

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Multiple Property Documentation Form**

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*ECF*

*MAR 22 2002*

This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

New Submission     Amended Submission

**A. Name of Multiple Property Listing**

**Rochambeau's Army in Connecticut, 1780-1782**

**B. Associated Historic Contexts**

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

Military History of Connecticut, Colonial Period

**C. Form Prepared by**

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organization Public Archaeology Survey Team, Inc. date October 22, 2001

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**D. Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation. (□ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*John W. Shannahan* March 21, 2002  
 Signature and title of certifying official Date  
 John W. Shannahan, Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

*John D. Sase* 5/6/02  
 Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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### **E. Statement of Historic Contexts**

(If more than one historic context is documented, present them in sequential order.)

The properties included in this nomination are significant for their association with an important event in our national history: the pivotal role the French played, as American allies, in achieving victory in the American Revolution. All of the properties, including standing structures, archaeological remains of camp sites, and vestigial march route remnants, contribute to an understanding and an appreciation of this historical event.

In its identification of historic contexts within which to evaluate the state's resources, the Connecticut Historical Commission includes Military History, the history of systems of defending the territory and sovereignty of a people, as one of seven broad-brush themes or research fields encompassing areas of significant human activity. The Colonial Period, c.1614-c.1780, is one of four chronological divisions for assessing the Connecticut's cultural heritage (Poirier and Donahue 1990: 80-81). In each of that agency's geographical context reports, the American Revolution is treated as the final historical sub-theme within the Colonial Period (see Section I, Bibliography, Planning Documents). Because the activities associated with the French march occurred in four of the state's six geographical areas and involved the participation of state-government officials, the spatial component of the historic context is the state as a whole.

### Historical Background

In 1780 France assembled an auxiliary army of 10,000 troops for the purpose of providing much-needed assistance to the Americans in their war for independence against the British. Known as the Expeditionary Corps, the French auxiliary army was commanded by Jean Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, le Comte de Rochambeau. The 10,000 troops were comprised of six regiments—the Bourbonnais, Royal Deux-Ponts, Soissonais, Saintonge, Neustrie and Anhalt—plus Lauzun's Legion of Hussars and artillery detachments. Collected in Brest for departure in May, the Neustrie and Anhalt Regiments and 200-300 of Lauzun's Legion had to be left behind in France because of a shortage of transport ships. France was involved in its own war with the British at that time; its resources—money, ships, supplies, and men—were stretched thin, and it was embattled. The four regiments and attachments, some 6000 men, barely made it out of the harbor, nearly intercepted by British forces. The remaining troops were expected to follow as soon as transports became available, but France was never able to send this “Second Division” to America.

Sailing on 25-30 transports, escorted by nine warships, the Expeditionary Corps left Brest on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1780. On the ships were 5,000 troops from the Bourbonnais, Royal Deux-Ponts, Soissonais, and Saintonge Regiments, 500 men in the Auxonne Artillery Regiment, and 600 men of Lauzun's Legion (Blanchard 1969: 2). After a difficult Atlantic crossing during which numerous soldiers died and hundreds became seriously ill with scurvy, the French fleet anchored off of Newport, Rhode Island, on July 11<sup>th</sup>, 1780. It took several days for the disembarkation of troops, artillery, and supplies, during which time a large English fleet

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appeared in the harbor. The French were very vulnerable at this time: large numbers of soldiers were so ill they had to be hospitalized and others were in no condition to fight, the artillery had yet to be unloaded, and shore batteries had to be constructed. The English, however, failed to take advantage of their opportunity and Rochambeau rapidly secured a stronghold at Newport. Expecting the "Second Division" to arrive and awaiting instructions from General George Washington, commander of the American army, Rochambeau's troops encamped on the Rhode Island coast for the summer and fall, with the officers staying in private homes. In November all of the troops except for part of Lauzun's Legion were moved to winter quarters in the abandoned houses of Newport, which had been sacked by the British prior to the French arrival. The 400 cavalymen of Lauzun's Legion were sent to winter in Lebanon, Connecticut, a rural area where horse forage was readily and more economically available.

In May of 1781, General Washington and Rochambeau met at Joseph Webb's house in Wethersfield, Connecticut, and agreed that time was of the essence if they were to have the advantage of the participation of the French fleet. Consequently, Washington asked the French Army to join his forces in New York, at which point a plan of attack upon the British would be chosen and executed. The Expeditionary Corps left Newport on June 10<sup>th</sup>, proceeding first to Providence, then west through Connecticut to the Hudson River valley. In New York, Washington decided to attack the British in Yorktown, Virginia, and therefore the combined French-American army marched south from there.

In Providence the French formed into four equal contingents, each comprised of one regiment, with the field artillery and baggage trains among them, and each with a field hospital (Béville, in Rice and Brown 1972). The regiments marched separately, along the same line of march, leaving on successive days. A day's march averaged 15 miles and each night a division would occupy the same campsite which the previous division had left that morning (in general each division occupied a camp only one night). Lauzun's Legion traveled independently on a separate route to the south as a left flank to protect the army from British attack. Rochambeau and his aides lodged in inns and private homes, and divisional headquarters were also established in houses. The troops camped in tents in fields.

