



**The American Society of
Le Souvenir Français Inc.
Monthly Bulletin - Vol. VI, No. 8
August 2026**

America250
Part of a series

**French Volunteers of 1776
Part II**



Cover illustration:

Breymann's Redoubt, Battle of Saratoga, 1777, painting by Don Troiani, 2006

The Battle of Saratoga (September 19 - October 7, 1777) was a pivotal moment in the American Revolution, convincing the Court of Versailles to openly support the United States. Most professional

Editorial

As part of our America250 series, this Bulletin is dedicated again to the French volunteers who joined the Continental Army and fought for the independence of the United States prior to the Treaty of Alliance of February 6, 1778, and France's formal entry into the war on the side of America — before the thousands of regular French soldiers and sailors who followed.

We will present a few additional figures among this group who joined early in 1776, a year before Lafayette. As you will see, many were idealists, eager to fight for a noble cause, while a few others were soldiers of fortune — if not downright adventurers and impostors, or simply eager to distance themselves from creditors or tumultuous love affairs. We are indebted to Prof. Norman Desmarais, whose recently published book "George Washington's Dilemma" provides several heretofore largely forgotten biographies.

Next month in September we will continue celebrating America's 250th anniversary with the story of more than 3,500 French sailors (and embarked soldiers) who fought at sea and died for the independence of the United States — in advance of the inauguration of our granite memorial at Riverwalk, Yorktown, Virginia, planned for October 18, 2026.

Part Two of this Bulletin continues our tradition of honoring a particular American volunteer who, conversely, fought and died for France 141 years later. This month we honor **First Lieutenant Benjamin Stuart Walcott**, of Washington, D.C., who was declared "Mort pour la France" on December 12, 1917, at Saint-Souplet, in the Département of the Seine-et-Marne, at the age of 21.

Scroll down the bulletin a bit more, and you will reach **Part Three**, which lists several **news items and save-the-dates** for this Fall season.

It will be a busy time again soon, but first, we hope you enjoy a relaxing summer month in spite of the heat waves. Let's spare a thought for all those soldiers, laden with their rifles and gear, marching under the sweltering heat of Maryland or Virginia, along dusty trails, in their woolen uniforms—some wearing powdered wigs—and all of them besieged by mosquitoes... We wish you a Happy Labor Day!

On behalf of the Board of Directors,
Thierry Chaunu
President, The American Society of Le Souvenir Français, Inc.
Délégué Général du Souvenir Français pour les Etats-Unis.

Volunteer application

- Most French volunteers arrived in America carrying letters of recommendation from Congress's envoys in Paris, Silas Deane (who also

promised high military ranks, often indiscriminately, as we saw in our past Bulletins) or Benjamin Franklin.

- Some also applied directly, writing to the Continental Army's Commander-in-Chief!
- We give this example from **Captain de Santerre**, about whom we know little, including whether his application was granted:
Original letter pictured above, with translation in English [1]:

"Captain De Santerre to George Washington, 27 January 1776

Cap-Français, Saint-Domingue, 27 January 1776

My General

I am a french Officer, first Captain of my Regiment I have Served twenty four years, I have been in Germany all the Last war, when I thought to have reaped the fruits of my Long Service & my fatigue, I have been most Cruelly used by a puissant Chief, against whom I have it not in my power to take my revenge, I have demanded justice, intrigue, money & the great Credit of my adversary, have rendered my Complaints of no effect I have quitted forever a Country, where I have experienced Such heartbreaking vexations.

I pray you My General, to Let me Know whether you will grant me an Asylum, & in your Service I will devote to your nation my blood, & the Little fortune which I can pluck from the greedy hands which persecute me I will Serve your Country with all that Zeal & fidelity which you have a right to expect from an Officer, whom honour has been the only Cause of his misfortunes.

Give me My General, the power, the Glory to die in deffense of your Laws & your Liberty I will become one of your Citizens, I will with pleasure Seal with my blood, this title which I now Solicit from you, if the war Shoud Spare me, I will finish my days amongst your Countrymen, to whom I make account of attaching myself, by the most Sacred ties.

I burn to open the next Campaign with you nor do I desire that you will put the Least Confidence in me untill I have in the field of battle deserved it."

P.S. (omitted in the translation): *"I beg you, General, to place your trust in the young man who will have the honor of delivering this letter to you, and to believe everything he tells you about me."*

Note [1] Copy, translated from the French, in Stephen Moylan's writing, DLC:GW; ALS, DLC:GW. Moylan's translation omits the dateline, closing, and postscript of the letter.

P. Moreau carried this letter to Providence and gave it to Nicholas Cooke who forwarded it to George Washington.

To us, these letters seem touching in their naïveté and mannerism. Yet the expression of idealism is evident. Still, one can imagine George Washington's irritation at being inundated with similar demands...

Or, as was the case in New York, when they came knocking at his door!

**French Volunteers
Calling on George Washington:
New York City, 1776**





Above:

Top: Map of New York City in 1776, Untitled engraving of the lower portion of Manhattan, labeled "Survey'd in 1767." Penciled in margin: "Red denotes Fire of 1776", By Bernard Ratzer, cartographer; Thomas Kitchin, engraver; Jefferys and Faden (London), publisher. New York Public Library's Digital Library, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=56264123>

Bottom: General George Washington ordered the Declaration of Independence read aloud to the Continental Army in New York City. Illustration: New York Public Library's Digital Library, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=48746469>

While George Washington was embattled in New York in 1776, their attempts at presenting credentials in person must have caused additional headaches. For instance, this excerpt from "Catholic Footsteps in Old New York: A Chronicle of Catholicity in the City of New York from 1524 to 1808," p. 349, about George Washington's stay in New York in 1776:

"Washington had assumed command in New York city April 14th, and by the end of the month there were 8,301 officers and men in the city and vicinity, available for duty. The Commander-in—Chief, on his arrival, made his headquarters in a house on Broadway, but the city was unhealthy, and he later removed to the former home of Abraham Mortier, or

Motier, the British paymaster, a fine Colonial mansion later known as “ Richmond Hill,” now the southwest corner of Varick Street and Charlton Street.

