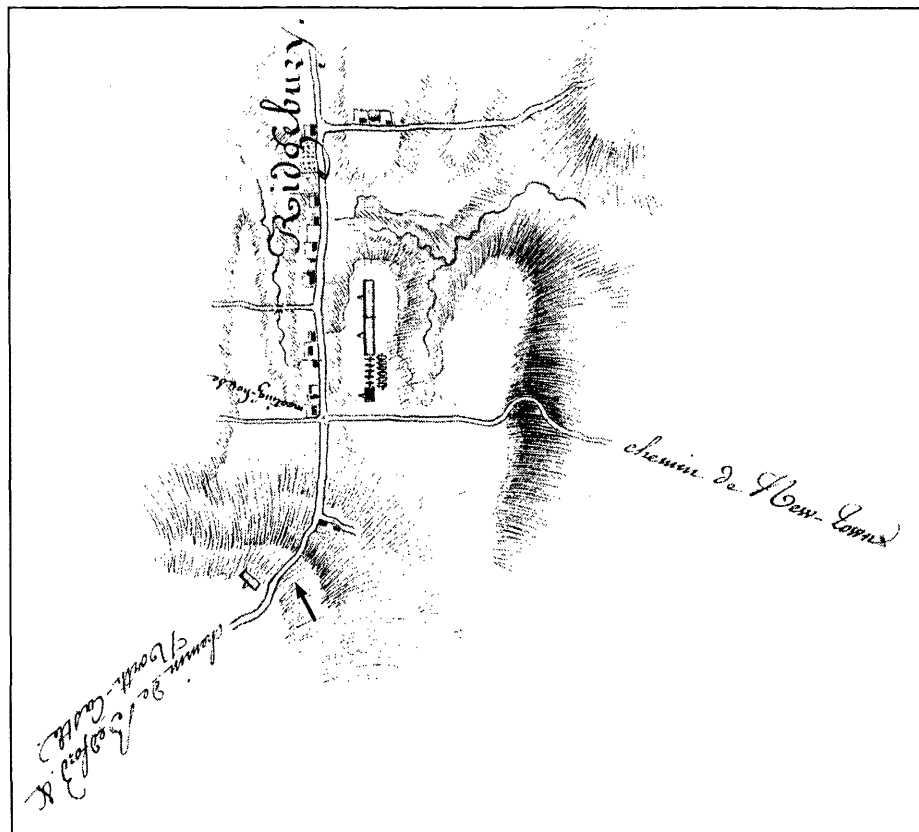
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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

March Route of Rochambeau's Army:
Ridgebury Road
Ridgefield, Litchfield County, CT
(Rochambeau's Army in Connecticut, 1780-1782
Multiple Property Listing)

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Figure 2: Excerpt from the Ridgebury camp map, as drawn by Louis-Alexandre Berthier, military engineer for the French army, with the portion represented by Ridgebury Road indicated by an arrow (*from Rice and Brown 1972*). The building indicated as the "meeting house" is an earlier Congregational church building, then in use by the Episcopalians. The contingent shown at the lower left is a group of chasseurs and grenadiers posted to guard the main camp.