The army was primarily composed of infantry soldiers, along with significant numbers of artillery men and field pieces. In addition to these combat components, the army included numerous people who performed special services: musicians to play marching songs; surgeons and medical corpsmen, who established hospitals at several locations and cared for the troops en route; craftsmen such as tailors, harness makers, and blacksmiths to maintain the equipment; axe-men to clear vegetation from the roads in advance of the main column; cooks, some of whom were American women; and drivers who had charge of the hundreds of supply wagons. In addition to Lauzun's Legion of mounted Hussars traveling separately along the southern flank, the main column also had mounted units of chasseurs and grenadiers who acted as scouts and manned advance-warning positions as the army approached British-held territory. There were at least a few women and children in the entourage, as evidenced by an unpleasant encounter with a childless Connecticut clergyman who offered to compensate a grenadier and his wife if they would give up their

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daughter for adoption. Although mostly a French army, the ranks included the citizens of other nations as well. There were a number of men of Irish descent among Lauzun's horsemen, including his second-in-command, Robert Dillon, and one regiment, the Royal Deux-Ponts, was entirely made up of German soldiers in the service of the French king. In the record paintings of the siege of Yorktown, completed in France 1784-1786 by Louis-Nicolas van Blarenbergh, an official military artist, at least one participant, a medical corpsman, is shown as a person of African descent; Troiani states that the expeditionary forces included Black soldiers from the French West Indies.

The first division, the Bourbonnais, left Providence on June 18<sup>th</sup>, the Royal Deux-Ponts on the 19<sup>th</sup>, the Soissonais on the 20<sup>th</sup>, and the Saintonge on the 21<sup>st</sup>. Providence was considered the first camp. The second was at Waterman's Tavern in Coventry, Rhode Island. The third camp was in Plainfield, Connecticut, the fourth in Windham, and the fifth in Bolton Center, each a one-night stay. The army then moved to East Hartford, where each division stayed two days to rest and make repairs to the supply and artillery wagons damaged by the rough roads. After crossing the Connecticut River in ferry boats, the army camped in Farmington, the seventh stop. The eighth camp was at Barne's Tavern in Marion, a part of Southington, and Break Neck in Middlebury formed the ninth encampment. After one-night stays at these locations, the army proceeded to Newtown, the tenth camp, at which it stayed several days. The last camp in Connecticut was in Ridgebury, part of Ridgefield, from which the army marched into New York and joined the American forces and Lauzun's Legion.

In October of 1781 the combined French-American forces defeated the British in the battle of Yorktown. The addition of the French Army, which doubled Washington's available men, and the perfectly timed arrival of a French naval fleet from the West Indies under Admiral de Grasse, made the victory possible. In addition to providing needed manpower in the form of infantry units and marines landed from de Grasse's ships, the French contribution was vital in limiting the participation of the British fleet, which was unable to land its own marines or bombard American positions; in disrupting the British defenses with their field pieces and siege guns; and in providing the expertise of the French military engineers, who planned the siege, organized the construction of trenches, redoubts, and other works, and calculated a pattern of firing lines for the artillery.

Following the British capitulation on October 19, 1781, the French navy departed and Rochambeau's army wintered in Virginia. The following summer the army began the long return march to Boston, from which it would embark for duty in the West Indies. The troops returned along the same route they had traveled in 1781, generally staying at the same campsites. The army was forced to slow its return march because the transports were not ready to sail, and it did not reach Connecticut until October of 1782. The first Connecticut camp location on the return trip was in Danbury (Camp # 40), a new site. The second (# 41) was in Newtown, in the same general vicinity as the previous year's camp. The third (# 42) was at the old Break Neck camp in Middlebury, and the fourth (# 43) was a revisit to Barne's Tavern in Southington. The army then returned to the Farmington camp (# 44) and East Hartford camp (# 45), before continuing on to a new camp location (# 46) in Andover (then a part of Bolton). Proceeding onward to Windham, the army

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camped at a new location (# 47). The last two stops in Connecticut were at new campsites in Canterbury and Sterling Hill (#s 48 and 49).

Connecticut's role in supporting Rochambeau's expedition was a large one that went well beyond simply allowing the column to pass through the state. Connecticut patriots such as Jonathan and Joseph Trumbull, Henry Champion, and Jeremiah Wadsworth were instrumental in arranging for the acquisition of draft animals, food, and other supplies for both the American and French armies, earning Connecticut the name "the Provisions State." Both civil and military officials participated in important strategic meetings held in Wethersfield, Hartford, and Lebanon, and the hostility of shoreline communities helped prevent the British from establishing a land presence from Long Island Sound, despite raids that ruined settlements in Danbury, Greenwich, East Haven, Fairfield, and New London. Finally, local historical traditions in a number of Connecticut towns assert that some young men, impressed with the size and scope of the French movement, enlisted as combatants and traveled with the French to Yorktown.

In addition to its military significance, the French march through Connecticut engendered a host of cultural and social encounters that left their mark on both sides. Local citizens flocked to see the spectacle of the French column, alive with martial music and sometimes stretching out from horizon to horizon. People came by the hundreds to visit the camps, both to hear musical programs put on by the French musicians and to trade their local produce for French silver. Local notables entertained the officers in their homes, while other officers visited local taverns. Officers were lodged overnight in private homes and inns as conditions allowed, furthering the social interaction between the French and local families. For their part, the journals kept by the French show them to have been interested, and often surprised, by their meetings with Americans. Their position as European noblemen made them see most Americans' houses as rather poor habitations, and they found many Americans as unsuitably tight-fisted in their dealings. Although to a man they deplored the conditions of Connecticut roads, they regarded the countryside as beautiful and intelligently cultivated. Imbued perhaps with the ideals of the Enlightenment, most were complimentary regarding the middling economic level seemingly enjoyed by most Americans, and they admired the plain and forthright conversation of their Connecticut hosts. Although many journal entries celebrated the physical charms of the American women they encountered en route, they also remarked on the independence of American women compared with their counterparts in rural European society and their willingness to initiate conversation with foreigners.

