THEME: Major American Wars, Revolution

Form 10-300
(Rev. 6-72)

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY – NOMINATION FORM

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS) *(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)*

STATE: Pennsylvania
COUNTY: Montgomery
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME
COMMON: Valley Forge State Park
AND/OR HISTORIC: Valley Forge

2. LOCATION
STREET AND NUMBER: at Port Kennedy, off Valley Forge Interchange of U.S. 76
CITY OR TOWN: Upper Merion vicinity
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Pa. #5
STATE: Pennsylvania — CODE: 42
COUNTY: Montgomery — CODE: 91

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
☐ District ☒ Building	☐ Public	Public Acquisition:	☒ Occupied	Yes:
☒ Site ☐ Structure	☐ Private	☐ In Process	☐ Unoccupied	☐ Restricted
☐ Object	☒ Both	☐ Being Considered	☐ Preservation work in progress	☒ Unrestricted
				☒ No

PRESENT USE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

☐ Agricultural	☐ Government	☒ Park	☐ Transportation	☐ Comments
☐ Commercial	☐ Industrial	☒ Private Residence	☒ Other (Specify)	
☐ Educational	☐ Military	☐ Religious	State historic park	
☐ Entertainment	☒ Museum	☐ Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
OWNER'S NAME: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Private Owners
STREET AND NUMBER: Historical and Museum Commission
CITY OR TOWN: Harrisburg
STATE: Pennsylvania — CODE: 42

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: State Capitol
STREET AND NUMBER: Third Street
CITY OR TOWN: Harrisburg
STATE: Pennsylvania — CODE: 42

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic American Buildings Survey
DATE OF SURVEY: 1937 ☒ Federal ☐ State ☐ County ☐ Local
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Library of Congress
STREET AND NUMBER: Division of Prints and Photographs
CITY OR TOWN: Washington
STATE: D.C. — CODE: 11

STATE: Pennsylvania
COUNTY: Montgomery
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	☐ Excellent	☒ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Deteriorated	☐ Ruins	☐ Unexposed
	(Check One)		(Check One)			
	☒ Altered	☐ Unaltered	☐ Moved	☒ Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL *(if known)* PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Valley Forge encampment, as designed by Louis Duportail, consisted basically of the Inner and Outer Lines of defense, which were composed of earthworks, trenches, earth redoubts, an abatis, riflepits and lunettes. The Lines stretched southward from the Schuylkill River across the eastern slopes of Mount Joy, with the Inner Line closely following a north-south ridge line at a 250' elevation and the Outer Line similarly following a northeasterly-southwesterly ridge line at an elevation of 200'. Today, these Lines are fully contained in the State Park and are well preserved, especially the Inner Line's earthworks and redoubts. On the open plains enclosed by the two Lines the bulk of the more than 900 soldiers' huts were constructed, in brigade and company streets that closely paralleled the lines of entrenchment. Approximately twenty huts have been reconstructed, with archeological research providing the guidelines. As well as the huts, this area also included the Grand Parade where the soldiers drilled, the artillery park where the 42 cannon were drawn up in formation, and several stone houses that received varied use. Three of these houses were used as headquarters for General Varnum, General Huntingdon, and as the Commissary Quarters. A fourth house used as the quarters for the Provost Guard has been demolished, but the other three have been preserved within the Park, although Huntingdon's Headquarters remains only in part.

South of Mount Joy, on either side of Valley Creek, stand the stone houses that were used as the quarters for Generals Maxwell and Knox. Maxwell's quarters stand on the west bank of the stream, and is two-and-a half stories high. Knox's quarters stand south of Maxwell's and on the east bank of Valley Creek. It is one-and-a half stories tall, and both are built of stone.

A stone schoolhouse built in 1705 and used during the encampment as an emergency hospital has been preserved and continues to stand at the intersection of Baptist and Gulph Roads. To the west of the Inner Line and north of Mount Joy, the hamlet of Valley Forge is located. Here on the eastern bank of Valley Creek is preserved the two story stone house that was used by General Washington as his headquarters. Just to the south of Washington's headquarters stands what is known as the "bakehouse." A portion of the present structure was erected prior to 1768. At the time of the encampment there were several large bake ovens in cellar, but they have since been removed and the building now houses the park police. Further north on Gulph Road, General von Steuben's quarters have been restored by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

An additional feature of the encampment was General Sullivan's Bridge across the Schuylkill at what was known as the Fatland Ford. This bridge provided the Continental Army with its main avenue of access to the north. An outpost picket was stationed at this location as well. The bridge no longer remains, but its position is marked by a memorial stone.