“Among the many Frenchmen given commissions in the American army by Congress In 1776 a number called on the Commander-in-Chief in the Motier house. Those commissioned in that year were M. **Dugan**, who served in the Canadian campaign; Chevalier **De Saint Aulaire**, a captain in the same campaign; Antoine Felix **Vibert**, [1] engineer; Colonel Louis **Dubois**, [2], Lieutenant Colonel Jacques Antoine **De Franchessen**, Knight of St. Louis; Lieutenant Colonel **Saint Martin** [3]; Brevet Major Jean Arthur **De Vermenet** [4]; Fidele **Darre**; Brevet Captain Jacques Paul **Govert**; Brevet Major the Marquis de **Malmady** [5]; Chevalier **Du Plessis Mauduit** [6]; Captain Jean Louis **Imbert** [7]; Major Chrétien **De Colerus**. Some of these proved to be worthless adventurers, others fought well for the cause of liberty. Among those who were in the city in February and March was **Dohicky Arundel** [8], who brought a certificate from the military school at Strasburg and two lieutenants’ commissions from the French King. Richard Smith’s diary, under date February 5th, 1776, records: “The Foreigner whom Dr. Franklin and St. Clair were to examine as to his Proficiency in the knowledge of Artillery was now recommended to General Schuyler for Preferment, tho’ some members, Paine and Sherman in particular, did not approve of employing in our Service Foreign Papists.” **Arundel** was commissioned a Captain of Artillery. Another Frenchman in New York in 1776 was Christophe **Pelissier**. He was a native of Lyons, France, and in Quebec, in 1767, organized the Company of St. Maurice Iron Works. He was active in the encouragement and aid he gave the invading American army during its occupation of Three Rivers. On the evacuation of that place he went with the Americans to St. John and Ticonderoga and acted as engineer there for a time. Congress commissioned him a Lieutenant-Colonel, and indemnified him for his losses. He shortly afterwards returned to France.”

These volunteers are presented in this Bulletin, except:

[1] We introduced him in our June Bulletin under his correct name, Wuibert de Mazières

[2] Likely Col. Lewis Dubois, descendant of Louis Dubois, (founder of the early Huguenot settlement of New Paltz, NY) who raised the 5th NY Regiment.

[3] He was presented in our June Bulletin

[4] The correct spelling is Vermonnet, as seen below

[5] He was presented in our June Bulletin

[6] This is an error. He left France for America in February 1777. George Washington had left New York a few months before.

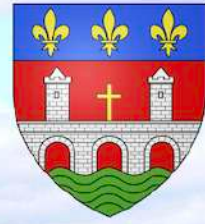
[7] He was presented in our June Bulletin

[8] We paid tribute to him in our July Bulletin and at the inauguration of his bronze marker this past July 9, which reads: "First French officer killed for the independence of the United States, July 9, 1776."

As noted previously, we do not have individual portraits of the Volunteers presented below. Instead, we chose landmarks of their native towns and villages. If you visit some of these regions in France, the landmarks are still there, unchanged!

Also, for the most part, details about many French volunteers of 1776 are sketchy. Genealogical sources are difficult to find, perhaps because name variants are ambiguous — whether from transcription errors or deliberate attempts to disguise their identity.

François Parfait Berruyer de Vauroüy
From Pont-de-l'Arche, Normandy
Captain, militia of Saint Domingue



Above:

Top: View of Pont-de-l'Arche from the bridge—In the foreground, the Eure River, (2011), Photo by Armand27340 — Travail personnel, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=21983725>

Bottom: Picturesque tour of the Seine from Paris to the sea, with particulars historical and descriptive, by Jean Baptiste Sauvan, c. 1821, Domaine public, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=166738853>

François Parfait Berruyer de Vauroüy — his name sometimes rendered "François-Nicolas-Parfait" in later compilations, likely a conflation with his godfather Nicolas François Langlois, and often spelled **Vauroux** in American documents — was born on August 30, 1743, and baptized two days later, on September 1, 1743, per his original baptismal record. He was the son of Joseph George François Berruyer, chevalier de Vauroüy, and Constance Élisabeth des Pardieux; his godparents were Nicolas François Langlois, écuyer, seigneur et patron of Ericquebeuf-la-Campagne, and Marguerite Catherine Bourbe de Bivilles.

- He began his military career young, enlisting as a private in the Marine Regiment on September 10, 1761, and serving two campaigns in Newfoundland in 1760–61 before leaving that service in July 1763.
- He went on to become a lieutenant in the Valenciennes Recruit Regiment in August 1765, was discharged in 1766, then joined the Legion as a volunteer hoping for a second lieutenancy, a corps he left in March 1770.
- He subsequently entered the militia of Saint-Domingue as a captain and was granted his own company in 1775.