Research Potential

The role the French auxiliary army played in helping America win its independence is not widely known by the public, yet historians agree that France's generous assistance, in the form of men, expertise, supplies, money and tactical strategy, made victory possible. Some excellent volumes on the French contribution in the American Revolution have been produced (e.g., Bonsal 1945, Chartrand 1984, Forbes and Cadman 1925, Kennett 1977, Rice and Brown 1972, Stone 1884), but they all present information on a large scale which

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deals more with big events and global politics. Little is written on the French influence and impact, on a more intimate level, in America. There is barely any cohesive understanding of the experience of the French soldiers and officers here, and even less of a grasp on their interaction with and effect upon the American people whose homes and fields they stayed in or near as they moved on toward Yorktown. How did these Frenchmen, recent enemies of Americans, view Americans? What was life like on the march and in the camps? Historical and archaeological research of the campsites, structures and route remnants can help answer these and other historically significant questions. Several French officers and one enlisted man left diaries of their experience in America and from these can be gleaned important information. Combined with archaeological data, the historical record helps shed light on patterns of camp placement, camp formation, life on the march and in the camps, and cultural differences between French and Americans.

The Bolton campsite is a good example of the small but important details to be learned from the historical and archaeological data. The journals are consistent in describing the road to the campsite as “frightful” and difficult (Bourg 1880: 293; Clermont-Crèvecoeur, in Rice and Brown 1972, I: 28-29; Cloisen 1958: 85). The Bourbonnais regiment had to sleep in “bivouacs,” make-do sleeping arrangements in lieu of tents, because their supply wagons were too late in arriving, slowed by the poor roads (Clermont-Crèvecoeur, in Rice and Brown 1972, I: 28-29). General Bévillie, in planning the Bolton campsite, noted that a “small stream” ran nearby and that the wells of nearby houses would provide additional water (Rice and Brown 1972 (II): 11-12).

Clermont-Crèvecoeur noted that the French entertained the local population on the Bolton Green in the evening, the soldiers playing music and dancing with Bolton's female residents; he also added a note that at every camp the local people came, listened to music, danced, and brought food and other items to sell to the soldiers (Rice and Brown 1972: I, 28-29).

These brief accounts, relative to the Fifth Camp, are revealing: they demonstrate that the road conditions made the march an exhausting endeavor, yet the soldiers still engaged in nightly social and commercial relations with the local population. Americans and French came to learn a bit of each other's customs, cash-starved Americans made a little money selling goods to the French, and the French obtained American-made items on the march. The accounts also document the presence of some wives and children among the troops; and they give evidence of the marginality of the nearby stream (it was necessary to supplement the stream with well water), which may be one reason the Fifth Campsite was bypassed on the return march.

The archaeological data from the campsite can provide information that the journal accounts do not address. Because most of the diary accounts were written by officers who did not stay with the troops at the campsites, there is virtually no information about how the camps were organized internally. Oblique references in the journals indicate a more relaxed organization at the campsites farthest from the Connecticut/New York border, enemy territory. At Windham, the Fourth Camp, for example, Clermont-Crèvecoeur recorded camping “very comfortably, although hardly militarily” (Rice and Brown 1972: I,

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280). Von Closen, also describing Windham, wrote, "As we are still far from the enemy, we occupy camps only for convenience, and the distribution of forage, bread, meat, and wood ordinarily is made in front of the camp" (Closen 1958: 85). By the time the Expeditionary Corps reached Newtown, in western Connecticut, the camps had assumed a "more military" formation; unfortunately, it is not known what this means beyond detaching grenadier and chasseur units and stationing them outside of the camps. There is no documentation of the layouts of either the relaxed or "on guard" camp formations. Careful archaeological investigation of the Fifth Camp may provide conclusive evidence of different activity areas at a "relaxed" campsite. Artifact patterns may be revealed, for example, that indicate separate butchering or trash disposal areas or even regiment segregation. There may be separate blacksmith repair areas or wagon train loci that would be evidenced by archaeological remains. So little is known about these short-term encampments, and so little is forthcoming from the primary accounts, that any new data is important. Current knowledge of Revolutionary War campsites is limited to long-term winter encampments (e.g., Starbuck 1999); the internal structures and operation of expedient march camps are a mystery.

Other areas of research value include the standing structures associated with the march and the vestigial route segments. The standing structures were visited by officers, not common soldiers, and not only evoke the event by their period appearance, but the officer journal accounts often elucidate the various cross-cultural encounters and other experiences at the structures. The same is true for the vestigial road segments; documented by the French officers, some of the descriptions provide vivid details of the march experience that can be imagined today when one visits the road remnant. Visiting the vestigial portion of Break Neck Hill Road, now a rough, barely visible steep path through woods, one can easily appreciate the officers' descriptions of the wagons breaking down, forcing the replacement of horses with oxen, and DuBourg's observation that Break Neck "well deserves the name from its difficult approach" (Bourg 1880: 295).