All of these features are contained in the approximately 2,255-acre Valley Forge State Park, of which the boundaries are most readily apparent upon

(continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

☐ Pre-Columbian	☐ 16th Century	☒ 18th Century	☐ 20th Century
☐ 15th Century	☐ 17th Century	☐ 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) *(If Applicable and Known)* 12/1777-6/1778

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

Aboriginal	☐ Education	☐ Political	☐ Urban Planning
☐ Prehistoric	☐ Engineering	☐ Religion/Philosophy	☐ Other *(Specify)*
☐ Historic	☐ Industry	☐ Science	
☐ Agriculture	☐ Invention	☐ Sculpture	
☐ Architecture	☐ Landscape Architecture	☐ Social/Humanitarian	
☐ Art	☐ Literature	☐ Theater	
☐ Commerce	☒ Military	☐ Transportation	
☐ Communications	☐ Music		
☐ Conservation			

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

No name in American history conveys more of suffering, sacrifice, and triumph than Valley Forge. The bitter winter of 1777-1778 endured here by Washington's ragged, hungry troops saw the emergence of a real American Army, risen from the wreckage of the defeated force which staggered into the camp on December 19, 1777. The military training and discipline imposed at Valley Forge created a force which from that time on would meet its professional enemy on equal terms and at last defeat him.

Valley Forge State Park, embracing 2,300 acres on both sides of the Schuylkill River, includes extensive remains of major forts, miles of earthworks, the artillery park, Washington's headquarters house, quarters of other top officers and the Grand Parade Ground where von Steuben rebuilt the army and where news of the French alliance was announced on May 6, 1778. Owned by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Park is administered by the Valley Forge Park Commission. Outside the park boundaries, several of the houses used as general officers' quarters are maintained by private owners.

The Valley Forge encampment site is situated at Port Kennedy, in Montgomery and Chester Counties, Pennsylvania.

HISTORY

November 1777 found General Howe and the British forces securely settled in Philadelphia for the winter while General Washington and the Continental Army were camped in their thin field tents at Whitemarsh, five miles north of Philadelphia. With the capture of Philadelphia, the Continentals lost not only their capital city, but their largest supply center, and prospective winter quarters as well. Washington was faced with two alternatives, either recapture Philadelphia, or seek winter camp elsewhere. In view of the weakened and undersupplied condition of his troops, Washington determined to forego a major engagement and seek catonment instead. But where? The present site was dangerously close to Philadelphia and the camp was prone to harassment from British patrols. Field tents provided the only shelter, and the countryside was barren of provisions, already having been scoured by the British. Washington's staff offered a range of suggestions, including Wilmington, Bethlehem, and the countryside between Reading and Lancaster. These locations were dropped from consideration upon the issuance of a warning by the Pennsylvania Supreme

(continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Roy Appleman, "Historical Report on Valley Forge Proposed National Park Area," (Washington, 1938).

Gilbert Jones, Valley Forge Park; An Historical Record and Guide Book, (Philadelphia, 1942).

Howard Peckham, The War For Independence, A Military History, (Chicago, 1959).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY

CORNER	LATITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds	LONGITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds
NW	UTM 18.458330.4439660	° ' "
NE	18.464320.4440380	° ' "
SE	18.464710.4437630	° ' "
SW	18.460460.4435460	° ' "

OR

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES

LATITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds	LONGITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds
° ' "	° ' "

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2,515 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Pennsylvania	42	Chester	29
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Richard Greenwood, Survey Historian, Landmark Review Task Force

ORGANIZATION: Historic Sites Survey, Landmark Review Project

DATE: 11/5/74

STREET AND NUMBER: 1100 L Street

CITY OR TOWN: Washington

STATE: D.C.

CODE: 11

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☐

Name (NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Title

Date (NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date (NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date

Landmark Designated: Jan. 20, 1961 date

Certified: Chief, Hist. & Arch. Surveys 10-8-75 date

Boundary Affirmed: Director, OAHP 10/10/75 date

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

☆ U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1973-729-147/1442 3-1

7. Description: (1) Valley Forge State Park

the inspection of the enclosed map. Within its boundaries, the park is crossed by four major roads; Gulph Road, Baptist Road, Valley Road, and Pennsylvania Route 363. In addition to these thoroughfares, there are two park drives, the Inner and Outer Line Drives, that closely parallel the original lines of defense. The Reading Railroad maintains a right-of-way for 2,320 yards through the northern end of the part, parallel to the river, and then runs approximately 2,100 yards further, between the park and the river. The largest single intrusion in the park is created by a magnesium manufacturing plant and its quarries which occupy approximately 70 acres to the east of the Grand Parade. Other intrusions are of a commemorative or recreational nature. These include; the Washington Memorial Chapel and Museum on Route 363, the Memorial Arch and other monuments and statues on the Outer Line Drive, the 125' observation tower on the summit of Mount Joy, as well as the park headquarters, and the various picnic groves. Aside from these intrusions, the park lands have been maintained as open fields and wooded hillsides.