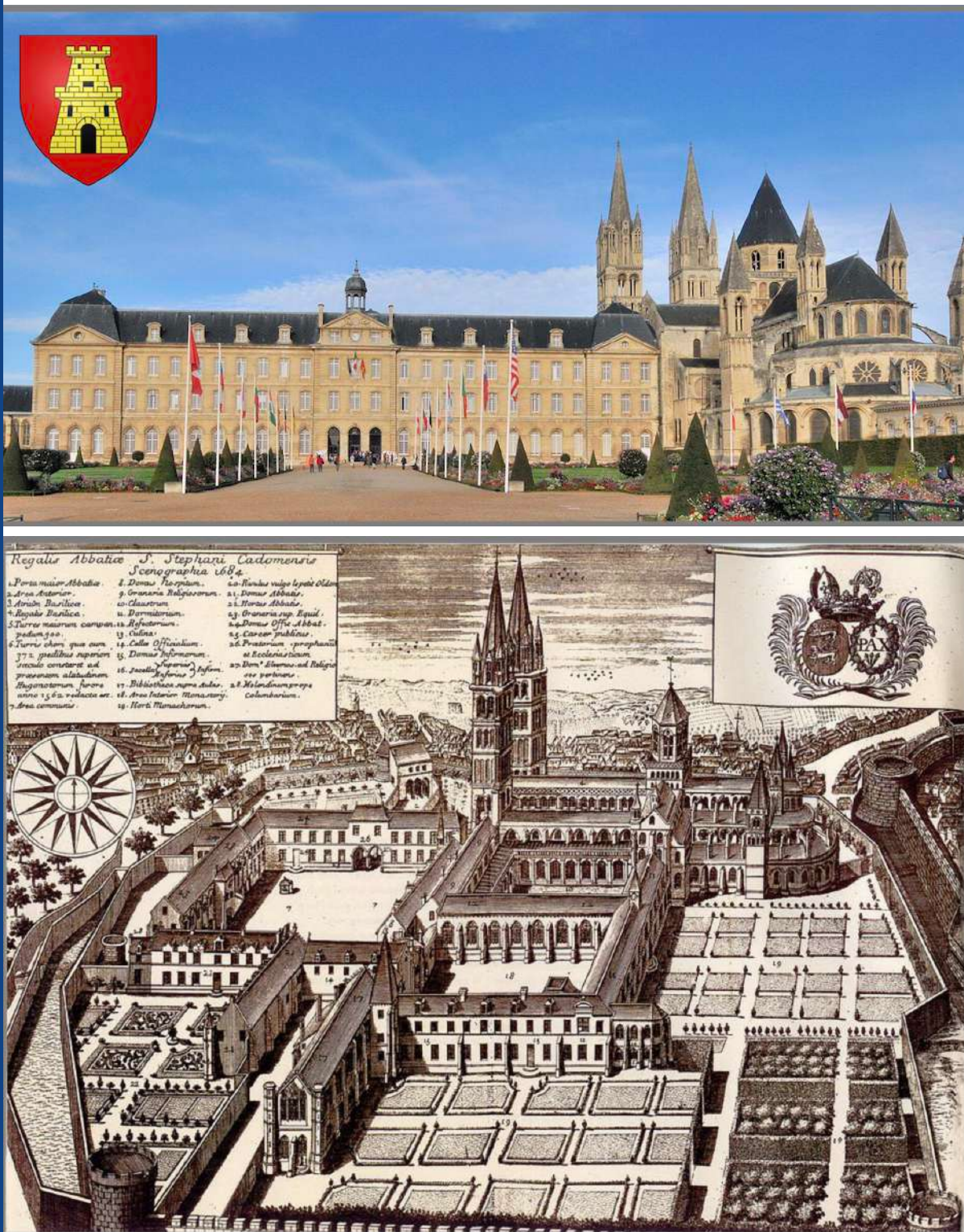
Early Support for the American Cause (1775)

- Notably, Berruyer de Vauroüy's involvement with the American cause began remarkably early — in 1775, the very year war broke out, he was sent to New England specifically to bring arms and gunpowder to the American insurgents, making him one of the earliest documented French contributors to the cause, predating even most of the 1776 volunteers covered elsewhere in this Bulletin.
- Historians consider he must have volunteered for this covert mission.
- He made two campaigns in America in this capacity and took part in the Siege of Savannah.

Later Military Career

- Returning to the West Indies in 1777, he was wounded in a naval engagement.
 - In 1780, he raised a company of 150 men for the volunteer corps of Monsieur (the honorific title for the King's brother, the future Louis XVIII) and embarked aboard the frigate *Le Monsieur*.
 - He returned to Saint-Domingue in 1792 and served there until October 1797, when he came back to France. He later joined the volunteer hussar corps in May 1800, was appointed provisional captain that June, and, after that corps was dissolved, was appointed captain in the 18th Cavalry Regiment in November 1801. He retired from military service on October 15, 1803, and settled at Versailles.
 - He died on October 9, 1825, in Trappes, in the Île-de-France region at age 82.
-

Jean-Baptiste Vermonnet
from Caen, Normandy
Captain, Continental Army



Above:

Top: Former Abbaye aux Hommes, now Caen City Hall (Calvados, Lower Normandy), Photo by Viault - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=11407875>

Note: Since we do not have portraits of these volunteers, we chose photos of their native towns instead — showing buildings they would still recognize today!

Bottom: Engraving, circa 1684, Archives départementales du Calvados, Public Domain, <https://picryl.com/media/planabbaye-aux-hommes-de-caen-1684-594f77>

• **Jean-Baptiste Arthur Vermonnet** (also recorded as Jean Arthur Marie Vermonnet, or "John Vermonnet") was a French-born military engineer, baptized in Caen, Normandy on February 16, 1753 (though some American

muster records list his birth year as 1750, possibly because he misled authorities about his age and tried to make himself a bit older).

- He came from a family with ties to the French crown—his father was a royal commissioner of gunpowder—and he entered French military service early, becoming a second lieutenant in the Quercy regiment in 1768 and a lieutenant in 1772. Over roughly 13 years, he trained and served as a military engineer before deciding to sail for America in 1776 to join the revolutionary cause.