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### F. Associated Property Types

(Provide description, significance, and registration requirements.)

**Name of property type: BUILDINGS ASSOCIATED WITH THE FRENCH ARMY IN CONNECTICUT**

#### **Description:**

Buildings associated with the French army's presence in Connecticut include 1) homes and taverns where the French were entertained or where officers were quartered, located on or near the route of the march, and 2) places where Washington, Rochambeau, and other commanders met to plan upcoming military actions. Whether homes or taverns, these are of a domestic scale and appearance, often the typical five-bay, center-chimney, gable-roofed clapboarded house that is one of the most common forms of colonial New England vernacular domestic architecture. Varying from this generalization are those houses which exhibit the more up-to-date two-chimney, center-hall plan or even the hip-roofed form of formal Georgian-detailed architecture. Reflecting the house siting practice of the period, the buildings generally are located close to the road, with their ridge lines parallel to the road and their main entry on the broad side of the house. One identified member of this group is not a dwelling: the War Office, the Joseph Trumbull family store in Lebanon, which was used for meetings during the Revolution among the Governor, Council of Safety, and various military commanders, including Washington and the French (already individually listed on the National Register).

The boundary for members of this property type will generally include a limited setting for the building itself, along with any outbuildings and landscape features that help convey its character. Relevant landscape features may include historic fences, open fields, orchards, gardens, and stone walls in the immediate vicinity of the building. Since many of the buildings of this property type were historically farm residences (including taverns that also served as the keeper's residence) and were located in the countryside, agricultural outbuildings from later periods may be part of an appropriate setting, since they help to convey the nature of the property as a rural dwelling.

#### **Significance:**

The French march was not only a military maneuver but also, for the numerous small towns and villages along its route, a major social event. The French troops, particularly the officers, were entertained at taverns and private houses along the route, and these encounters made a lasting impression on both parties. The houses that remain that can be firmly identified as these meeting spots are significant for recalling the social impact that the French movements had on Connecticut communities. Other buildings are significant because they are known to have been used for quartering officers. Wherever there were houses nearby, the army arranged to have some of the officers eat and sleep in private homes rather than camp in the fields. Reflecting French

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social divisions that carried over into military life, the special accommodations for officers ranged from ordinary inns and homes to Redwood, the Trumbull estate in Lebanon where Lauzun himself had his winter quarters. Finally, a few buildings, such as the Webb House in Wethersfield, are significant because they served as the meeting place for important strategic conferences among Rochambeau, Washington, and other leaders of the Revolutionary forces. These buildings are eligible primarily under Criterion A, for their associations with the event itself, although they may well have other characteristics, such as typical or outstanding architectural features, that would make them eligible under Criterion C as well.

**Registration requirements:**

In order to be included as a member, examples of this property type should meet the following criteria:

1) direct association with an important activity connected with French military operations, such as quarters for officers during the march, a place of entertainment patronized by the French, or a conference place for the commanders; 2) credible evidence for this association in the form of mention in a participant's journal, contemporary account, or an early and detailed oral tradition recorded in a secondary history; 3) integrity of location, design, setting, and materials sufficient to substantiate their identity as 18th-century buildings present at the time of the French march. Because there is such a strong locational aspect to the historical events, buildings that have been moved from their original location near or adjacent to the march routes will probably not qualify. In order to be recognizable as 18th-century buildings that played a role in the event, buildings will retain their characteristic form and roofline, with later additions confined to side and rear elevations and of such a size and scale that they do not overpower the part of the building that was present at the time of the event. At least two of the following should be present: appropriate siding material, such as clapboards; small-pane divided sash in the windows; original chimney configuration, typically a large center chimney; and period interior detail such as fireplaces, wide-board floors, and paneling.

A number of examples of this property type have already been individually listed on the National Register:

**Daniel White Tavern**, Andover, Connecticut. Built in 1773, the clapboarded house is of five-bay form, with a center-hall plan and two brick chimneys. The Georgian entry treatment features fluted pilasters and a pulvinated frieze. Extensive original interior paneling remains. The local tradition that this was a place of entertainment for the French was written down as early as 1888, and a letter to Washington from Chastellux specifically mentions the tavern. The French route map also indicates a tavern at this location.

**John Trumbull Birthplace** (Governor Jonathan Trumbull House), Lebanon, Connecticut. Built about 1740, the house is of the traditional center-chimney, five-bay form, but with Georgian pediments over the windows and pilasters flanking the center entry. The interior retains period paneling. The house was the home of Connecticut's war-time governor, Jonathan Trumbull, during

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which time Rochambeau, Lauzun, and many other Revolutionary War figures met with him here. It was moved about 1830 from its original site on the neighboring property to the south. The house, the birthplace of famed painter John Trumbull, is a National Historic Landmark.

**War Office** (Joseph Trumbull Store and Office), Lebanon, Connecticut. The War Office is a small 1 ½ story gambrel-roofed building, built c.1758, that served as the regular meeting place of the Connecticut Council of Safety, under the leadership of Governor Jonathan Trumbull. The building has been moved twice, both times only a short distance.

**William Williams House**, Lebanon, Connecticut. The house, built about 1754, has a clapboarded exterior, six-over-six sash, and the typical five-bay form of the period. The recessed entry, sidelights, and pilaster-and-lintel surround are early 19th-century alterations. The original center chimney was removed about the same time. The home of William Williams, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, the house is a National Historic Landmark. During the winter of 1780, it was assigned to Robert Dillon, Lauzun's second-in-command, as his quarters.