Outside of the park lands, and outside of the bounds of the original encampment are located many of the farmhouses that were tenated by Washington's general officers. While some of these houses have been destroyed and some have had their integrity damaged, to the southwest of the encampment, there are four of these original houses, that served as the quarters for Lord Stirling, Lafayette, Lee and Bradford, and Duportail and Woodford. These houses are typical of the early farmhouses of the area, ranging from two to two-and-a half stories, built of stuccoed stone, and all with later additions or renovations. Although separated from the park by the Pennsylvania Turnpike, the Lee-Bradford Quarters and the Woodford-Duportail Quarters are accessible via the Wilson Road underpass, and all four properties are located on lands that are still in the farmland and woodland state in which the Continental Army discovered them.

BOUNDARIES

The historic landmark consists of two parcels of land separated by the Schuylkill River. The southern parcel is bounded on the northwest, north, east, and southeast sides by the boundaries of Valley Forge State Park. In the southwest corner, the rectangular extension is bounded as follows: beginning at the western intersection of Baptist Road and the southern boundary of the park, proceed SE along the western curb of Baptist Road for 1625', thence SW in a straight line, passing through the dirt road connecting the Duportail-Woodford Quarters with Wilson Road, for 6500', thence NW in a straight line for 5125', running through the first road leading north off of Yellow Springs Road beyond the western park boundary, thence NE 3250' in a straight line to the point of intersection with the projecting angle formed by the park boundaries. At this point the landmark boundary resumes following the park boundary. The second parcel of land, north of the river, is enclosed by the state park boundaries. (continued)

7. Description: (2) Valley Forge State Park

JUSTIFICATION

Within the historic landmark, the Valley Forge State Park encompasses approximately all of the historic encampment with the exception of the majority of the general officers' quarters. In the southwest quadrant, outside the park boundaries are included the four houses where Lord Stirling, Lafayette, Lee and Bradford, and Duportail and Woodford were quartered. This enclosed land also provides (from within the camp grounds) the sole remaining vista of the surrounding countryside in the rural state as the Continental Army viewed it.

8. Statement of Significance: (1) Valley Forge State Park

Executive Council, holding session in Lancaster, that the colony would withdraw its men, supplies, and financial aid if the Continental Army did not remain encamped close by Philadelphia. Deterred by the threat of the dissolution of the united colonial front, Washington and his officers decided upon Valley Forge, a small hamlet twenty-five miles west of Philadelphia that was both geographically defensible and close enough to Philadelphia so that Washington could keep the British under surveillance.

The march from Whitemarsh to Valley Forge was delayed by a series of skirmishes and it was not until December 11 that the army began its march. The weather was snowy, and many of the troops were shoeless, shirtless, or similarly ill-clad, and sickness took a heavy toll among the ranks. The eleven thousand men labored eight days to complete the fifteen mile march. Upon their arrival they set about constructing their huts along the specifications issued by Washington himself which stated:

> The Soldiers Hutts are to be made of the following dimensions Viz. 14x16 each sides, Ends and Roofs made of Logs, and the Roofs made tight with Split Slabs, or in some other way, the sides made tight with Clay, Fireplace made of wood and secured with Clay on the inside 18 inches thick, this fireplace to be in the rear of the Hutt. The door to be in the end next the Street. The door to be made of Split Oak Slabs unless boards can be procured. Side walls to be 6 1/3 feet high. The Officers Hutts to form a line in the Rear of the Troops, one Hutt to be allowed to each General Officer, one to the Staff of each Division, one to the Staff of each Brigade, one to the Field Officers of each Regiment, one to the Commiss'd Officers of two companys, one to every Non-commiss'd Officers and Soldiers.[1]

The approximately nine hundred huts were laid out in strict military fashion according to brigade, one company streets, within the lines of fortifications.