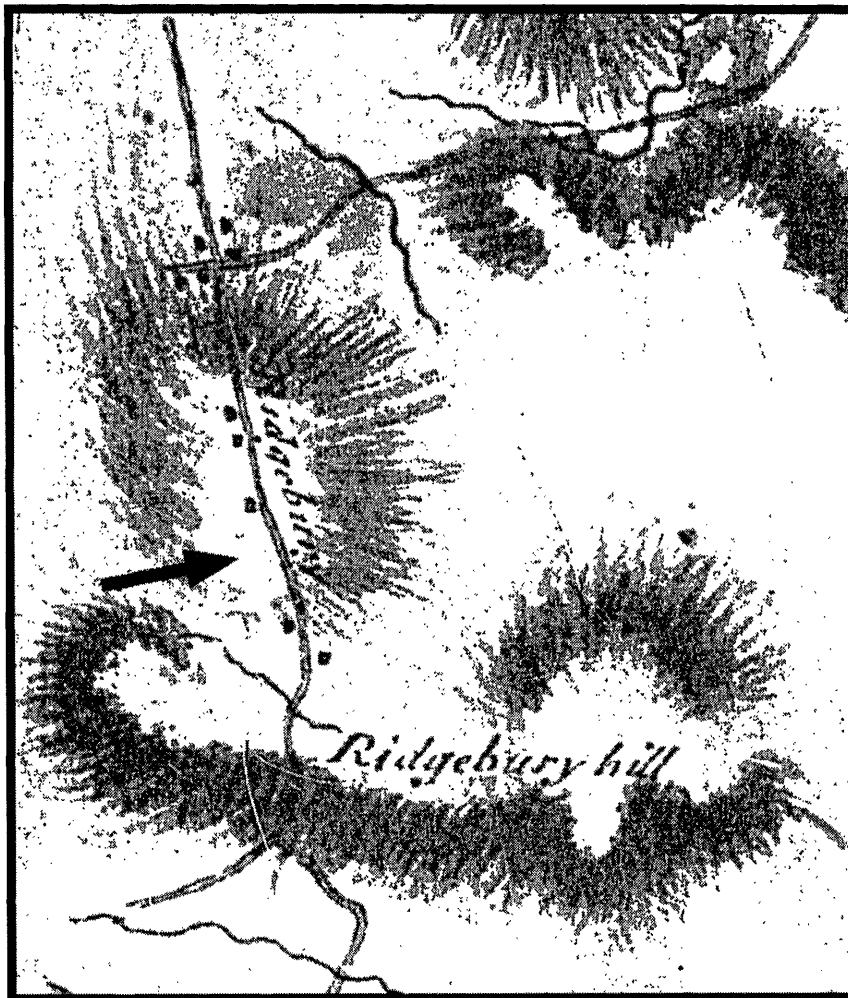
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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 4

**March Route of Rochambeau's Army:
Ridgebury Road
Ridgefield, Litchfield County, CT
(Rochambeau's Army in Connecticut, 1780-1782
Multiple Property Listing)**

Figure 3: Ridgebury as shown on the Library of Congress's map of Tryon's expedition to Danbury, 1777, with the nominated portion of Ridgebury Road indicated by an arrow.



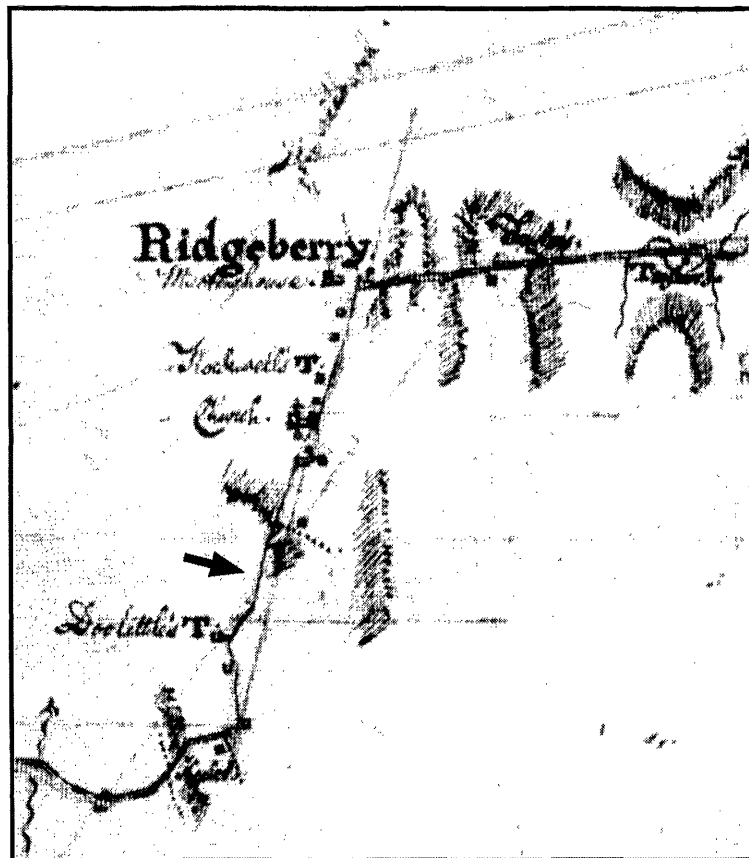
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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**March Route of Rochambeau's Army:
Ridgebury Road
Ridgefield, Litchfield County, CT
(Rochambeau's Army in Connecticut, 1780-1782
Multiple Property Listing)**