**Josiah Bronson House**, Middlebury, Connecticut. Located on Breakneck Hill, the house served as a tavern and inn and was patronized by French officers during both the forward and return march.

**Joseph Webb House**, Wethersfield, Connecticut. The clapboarded, gambrel-roofed house, built in 1752, has a center-hall plan, two brick chimneys, and an interior with an original Georgian stairway and paneling. It was the site of a critical conference in May of 1781, in which Washington and Rochambeau agreed to begin an immediate combined offensive. The building is a National Historic Landmark.

Although it is believed that the methodology described in this document has identified all the currently known members of the property type, additional members may be identified in the future if additional research establishes a credible association with the French army for a property not previously recognized or for which the attribution was weak.

**Name of property type:** **ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: ENCAMPMENTS OF THE FRENCH ARMY IN CONNECTICUT**

**Description:**

The places chosen as camp grounds for the army were generally large open fields, reasonably level if not flat, well-drained, and with a reliable source of fresh water nearby. Usually, but not always, the encampments

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were adjacent to the march road. Frequently part of the army occupied one site, while another component (often the artillery) was located across the road or even a mile away.

The present-day condition of the French camp sites varies widely. Some lie within heavily built urban residential, commercial, and industrial areas, while others are now occupied by suburban residential development. Fewer than one third remain in an open, undeveloped state. Archaeological testing has confirmed that a number of the camp sites, particularly among those that have remained undeveloped, will yield important artifacts associated with the French march throughout most if not all of their several-acre extent as shown on the historical camp maps. Diagnostic regimental buttons, French musket balls, scabbard parts, cannon decorations, draft animal shoes and harness parts, period coins, gun flints, and domestic items have been recovered at these sites. The same testing has shown other sites to have been substantially disturbed by the flooding and erosion of nearby watercourses, by later grading and fill episodes, and by the construction of nearby rail lines and roads in the middle of the 19th century; these probably lack the integrity needed to qualify for listing under Criterion D, the ability to yield important information.

The boundary for members of this property type will be limited to an area that retains or is likely to retain its information potential under Criterion D. Archaeological sites that also have visual qualities that give them strong associative characteristics under Criterion A may have their boundary expanded to include the area that retains the relevant visual qualities, up to the extent of the camp as defined by the outline on the French maps.

Many of the encampments include multiple discontinuous components, such as the placement of infantry units on one side of the road and the artillery on the other. Because not all of the components may be available for archaeological testing at the same time, the boundary for any given member of this property type may be drawn to include one or more components of a multi-component camp.

**Significance:**

The archaeological sites that are member properties of this group are significant under Criterion D. They have already yielded or have the potential to yield information important in understanding the following research topics:

- Virtually all documented archaeological research at 18<sup>th</sup>-century military campsites has been conducted at long-term encampments which include semipermanent structures and features and a high density of artifacts. For this type of encampment, such as a winter campsite complete with huts and bake ovens, a fair amount is known about their internal configuration. But for ephemeral one-night encampments, such as those used by the French army, there is virtually no archaeological or historical documentation. No detailed descriptions or diagrams of the campsite set-ups exist. French soldier accounts offer no substantive information regarding campsite structure, not surprising, since they

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were nearly all written by officers, who did not stay in the camps. The primary accounts do indicate, however, that the soldiers camped "casually" in eastern and central Connecticut on the forward march, adopting a "more military" character only when they reached Newtown, the edge of the British-held territory. Clearly, then, there were two different camp styles. Intensive archaeological investigation of a sample of the camp sites could determine the different configurations of the "casual" and "military" camps. There may have been specific arrangements of tent and hearth placement, cooking or butchering areas, holding areas for animals, blacksmithing loci, or medical areas.

- Although we know the four regiments that marched across Connecticut and can identify their presence by their regiment-numbered buttons, the finding of additional regiment buttons offers information on the addition of replacements or possibly the integration of soldiers into regiments without time to order new uniforms to match the new regiment. The buttons offer insight into the actual composition of the regiments.
- Excavation could yield insight into the everyday experiences of the common French soldiers, who left virtually no written records. Dietary information is possible, as is data on how they passed time (e.g., gaming tokens would indicate leisure activities and ball and shot-making would indicate military preparation).
- Development of a testing methodology to obtain the archaeological data necessary for addressing the above research issues is itself a formidable research question. Because the camps were so ephemeral, the vast majority of ground disturbance by the French troops was probably limited to the surface or a few inches below. Cooking hearths were likely very shallow. Many of the extant camp sites have been plowed for generations, likely obliterating hearth evidence. In order to obtain a sufficient sample of artifacts to ascertain internal camp configurations, the ideal site would be wooded and less damaged by plowing; but a wooded site presents practical difficulties. Testing would have to include a combination of intensive metal-detecting and standard excavation units; but because some loci may be very small, the only way to conclusively identify the camp contents is to excavate 100% of the site. Stripping is not a viable option since most if not all artifacts will be in the plow zone.

In addition to the artifactual data categories already mentioned, the camp sites may yield important situational or feature-related data. The physical extent of the camps can be correlated with the number of simultaneous occupants, providing a sense of the density of occupation. Limits to the degree of slope or the distance from fresh water can be inferred from studying the entire set of camps. Features such as individual fires, bake-ovens, and special-activity areas can be expected at the camps.