The encampment and fortifications had been laid out by Brigadier General Louis L. Duportail, a twenty-six-year-old Frenchman, attached to Lord Stirling's Artificers (Engineers). Utilizing the natural defenses offered by the Schuylkill River to the north and Mount Joy to the west, Duportail supervised the construction of both an inner and outer line of defense. The Inner Line of earthworks formed a semicircle stretching from the northwest to the southeast following a ridgeline. The earthworks were supplemented from north to south by the Star Redoubt, Fort Huntingdon, and Fort

[1] George Washington, quoted by Gilbert S. Jones, Valley Forge Park; An Historical Record and Guide Book, p. 13.

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8. Statement of Significance: (2) Valley Forge State Park

Washington, each flanked by artillery redans. Just forward of the Inner Line an abatis of sharply pointed rails, timbers and saplings was erected, further strengthening the Inner Line. Within the earthworks, running roughly parallel to them, was the Inner Line of entrenchments, originally four feet in depth, with the outer wall sloping to a trench six feet wide.

To the east of the Inner Line stretched the Outer Line of defense which ran roughly east to west with parallel lines of earthworks and trenches and two redoubts at its eastern terminus.

The area bounded by the lines of defense contained the bulk of the encampment. The soldiers' and officers' huts were located directly behind their brigade's position in the trenches, and the artillerymen's quarters were adjoining the artillery park, below Fort Washington.

The Grand Parade was situated on the plain just south of the Star Redoubt. Here perhaps the greatest achievement at Valley Forge was accomplished by Baron von Steuben, the newly-appointed Inspector-General who drilled the ragged Continentals in the fundamentals of soldiering.

By Christmas Eve, the majority of the huts had been completed, and Washington moved from his marquee on the open plain into the small stone house on the bank of Valley Creek. His general officers took up residence with many of the local families in the surrounding countryside. However, the comfort of shelter did not lessen the other miseries that beset the army. Lack of clothing and food contributed to a rampant outbreak of disease. Brigade hospital huts had to be built. More than 2,500 men died.

In desperation, Washington was forced to maintain strict discipline among his troops and among the local farmers who favored British gold over Continental paper in return for their produce. Nonetheless, morale and endurance continued at a high level. In Washington's words:

> Without arrogance or the smallest deviation from truth, it may be said that no history now extant can furnish an instance of an army's suffering such uncommon hardships as ours have done, and bearing them with the same patience and fortitude. To see men without clothes to cover their nakedness, without blankets to lie on, without shoes, for want of which their marches might be traced by the blood from their feet, and almost as often without provisions as with them, marching through the frost and snow, and at Christmas taking up their winter quarters within a day's march of the enemy, without a house or a hut to cover them till they could be

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built, is a proof of patience and obedience which in my opinion can scarce be paralleled.[2]

In late February, the tide of good fortune began to turn for the Continentals, with the arrival of Baron von Steuben. Von Steuben had been a professional soldier in the army of Fredrick the Great and had been persuaded to join the American cause. With Washington's backing, he was appointed Inspector-General by the Continental Congress, and he began at once to drill the troops at Valley Forge, starting with Washington's Life Guard and then proceeding, unit by unit. Under his instruction, and following his simplified manual, the ragged troops began to develop into the trained soldiers who would eventually defeat the British.

On March twenty-third Washington made a second fortuitous revision in his staff. After dismissing Thomas Mifflin from his post as Quartermaster General, he appointed Nathanael Greene in his place. Greene proved considerably able in scouring the countryside and maintaining a relatively steady stream of supplies into the camp.

Despite the severe hardships, and the heavy toll taken by deprivation and disease, when spring arrived in Valley Forge, the Continental Army was not only intact, but well-trained, well-disciplined, and possessed of a strong morale. The announcement of the French alliance on May fifth prompted a day of celebration on the Grand Parade, while in Philadelphia Sir Henry Clinton, Lord Howe's replacement, pondered the significance of France's entry into the war.

A major revision in strategy was called for. The British decided to evacuate Philadelphia and to return to New York, with the better part of the army traveling by land. On June eighteenth Clinton set off along the Delaware River for New York, with Washington keeping a tight watch. Some troops were dispatched from Valley Forge to reoccupy Philadelphia and the rest of camp was mobilized and set out after the British on the following day. One week later, on the twenty-eighth, the armies met at Monmouth, New Jersey, and though the outcome was indecisive, the Continentals had held their ground in the longest sustained battle of the war. The trial at Valley Forge had borne its fruit.

[2] Ibid., p. 15.