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Figure 4: Ridgebury as drawn for Washington's army, with the nominated portion of Ridgebury Road indicated by an arrow. The road from Danbury taken by the French is not shown on this map. However, the row of houses along the west side of the road, between the [Episcopal] Church and the Congregational meetinghouse, corresponds closely to those shown on the Berthier map. Erskine-DeWitt No. 44, "Contraction of the Road from Danbury to Crompond," Collection of the New-York Historical Society.



8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark an "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B removed from its original location.
C a birthplace or grave.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, structure
F a commemorative property.
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

MILITARY

Period of Significance

1781 - 1782

Significant Dates

1781, 1782

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
previously listed in the National Register
previously determined eligible by the National Register
designated a National Historic Landmark
recorded by Historic American Building Survey #
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

Connecticut Historical Commission,
59 South Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 1

**March Route of Rochambeau's Army:
Ridgebury Road
Ridgefield, Litchfield County, CT
(Rochambeau's Army in Connecticut, 1780-1782
Multiple Property Listing)**

Significance:

Ridgebury Road in Ridgefield is significant because it recalls the appearance of the Connecticut countryside as it was seen by the passing French army in the Revolutionary War (Criterion A). The gently rolling fields visible to the east, defined by stone walls and tree lines, are undoubtedly similar to the vista seen by the French troops as they broke camp in Ridgebury and began their march into New York State, where they met up with the Continental troops under the command of George Washington. Pierre-Francois Beville, Rochambeau's quartermaster, noted that the country in the vicinity of Ridgebury was "quite open and well-cultivated," and George Flohr, a soldier in the Royal Deux-Ponts regiment, compared Ridgebury to "a beautiful gentleman's manor" (Rice and Brown 1971: II, 14; Flohr, 1787). The nominated portion is the only positively identified segment in the western half of the state to retain its open and undeveloped character.

The French infantry camped at Ridgebury the first week of July in 1781, following strict military protocol because of the proximity of British forces. Advance sentries were placed at all the roads leading in from New York, and a contingent of grenadiers and chasseurs was stationed a mile ahead of the main encampment as further protection. Marching as two brigades, the French forces joined the American army at Phillipsburg, New York, where they remained for a month. This circumstance caused British authorities to presume their intention was to attack or at least threaten New York, their true purpose becoming evident only at the very end of August, when the combined army set off for Virginia and the decisive battle at Yorktown.

The authenticity of the nominated section of road as part of the Rochambeau route is indisputable. The scattered houses on the broad ridge top and the surrounding topography are very distinctive and were shown in detail on maps prepared by all three belligerents involved in the conflict (see Figures 2-4). In addition to the settlement of Ridgebury itself, the steep, winding course of Ridgebury Road south of the nominated portion is evident both on the maps and as a landmark in the written itinerary used by the French army.

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Section number 9 Page 1

**March Route of Rochambeau's Army:
Ridgebury Road
Ridgefield, Litchfield County, CT
(Rochambeau's Army in Connecticut, 1780-1782
Multiple Property Listing)**

Bibliography:

Erskine, Robert

c.1779 "Contraction of Road from Danbury to Crompond." Manuscript map, Erskine-DeWitt Map Collection, No. 44, New-York Historical Society, New York.