Service in the Continental Army

- Once in America, Vermonnet's engineering expertise quickly caught the attention of General George Washington, who personally recommended him for a brevet appointment as captain on July 29, 1776.
- Just weeks later, on September 18, 1776, he was promoted again to brevet major in recognition of his skills and service, again at Washington's request.
- He went on to serve under Major General Horatio Gates in the Continental Army's northern department from roughly 1776 to 1779, applying his engineering background to fortification work during that critical phase of the war.

Personal Life and Post-War Struggles

- While in Boston, Vermonnet married the daughter of a Colonel Down.
- After his active service, his life took a difficult turn: attempting to return to France, he and his family became stranded in Cape François, Saint Domingue (present-day Haiti), due to a combination of family illness, financial hardship, and misfortune at sea.
- From there, he wrote to Benjamin Franklin in September 1783, enclosing a memoir detailing his American service and asking Franklin to help him secure an appointment as vice-consul to the United States—trying to leverage his wartime reputation into a diplomatic or commercial career. Apparently his request was ignored.

Later Career

- Vermonnet's later life took him in several directions: he worked as a miniature portrait painter and ran a school for young ladies with his wife in Baltimore.
- He sought further American engineering commissions (including fortification work at Annapolis and Alexandria, notably the 1794 earthen fort at Jones Point, now part of Jones Point Park), and eventually became a French commercial agent, ultimately serving as commissary and general agent for Cuba, Louisiana, and Campeche in the early 1800s.
- A 1803 letter he wrote to Thomas Jefferson from Havana reflects on his 27 years in the United States and his continued hope of building on the goodwill Washington had shown him decades earlier. Again, there is no trace of any answer to his request, and his final whereabouts are not known, except that he died after 1803 according to genealogical records.

Pierre François de Boy
From Marseilles, Provence
Infantry Major, Continental Army
September 4, 1776



Above:

Top: The church of Notre-Dame des Accoules, in the second arrondissement of Marseille, where Pierre François de Boy was baptized in 1737. Only the bell tower and the traces of the nave remain. The present church, with a central plan, dates from the 19th century.

Photo: <https://www.marseille-tourisme.com/>

Bottom: "In the Port of Marseille, View from the Clock Pavilion in the Park" by Joseph Vernet (1714-1789) painted in 1754 (when de Boy was 17), Oil on canvas, Musée de la Marine, Lent by Département des Peintures, Musée du Louvre. Photo: TC © ASSFI 2024.

- **Pierre François de Boy** (also spelled **Bois** in some documents) was born in Marseilles on August 18, 1737. Despite the particule "de", he was not of noble extraction. In France, the use of the particule "de" is not reliable evidence of the bearer's nobility.
- His father Pierre Boy was born in Constantinople, likely from a French merchant family (which perhaps lost claims to nobility, due to activities in commercial business, which were forbidden to nobles) and married a commoner, Catherine Ginies in 1733 in Marseilles.
- Pierre François was baptized on the day of his birth in Notre-Dame-des-Accoules. His godfather was François Montagnier and Mademoiselle Françoise D'Amphoux, maybe pointing to family links with the nobility.
- Like his father, he received a solid education at the very prestigious Royal Academy of Juilly.
- He began his long military career as a second lieutenant in the Saint-Chamond Regiment in January 1757, becoming a lieutenant later that year on September 23, 1757. He resigned that post on November 10, 1761, then re-entered service as an ensign in the Bouchonnais regiment on January 23, 1762, was promoted to lieutenant later that year, and resigned again on October 10, 1766.
- On January 1st, 1769, he transitioned to colonial service, becoming a captain of militia in the French colony of Saint Domingue (present-day Haiti).

Service in the American Revolution, fighting at Saratoga:

- De Boy arrived in Philadelphia and joined the American cause on September 4, 1776, serving as an infantry major in the United States.
- He served with Colonel Daniel Morgan, perhaps on Gates's staff.
- He fought at Saratoga...
- He remained in this role for roughly three years before resigning his commission on April 9, 1779.
- His attempt to return to France afterward proved perilous—he was captured aboard the ship *Eagle* and detained in the Caribbean islands of Saint-Christophe (St. Kitts) and Saint-Eustache (St. Eustatius), both important naval and trade hubs during the conflict.

Induction into the Society of the Cincinnati:

- Following his American service, de Boy's career took him further afield: he transferred into Dutch service around 1782–1784 and spent several years posted in the Dutch East Indies until 1788.
- In December 1789, he was recognized for his American Revolutionary War service by being inducted into the Society of the Cincinnati.
- He returned to French military service in 1792 as a captain in the 40th Infantry Regiment, but this final chapter was short-lived: he was taken prisoner on September 1, 1793, during the turbulent early years of the French Revolutionary Wars, and died in Fribourg just weeks later, on November 15, 1793.

Pierre Penet
From Nantes, Brittany
Brevet Aide-de-Camp to Gen. Washington
October 14, 1776



LE PORT
Vu de l'Isle

DE NANTES
Feydeau.

Above:

Top: Inner courtyard of the Castle of the Dukes of Brittany, Nantes, by Jean-Pierre Dalbéra from Paris, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=24666561>

Bottom: "Le Port De Nantes Vu de l'Isle Feydeau" (*The Port of Nantes as Seen from the Isle Feydeau*), 1776 - By Nicolas Marie Ozanne – BNF and Musée du Louvre, engraved by Yves-Marie Le Gouaz, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=151756938>

*We briefly mentioned **Pierre Penet** in our past January and June bulletins, in the chapter dedicated to his companion **René Étienne Henry Gayault de Boisbertrand**.*

Although he was the most famous and influential of all the early supporters of the American cause, **Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais** was not the only merchant to provide arms, ammunition, uniforms, and various war supplies to the 'Insurgents' through his covert company, Roderigue Hortalez & Cie.