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Some of the camp sites can also be expected to have significance under Criterion A. These have retained their historic character as open fields and are important because they convey a sense of the landscape as it was encountered by the French at the time of their march.

### Registration requirements:

In order to be an eligible member of this property type, a camp site must 1) be positively identified as to its location in terms of modern topography; 2) retain substantial portions of its original extent in an undisturbed state, with meaningful stratigraphy; and 3) have yielded some or all of the diagnostic artifactual material that confirms both its identity as a French encampment and its ability to yield important information. Although not a requirement for inclusion, some members of this property type will also have significance under Criterion A because in their visual qualities they recall the appearance of the site as encountered by the French army. These members will, in addition to the requirements discussed above, retain their historical appearance as open fields, with a minimum of modern construction visible nearby. The presence of small streams, stone walls, and period houses nearby will enhance their visual qualities and thereby their associative significance under Criterion A.

There is one example of this property type already individually listed on the National Register:

**Fifth Camp of Rochambeau's Infantry** (Site No. 12-25), Bolton, Connecticut. The site is an open field that retains its visual qualities, with stone walls marking the same field lines as shown on the map prepared by the French engineers. The camp was occupied for four nights in a row, one night by each regiment, in June, 1781. A large number of artifacts have been recovered to date, including numbered regimental buttons, .66 caliber musket balls, buckles, period coins, and a lead bar.

In addition to the members of the property type being nominated as a result of the survey methodology described herein, additional members may be expected in the future: some camp sites that could not be tested because owner permission was denied or not received in a timely manner may be tested at a later date and found to meet the listing requirements. Camp sites in developed areas that were problematical to test with metal-detecting technology (for example, those that are paved) might be found to have meaningful intact subsurface remains if circumstances allow them to be tested with other techniques.

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**Name of property type:      ROAD SEGMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE MARCHES OF THE  
   FRENCH ARMY IN CONNECTICUT**

### **Description:**

Much of the route traversed by the French forces in 1781 and 1782 has been incorporated into one or more subsequent episodes of highway improvement, including early 19th-century turnpikes, city streets, busy state two-lane roads, and even limited-access interstate highways. As a consequence, they would be hardly recognizable today to the French soldier transported forward in time. While they may have commemorative value as the route of the march, most of these parts of the route lack the integrity of design, materials, and setting needed to convey an association with the historical event.

A few segments, however, retain something of the appearance they must have had at the time of the march. Many of these route segments are low-volume paved roads that once were part of the main route but now have been by-passed by a new alignment. Others have been completely abandoned and appear as wood roads through areas that have become overgrown with forests. Defining characteristics include a narrow width, a hilly and winding geometry, a border of stone walls, and an overall setting that is unencumbered by visually intrusive modern elements. Views from the roads typically are of open fields (corn fields, hay fields, pasture) or wooded areas. The actual material of the road is secondary, since it is unlikely that the actual rutty surface encountered by the French now exists anywhere. The road surfaces have either been graded and gravel-filled, paved, or, in the case of abandoned sections, overgrown with vegetation that would not have been as extensive at the time of the French passing.

The boundary for members of this property type will generally be drawn to include contiguous sections of roadway that retain their defining physical and visual characteristics, with the width defined as the present or historic publicly owned right-of-way.

### **Significance:**

Road segments that retain something of their historic appearance have important associative value in bringing to life the reality of the event, an overland march by thousands of troops using narrow, hilly, winding roads. Nearly every section in Connecticut was judged by one or more of the French officers to be a very bad road. It was often nearly impossible to move the cannon and supply wagons through, and the narrowness of the roads meant that the marching column sometimes extended for miles. The movement required an advance party of "pioneers," ax-wielding woodsmen, to move ahead of the troops and clear away obstructions. At some stopping points, the troops were so delayed by the condition of the roads that there was no time to erect shelters; instead, the soldiers slept out in the open and moved on in the early morning hours. Many of

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the Colonial roads were poorly drained. Although there were bridges across the major rivers and brooks, smaller streams simply ran over the roadway and required fording.

**Registration requirements:**

In order to be eligible, march route segments will have to meet all or most of the following requirements:

- Eligible road segments will generally retain their narrow width and hilly, curving geometry.
- Although they may be paved or gravel-filled, they will retain their character as essentially unengineered structures, with only traditional facilities visible such as stone-slab culverts.
- They will have appropriate settings, such as a border of stonewalls and an environment of woods, open fields, and buildings of the Colonial period.

Segments that lack one of the above characteristics must be outstanding in one or both of the others in order to qualify.

The methodology described in this document has identified all known eligible road segments. However, additional members of the property type could still be added in the future should additional research clarify the precise march route in one or more of the three short segments where the route still has not been positively identified.