Flohr, Georg Daniel

1787 Excerpts from an unpublished journal. Manuscript. Translated by Robert Selig.

Harper, M., B. Clouette, and R. Harper

1999 *The Rochambeau Project: Historical and Archaeological Documentation of the French Army's Marches through Connecticut in 1781 and 1782*. Storrs, CT: PAST, Inc. and Keegans Associates. Prepared for the Connecticut Historical Commission.

Hurd, D. Hamilton

1881 *History of Fairfield County, Connecticut*. Philadelphia: J. W. Lewis & Co.

Rice, Howard C., Jr. and Anne S. K. Brown, eds.

1972 *The American Campaigns of Rochambeau's Army 1780, 1781, 1782, 1783*. Princeton, N.J. and Providence, R.I.: Jointly published by Princeton University Press and Brown University Press. Two volumes. Includes the maps prepared by the French army and the journals of Berthier, Béville, Clermont-Crèvecoeur, and Verger.

Ridgefield Connecticut Tercentenary Committee

1935 *Ridgefield, Connecticut, 1708-1935*. Map of march routes and historic buildings and sites.

Tryon, William

1777 *Map of the Route of General William Tryon's Expedition*. Manuscript, Library of Congress; photostat, Connecticut State Library.

March Route of Rochambeau's Army: Ridgebury Road

Name of Property

Litchfield County, CT

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approx. 2 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 18 623 120 4578 160

Zone Easting Northing

3

Zone Easting Northing

2 18 623 010 4577 710

4

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mary Harper, Archaeologist, and Bruce Clouette, Historian

organization Public Archaeology Survey Team, Inc.

date December 5, 2002

street & number P.O. Box 209

telephone 860-429-1723

city or town Storrs

state CT

zip code 06268

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Town of Ridgefield, Connecticut

street & number 400 Main Street

telephone 203-431-2783

city or town Ridgefield

state CT

zip code 06877

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**National Register of Historic Places
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Section number 10 Page 1

**March Route of Rochambeau's Army:
Ridgebury Road
Ridgefield, Litchfield County, CT
(Rochambeau's Army in Connecticut, 1780-1782
Multiple Property Listing)**

Verbal Boundary Description:

The nominated property consists of the Ridgebury Road from its intersection with Stagecoach Road southward approximately 1,600 feet, past Hussars Camp Drive on the west, to a long private road on the east side, shown as dotted lines on the U.S.G.S. Peach Lake Quadrangle. The nominated property includes the entire public road right-of-way.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary includes the portion of the Ridgebury Road that retains the visual qualities that convey its historical significance as a portion of the route traversed by the French Army in 1781-1782. Farther north, the stone walls are no longer in place and the land is not as open, and farther south, the density of modern residential development increases on both sides of the road.

UTM References:

- 1: 18.737020.4620130
- 2: 18.737520.4620280

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

March Route of Rochambeau's Army:
Ridgebury Road
Ridgefield, Litchfield County, CT
(Rochambeau's Army in Connecticut, 1780-1782
Multiple Property Listing)

Section number Photographs Page 1

All Photographs:

1. March Route of Rochambeau's Army: Ridgebury Road
2. Ridgefield, Litchfield County, CT
3. PAST, Inc. Photo
4. April, 2001
5. Negative filed with PAST, Inc., Storrs, CT

Captions:

View of road at north end, with orchard and field visible beyond fence, camera facing southeast
Photograph 1 of 4

Typical view of fields east side of road, approximate midpoint, camera facing southeast
Photograph 2 of 4

Typical section of stone wall along west side of road, camera facing north
Photograph 3 of 4

Typical section of stone wall along east side of road, camera facing southeast
Photograph 4 of 4