Another active supporter of the American cause was **Pierre Penet**, who, in addition to the commercial activity of his company, also volunteered to fight in person.

Da Costa Frères & Co., often called "**Penet, Da Costa Frères & Cie.**", was a notable French-backed merchant and shipping company based in Nantes during the American Revolutionary War. The company entered into contracts with American revolutionary states like Virginia and Massachusetts to obtain and ship vital military supplies, clothing, and munitions across the Atlantic, despite the dangerous British naval blockade.

Located at the River Loire port in Nantes, the firm kept in touch with American boards of war, state commercial committees, and diplomats such as Benjamin Franklin, who was in Passy, then a Paris suburb.

- **Pierre Penet** [1] arrived in America in late 1775 alongside his business partner, **Emmanuel de Pliarne**, traveling to Cambridge, Massachusetts to meet directly with George Washington.
- He arrived at a pivotal moment—the Continental Army was critically short on ammunition—and he secured backing to begin supplying arms and materiel to the rebel cause. Operating out of Nantes, France, his firm became one of the earliest French companies to arm the American insurgents, doing so even before the formal Franco-American alliance was signed.
- The firm contracted with American authorities, including the Massachusetts Board of War, to ship weapons, gunpowder, cloth, and other vital provisions across the Atlantic from Nantes to American ports like Boston, all while risking capture by the British Royal Navy.
- As we saw in our January 2026 Bulletin, upon arriving in Paris from America with his congressional contracts and letters, Penet met with the influential Barbeau-Dubourg [1], the French physician and-savant. Through his presentation, intelligence, and credentials, he convinced Dubourg to trust him and champion the cause of the Insurgents to French Foreign Minister Vergennes.
- Penet also persuaded René Gayault de Boisbertrand to help ferry arms and diplomatic dispatches to the Continental Congress as we saw in our June Bulletin.

Aide-de-Camp to George Washington

- Washington recognized Penet's usefulness within French merchant and military networks and recommended him for a formal role.
- On October 14, 1776, the Continental Congress confirmed Penet as a brevet aide-de-camp to Washington, a position that helped him operate more effectively as a liaison between French supply networks and the American war effort.
- He held this role from October 1776 until January 1783.

Bankruptcy and Return to America

- Despite his significant early contributions to arming the Continental Army, Penet's firm ran into serious financial trouble and went bankrupt in France in 1782. Fleeing his creditors, he returned to America impoverished and looking to rebuild his fortune.

Land Speculation and the "Penet's Square" Scandal

- After the war, Penet first engaged in trade with the Oneida Indians before pivoting to land speculation. In 1787–1788, he convinced the Oneida to grant him a massive 100-square-mile tract of land along the St. Lawrence River in what is now Jefferson County, New York—a parcel that became known as "Penet's Square."
- His claim to the land was widely regarded by state officials as a fraudulent scheme, and New York Governor George Clinton ultimately intervened to protect Oneida interests (as the official story goes), thereby casting a shadow of scandal over the final chapter of Penet's American story.
- In 1790, Penet relinquished his claim to his "Square" and relocated to Saint Domingue (now known as Haiti), while still participating in land speculation in New York. It is thought that he perished at sea in 1812.

Note [1] Heitman's *Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army* lists him with the name Ignatius (Ignace), which may have been a second baptismal name.

Note: [2]: For more information on the role played by **Barbeu-Dubourg** in supplying the Rebels with military supplies, refer to our January 2026 Bulletin (**America250 series**):

"From Covert Aid to Official Alliance 1776-1778"

<https://conta.cc/3L1Dasy> (original version in English)

<https://conta.cc/4b48K3p> (version en français)

Matthias-Alexis Le Roche de Fermoy

From Martinique

Brigadier General, Continental Army

November 5, 1776



Above:

Top: Saint-Pierre, Martinique, with Mount Pelée in the background, By Zinneke - own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=5617271>

Bottom: Mouillage de Saint-Pierre à la Martinique en 1776, "Estampe tirée des *Nouvelles vues perspectives des ports de France dessinées pour le Roi* par M. Ozanne, gravées par Y. Le Gouaz en 1776", ("Print taken from *New Perspective Views of the Ports of France, Drawn for the King* by Mr. Ozanne. Engraved by Y. Le Gouaz in 1776") by Nicolas Ozanne (1728–1811)— Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=46660941>

As we have mentioned before, the time and the circumstances allowed for various volunteers to artfully secure appointments far exceeding their capabilities by exaggerating their credentials.

Such is the case with **Mathieu Alexis Roche de Fermoy**, born in the West Indies on November 7, 1725 (though one American source places his birth around 1737).

- As per *Echoes from Out the Past, Or, Historical Notes Relating to Irish Pioneers in America* (Author : Thomas Hamilton Murray, American-Irish Historical Society, Published in 1905), Le Roche de Fermoy was of Irish extraction.
- He began his military career as a lieutenant of militia in the Guyenne regiment on March 22, 1743, transferring to the Bourbonnais regiment that same year. He was promoted to captain of grenadiers in 1746 but left the service in 1760.
- He unsuccessfully sought a posting back in the West Indies afterward, possibly serving briefly at Saint-Pierre, Martinique in 1762, and was later given an honorary appointment as king's lieutenant while awaiting a permanent vacancy.

Appointment as a Continental Army General

- Fermoy was among a handful of French volunteers who managed to secure surprisingly senior commissions from Congress despite thin credentials—in his case, with extravagant claims of close ties to the French royal family, that he was a Colonel, even though he had only held the rank of captain in the French Army.
- Still, he was appointed by Congress a brigadier general, no less, in the Continental Army on November 5, 1776.
- He served credibly at first: he assisted Washington during the retreat across New Jersey, and he led a brigade during the assault on Trenton on December 26, 1776. Initially, he was at the forefront of General John Sullivan's division, which was part of the right wing. Later, he was repositioned behind Nathanael Greene's division and, along with Adam Stephen, was tasked with preventing the enemy's drive towards Princeton, New Jersey.
- He was later assigned to the Northern Army under General Gates and given command of Fort Independence, opposite Fort Ticonderoga.