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**G. Geographical Data**

The military activities of the French army took place in the following towns in Connecticut:

Fairfield County

Bethel  
Danbury  
Easton  
Monroe  
Newtown  
Redding  
Ridgefield  
Shelton  
Trumbull

Hartford County

East Hartford  
Farmington  
Hartford  
Manchester  
Marlborough  
Plainville  
Southington  
West Hartford  
Wethersfield

Litchfield County

Woodbury

Middlesex County

Chester  
Clinton  
Deep River  
East Haddam  
East Hampton  
Essex  
Haddam  
Middlefield  
Middletown

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Middlesex County (continued):

Portland  
Westbrook

New Haven County

Ansonia  
Branford  
Derby  
Guilford  
Madison  
Meriden  
Middlebury  
New Haven  
North Haven  
Oxford  
Seymour  
Southbury  
Stratford  
Trumbull  
Wallingford  
Waterbury  
Wolcott  
Woodbridge

New London County

Colchester  
Lebanon

Tolland County

Andover  
Bolton  
Columbia  
Hebron

Windham County

Canterbury  
Plainfield  
Scotland

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Windham County (continued):

Sterling  
Windham

Not all of these towns have members of the multiple property group currently identified. Ongoing archaeological reconnaissance may identify additional eligible encampment sites. Moreover, since these towns are believed to lie along the march route of one or more of the French contingents, it is possible that eligible resources might be identified in any of these towns if new documentary evidence comes to light.

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### H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods (Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing)

#### Survey Methodology

The survey that provides the basis for this multiple property listing consisted of four sub-parts. Delineation of the march route of Rochambeau's main army, location of their camp sites on the modern landscape, and archaeological testing of a number of those sites was undertaken by Public Archaeology Survey Team, Inc. in 1998 and 1999 (Harper *et al.* 1999). An additional set of campsites was tested the following year by the same consultant (Harper *et al.* 2000). Historic buildings associated with the activities of the main army were investigated by Robert A. Selig (Selig 1999). A subsequent report (Selig 2000) reconstructed the likeliest routes of the Lauzun contingent and inventoried buildings associated with both Lauzun and with the various meetings among the French and American commanders. The respective reports for the various survey activities contain complete statements of methodology, which the following paragraphs summarize.

#### Identification of the Routes

Reconstruction of the route taken by the main body of French forces and the correlation of that reconstruction with modern topology were accomplished by correlating evidence from the following sources:

- Three types of maps prepared by the French army's engineers (all reproduced in Rice and Brown 1972). The route maps of Alexandre Berthier, in strip map form, show buildings, roads, water bodies, and topography in the immediate vicinity of the march. Berthier's camp maps show the camp sites and surrounding areas in similar detail, but at a much finer scale and with a more consistent north orientation than the route strips. Finally, the army had maps that showed a major part of the overall route on a single sheet. Though necessarily less detailed and precise than the march or camp maps, the overall maps show a great deal more of the state's topography, waterways, and place names.
- The French itineraries and observations recorded in participants' journals. The itineraries were prepared ahead of time and so diverge in some minor ways from the actual march route. Most journals do not mention specific landmarks, but occasionally a journal entry was crucial in establishing the specific route between two known points.
- Other maps of the general period. These include c.1780 maps prepared by the British and Colonial armies, particularly for the western parts of the state and early road maps, such as those produced by Christopher Colles in 1789 and William Blodget in 1792. While these do not explicitly indicate routes taken by the French, they help to establish what roads were in existence at the time and were considered viable routes. These other contemporary maps

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were especially important in distinguishing Colonial-era routes from the re-buildings and re-alignments that occurred in the turnpike-building period.

- Local histories of towns along the way, many of which record early oral traditions concerning the passing of the French army.
- Standing structures along the way. The existence of pre-1780 houses and cemeteries along a road indicates a persistent alignment that is at least a strong candidate for the French march, while a dearth of such buildings raises the possibility of a subsequent re-alignment.

With only a few exceptions where uncertainties remain, the march route of the main body of the French forces was superimposed upon present-day topography with a high degree of confidence.

Sources for the reconstruction of the route of Lauzun's Legion, consisting of several hundred mounted Hussars and associated support troops, are much less specific in nature. The French engineers' maps show the route in only the most general terms, and it is clear from contemporary accounts, such as Ezra Stiles' diary, that Lauzun made some major digressions. Moreover, the contingent split up into smaller groups on more than one occasion, taking separate routes between points. In general, the Lauzun forces covered the southern flank of the main army's march, just inland from the coastline along the British-controlled Long Island Sound. With few exceptions, the actual ground covered by some or all of the Lauzun contingent can be known only in the most general terms, and apart from their winter quarters in Lebanon, it is difficult to pinpoint their overnight camps. Contemporary accounts, newspaper notices, participants' journals, and local-history traditions provided the major sources for tracing Lauzun's movements (Selig 2000).

Archaeological Testing of Camp Sites

Locating the sight of encampments employed a similar process of correlating French maps and other documentary sources with the modern topography. In almost every case, the location of the camp was unambiguous, though a few problems remain. Once the location was determined, a walk-over survey was conducted to assess obvious evidence of disturbance. Provided that testing was physically possible and land-owner permission could be obtained, the consultants attempted to confirm the survival of camp remains through a systematic testing program. Previous studies of military encampments suggested that a significant portion of military material culture remains consists of metallic items such as musket balls, uniform buttons, and weapon components. As a consequence, metal-detecting was selected as an appropriate method for ascertaining the presence of diagnostic artifacts. For each camp or sub-component, several acres were completely swept with equipment that had a detection depth of about 20 cm. All metal finds were marked by flags and then excavated by the archaeological field crew. If the hits appeared to be artifacts of possible 18th-century origin, their location were transited and the artifacts bagged for conservation and identification. In addition to the metal detection, a limited number of test pits were dug in order to provide information

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about the integrity and stratigraphy of the camp site, particularly if later fill, river action, or other disturbance appeared likely.