Disgrace at Fort Ticonderoga

- Fermoy's reputation collapsed during the American evacuation of Fort Ticonderoga in early July 1777. When General Arthur St. Clair ordered a covert nighttime withdrawal to avoid alerting nearby British forces, Rochefermoy failed to inform all the troops under his command of the retreat. Compounding the error, he set fire to his own headquarters on Mount Independence, illuminating the night sky and revealing the American withdrawal to General Burgoyne's forces. Had this not happened, St. Clair's retreat likely would have gone undetected.
- Rochefermoy nonetheless later defended his conduct and even petitioned Congress for a promotion to major general. Congress refused the request on January 31, 1778, and he was permitted to resign on February 16, 1778, receiving \$800 to fund his return to the West Indies.

Later Life

- After leaving American service, Fermoy served as a volunteer under the Marquis de Bouillé in French operations to capture Dominica and Saint Lucia.
- He returned briefly to Boston in the spring of 1781 alongside his son, Mathieu (born August 30, 1755) who was serving as an officer in Rochambeau's army, (Bourbonnais regiment) but his attempts to secure a new position in the American military went unanswered.

- Accounts of his death vary: one source suggests he died before 1782, while a letter from a niece indicates he may have died in Martinique in 1792 (though this could be a transcription error for 1782).

Charles Noël François Romand de Lisle
From Grenoble, Dauphiné
Artillery Major, Continental Army
November 12, 1776



Above:

Top: Palais du Parlement of Dauphiné, Grenoble, Photo: www.Grenoble-Tourisme.com

Charles (listed as Claude in many documents) **Noël François Romand de Lisle** (at times spelled L'Isle, but most [genealogical records](#) records in France confirm "Charles" and "de Lisle") was born on April 23, 1743 in Grenoble, into a family with notable civic and legal standing—his father Balthasar de Romand served as syndic of the nobility and mayor of Grenoble, while his grandfather Laurent had been secretary to the king and chief clerk of the Parliament of the Dauphiné. His mother Thérèse Royer was a commoner.

- He began his military career young, becoming an artillery officer on May 17, 1757, before being commissioned a second lieutenant in the Grenoble artillery regiment in 1760, reconfirmed in that rank in 1762, and promoted to lieutenant in January 1763.

He was stationed in Martinique where he was promoted to captain. On June 13, 1769, he married Rose Anne Rolle de Goursolas de Saint Ville at Fort-Royal (Fort-de-France).

- His French military career came to an abrupt end on November 27, 1769, when he was struck from the rolls due to personal debts.
- However, he got approval to join the American forces from Robert d'Argout, the governor of Martinique, who was helping the American colonists with weapons and supplies.
- Romand might have come to America to escape a troubled marriage; he had left his wife and two-year-old daughter Rose (1773-1856) in Martinique. Shortly after he became a major in the American artillery in 1776, he married an Irish immigrant while still married in Martinique (divorce was not an option in eighteenth-century Catholic France) and began a new family.

Arrival in America and Early Frustrations

- Romand de Lisle traveled to North America to join the Revolutionary cause, arriving as a captain of French artillery.
- He reached Washington's headquarters in early November 1776 at White Plains en route from Boston to Philadelphia and handed him a letter that peremptorily claimed a major rank [1]
- De Lisle was also accompanied by another volunteer, **Louis-Joseph-Henri Robillard d'Antin** who arrived without any paperwork and claimed he was a new artillery captain... His case became one of many that contributed to a broader problem facing the Continental Army at the time: an overwhelming influx of foreign officers seeking high rank, many with inflated credentials. This "volunteer overload" prompted Washington to write a frustrated letter to Congress President John Hancock on February 11, 1777, airing his concerns about managing the wave of foreign applicants.
- Romand de Lisle was reportedly granted permission to depart and return to Saint-Domingue in April 1777, though he would later resurface in Continental service.

Service, Capture, and Exchange

- Despite the early friction, Congress commissioned Romand de Lisle a major in the American artillery, with commissions dated November 12, 1776 and again November 12, 1777 in different records.
- He remarried with a young Letitia Ingraham, aged 16, with whom he had a child, James Henry de Lisle, and moved to the French colony of Saint Domingue (today's Haiti) which is on the western portion of Hispaniola island,

and not "Santo Domingo, Spanish America" a common confusion we often see the eastern portion of the island being Santo Domingo (today's Dominican Republic).

- He went on to command the artillery at Savannah, where he was taken prisoner (his capture was sometimes mistakenly reported as a death during the Savannah operations of August 1779—an error later corrected in genealogical records).
- He was exchanged in June 1779 and subsequently served under French Admiral d'Estaing's forces in artillery operations at Grenada, holding a provisional commission.
- On July 22, 1780, he was formally appointed captain of the French colonial artillery.

Later Life and Death

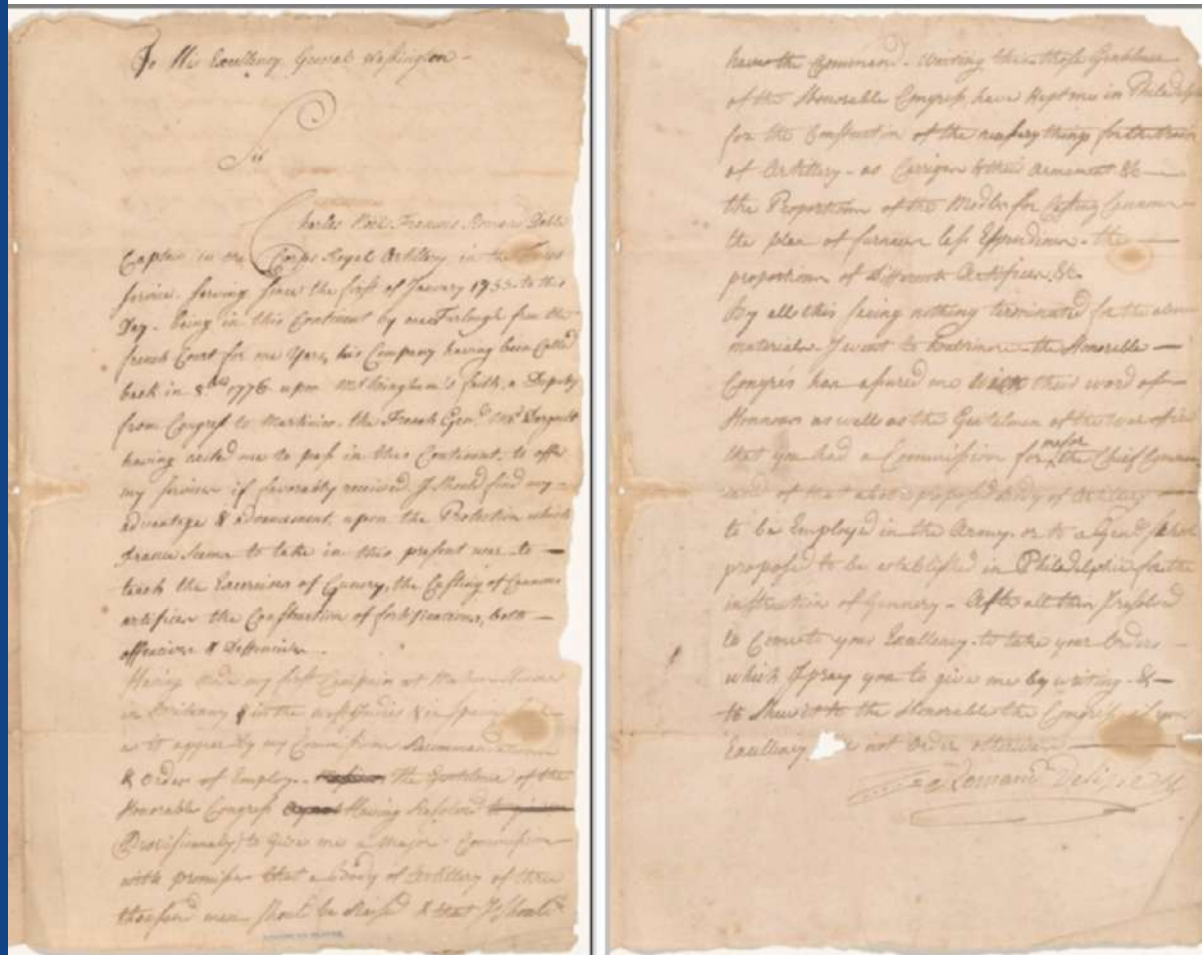
- Romand de Lisle's health eventually declined, and he set sail to Bordeaux, France, seeking treatment, on board "*Les deux Julies*".
- He died at sea on August 16, 1784, bringing an end to a career that spanned French royal military service, financial hardship, and active combat and captivity in the American Revolutionary War.

Footnote:

- James Henry was raised by Letitia, who moved to Barnesville, OH. James Henry married a Quaker girl, dropped the "de" and renounced any claim to nobility in France. Together they had 6 sons. He died in 1824. Letitia died in 1850.
- The [Lisle Corporation](#) was founded in 1903 by descendant C.A. Lisle in Clarinda, Iowa. It started by making horse-powered well drills and washing machines before shifting into automotive specialty tools with the Ford Model T. Today, it remains a family-owned, sixth-generation manufacturing company.

[1] It is easy to imagine how much George Washington must have been irritated by this letter!...it was the straw that broke the camel's back.

Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library. (1775 - 1779). Delisle, Charles Noel Francois Romand, Retrieved from <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/9f32a4a0-3735-0134-6cbb-00505686d14e> (and its transcription below):



To His Excellency General Washington -

Sir

Charles Noël Francis Romand De Lisle Captain in the Corps Royal Artillery, in the French Service, serving since the first of January 1755 to this Day - being in this Continent by one Furlough from the French Court for one Year, his Company having been called back in 8 bre [octobre] 1776. upon Mr Bingham's faith, a Deputy from Congress to Martinico, the French Gen Mr Dargout having exited me to pass in this Continent to offer my services if favorably received I should find my advantage & Advancement, upon the Protection which France seems to take in this present war to— teach the Exercises of Gunnery, the Casting of Cannons artificer the Construction of Fortifications, both — offensive & Defensive —

Having made my first Campaign at Mahon - Minorca in Brittany & in the west Indies & in Spain such — as it appear by my Commission Recommendations & Orders of Employ. — The Gentlemen of the Honorable Congress Having Resolved (Provisionally) to give me a Major's Commission with promises that a body of Artillery of three thousand men, should be raised & that I should have the Command Waiting this - those Gentlemen of the Honorable Congress, have kept me in Philadelphia for the Construction of the necessary things for the train of Artillery - as Carriages & their armament &c— the Proportion of the Metals for Casting Cannon the plan of furnaces less Expensive - the proportions of Different Artificer &c.