Restraints of time, weather, and budget and the lack of landowner consent prevented a full investigation of every camp site. Nevertheless, a characteristic archaeological signature for a French camp site emerged: an assemblage characterized by 1) generic 18th-century domestic items, clothing components, and weapon parts, such as ox shoes, knee buckles, and gun flints; and 2) diagnostic French army items such as numbered uniform buttons from known regiments, decorative cannon elements, and balls of a size (.66 caliber) appropriate to the French muskets. The presence of sword pommels and other parts is also strong evidence of an intact French encampment, since swords were relatively uncommon among the British and Colonial forces but were carried by all ranks and types of French soldiers. As would be expected by a brief stopover by a large number of men, the artifact assemblages were generally characterized by a wide distribution, always corresponding with the extent of the camp shown on the French maps, relatively low density, and shallow deposition.

The above methodology was not intended to represent a full investigation of all that might be learned from a Revolutionary War camp site but rather the minimum amount of disturbance and artifact recovery needed to confirm the location of the camp, the presence of meaningful artifacts, and the necessary degree of integrity. Whether applied to camp sites that have already been investigated or to camp sites that may be confirmed at a future date, this methodology offers an appropriate approach to determining each site's eligibility under Criterion D.

Identification of Historic Buildings

Journal entries and early oral traditions recorded in local-history sources provided the chief method of ascertaining which remaining 18th-century buildings have strong associations with the activities of the French army. Many of the participants' journals mention specific taverns and houses where troops were entertained or officers quartered, and in other cases there are early local traditions with sufficient plausibility and level of detail to confidently associate a particular house with the French march. In the case of conference sites, such as those in Wethersfield and Lebanon, several parallel and generally consistent accounts exist from the various participants. In most cases, credible documentary evidence or descent in the same family exists, so that the modern-day building can be linked to the house mentioned in the historical sources.

As a check, the overall appearance and architectural features of each building were evaluated to substantiate its historical ascription. As a consequence, a few buildings that were wholly or substantially 19th-century in character were eliminated from further consideration. As replacements for the buildings that the French had encountered, these later structures have only commemorative value for the French march itself. They merely mark the location of a resource that once existed and that, had it survived, would have important heritage value.

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### **Determination of Historic Contexts**

Since this multiple property listing embraces a single extended event, the movement of the French forces through Connecticut on their way to and from the decisive battle of Yorktown, the determination of the historic context was straightforward. The State of Connecticut has developed a framework of historic contexts for the state's resources, beginning with an overall statewide planning document (Poirier and Donahue 1990) and elaborated in a series of volumes of the state's geographic areas, four of which were traversed by the movements of the French forces: the Eastern Uplands, the Central Valley, the Northwest Highlands, and the Western Uplands (Cunningham 1995; Rossano 1996, 1997; Spencer 1993). Military history is one of 11 broad-brush research fields that have been identified to encompass the totality of the state's history, and the Colonial Period is one of the four historic chronological divisions used to delineate the state's historic contexts (Poirier and Donahue 1990: 81-82). Each of the regional context reports discusses the American Revolution as a separate historical theme within the Colonial Period.

### **Basis for Identifying Property Types**

The identification of property types was based upon the strength of the resources' association with the French army's activities. Buildings known to have served as meeting places for the leaders, officers' quarters, or places of entertainment for officers and troops have a strong association with the historical event: the buildings are the actual places in which aspects of the event took place, and because they retain their historic appearance, they allow people today to imagine the scene as the French and American historical actors saw it. The archaeological sites are the actual places where the French pitched their shelters, made their fires, mended their clothes, and parked their equipment. Artifacts from these sites can add to our knowledge of the historical event, both specifically and generally, as well as convey a sense of connection to the event. Most of the camp sites also retain associative characteristics: the open land, level terrain and stone walls are similar to what the French would have seen as they came upon the site. Road segments that retain their early character and are confirmed parts of the march routes share a similar ability to convey the historical event, particularly those that have a steep grade and allow one to imagine the effort to move heavily loaded wagons and artillery.

### **Derivation of Listing Requirements**

The requirements for listing member properties were principally derived from an assessment of the condition of existing properties, many of which were previously listed on the National Register. The on-site exploration of the march routes allowed the survey personnel to compare potential member properties. For example, of the several taverns with firm associations with the French army, there were a number in which the 18th-century building was substantially imbedded within later 19th-century construction. Those properties were

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not considered eligible within the multiple property listing because their ability to convey a sense of the period of the march is compromised; they are not what the French would have seen in the 1780s.

The survey activity also demonstrated that actual archaeological investigation is necessary to assess the information potential and subsurface integrity of archaeological sites. Some potential sites that initially appeared to be open and undeveloped were found to be substantially disturbed by river action, nearby railroad construction, or 19th-century grading activities. Conversely, potential sites that are currently laid over with dense urban, industrial, or suburban development could be shown to be eligible, at least for their information potential, if the degree of disturbance proved less than what was initially apparent. In several cases, camp sites were not tested because the density of development made surface metal-detecting or subsurface excavation impossible.

Finally, the survey activity's background research into the nature of 18th-century roads, along with the reconstruction of the route and on-site inspection, allowed a comparative judgment to be made regarding segments' retention of defining characteristics.

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