By all this seeing nothing terminated for the above materials - I went to Baltimore - the Honorable Congress has assured me with their word of — Honour as well as the Gentlemen of the war office that you had a Commission for the Major Chief Commander of that above proposed body of Artillery to be employed in the Army, or to a Genl school proposed to be established in Philadelphia for the instruction of Gunnery — After all this I resolved to Come to your Excellency to take your Orders — which I pray you to give me by writing - & — to Shew it to the Honorable the Congress if your Excellency does not Order otherwise -

Romand de Lisle

Jean Baptiste D'Antignac
From Auvergne Province (town unknown)
Major, Continental Army
November 1776



Above:

Top: Tomb of "Major John Jean Baptiste d'Antignac", Magnolia Cemetery in Augusta, GA
702 3rd St, Augusta, GA 30901, Plot North of 3rd St., 4th Walk West Of De L'aigle Ave.

GPS: [33.4650889](#), [-81.9561139](#)

Photo added by Michelle Valade Woodham

https://images.findagrave.com/photos/2007/327/23079738_119595187297.jpg

Bottom: The "Chaîne des Puys" in Puy-de-Dôme, Region of Auvergne, CC BY 2.5,

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=519423>

Jean Baptiste d'Antignac, born on August 18, 1748, in Auvergne, France, is the officer whose name appears in Continental Army records under a number of phonetic and transcription variants—most notably "Lantagniac" and "Laytaniac." These spellings appear to have arisen from French pronunciation being rendered inconsistently by English-speaking clerks and officers. In addition, he was commonly called "John".

- We include him in this Bulletin, because he arrived in America and approached George Washington in November 1776, even though he was formally appointed in 1777.

- D'Antignac's name surfaces in the historical record in a letter from George Washington to the Board of War, dated White Plains, November 8, 1776. Washington had received a letter introducing "Monsieur **Laytaniac**" around

late October or early November of that year—a chaotic and critical juncture during the New York campaign:

"TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

White Plains, 8 November, 1776.

Gentlemen, I have been favored with yours of the 31st ulto. by **Monsr. Laytaniac**, and must take the liberty of referring you to my former Letters upon the subject of providing for the French Gentlemen who shall incline to enter the service of the States. To me there appears that one of two modes must be adopted: they must either be appointed to places in some of the regiments, or formed into a distinct Corps. The former was advised as the most eligible in Respect to the Gentlemen who were here before. It requires time to form an accurate opinion of the merits of an officer, and the present situation of the Army, will not allow me to pay a particular attention to Monsr. Laytaniac, or such notice as he may wish to receive, or I to give. Nor is there any way of making his stay here agreeable. I have &c."

The Writings of George Washington, vol. V (1776-1777), p.13

- D'Antignac had requested employment in the army along with a rank he felt suited his merits. Washington, however, noted that he had little time to personally evaluate individual foreign officers arriving in growing numbers, and advised Congress that French volunteers should instead either be assigned directly into existing state regiments or organized into a separate corps altogether.

Prior Life and Motivations for Service

- According to his 1827 obituary, d'Antignac left France for the West Indies around age 19 and remained there until 1775. At that point, moved by opposition to tyranny and oppression, he chose to leave behind a comfortable, peaceful life to join the American cause, embracing what his obituary calls "all the horrors of an uncertain war" in defense of a nation he saw as injured and suffering under British rule.
- D'Antignac went on to serve actively throughout the Revolutionary War.
- He eventually received a warrant from Maj. Gen. Horatio Gates on May 1st, 1777, and a commission from Congress to serve as Captain, Continental Army, on August 6 of the same year. He witnessed the surrender of General Burgoyne to General Gates at Saratoga, one of the war's pivotal turning points, and at Ticonderoga.
- He later fought at the decisive Battle of Yorktown, ("*He was conspicuous at the siege of Yorktown*" according to the Lineage book, Volume Vol. 3, 2001-3000), page 21).
- His obituary characterizes his service as continuous and committed, spanning the full length of the struggle for American independence.

Post Revolutionary life in America:

- D'Antignac married Miss Hannah Debosque or Du Bose (of a French Huguenot family) on October 14, 1793 in Edisto, S.C.
- D'Antignac settled in Augusta, Georgia, where he died on Wednesday, April 18, 1827, at 78 years old (his obituary rounds this to "in the 79th year of his age").
- He was buried at Magnolia Cemetery in Augusta, Richmond County, Georgia. His death was marked by an obituary published in the Georgian newspaper of Savannah, Georgia, on Saturday, April 21, 1827 (Vol. IX, Issue 124), which praised him as a man of principle who had nobly dedicated himself to the cause of civil liberty.
- A bronze insignia of the D.A.R. is next to his grave.

• **OBITUARY:**

"Died, in this place on Wednesday the 18th inst. Major John D'Antignac, in the 79th year of his age. Major D'Antignac was born at Auvergne. in France, in the year 1748.—At about the age of 19 he moved to the West Indies where he remained until 1775, when (detesting tyranny and oppression) with all the disinterestedness of a truly great mind, He nobly espoused the cause of civil liberty; and exchanging the comforts of peace and a home, for all the horrors of an uncertain war, bravely bared his breast to the foe, in defence of the then injured and suffering America.- He witnessed the surrender of Burgoyne to General Gates, at Saratoga; was at the memorable battle of York Town, and at many other of importance; but it would be here superfluous to recount the various toils, difficulties and dangers which he underwent, for our history of that date, is known to all.--Suffice it to say, that throughout the whole of the revolution he was actively engaged in the struggle for the Independence which we now enjoy."

Augusta papers, Georgian (Savannah, GA), Saturday, April 21, 1827, Vol. IX, Issue: 124, Page 2

Magnolia Cemetery

702 3rd St, Augusta, GA 30901

Plot North of 3rd St., 4th Walk West Of De L'aigle Ave.

GPS: [33.4650889](#), [-81.9561139](#)

• **Inscription:**

"Sacred

To the Memory of

Maj John D'Antignac

a Native of France

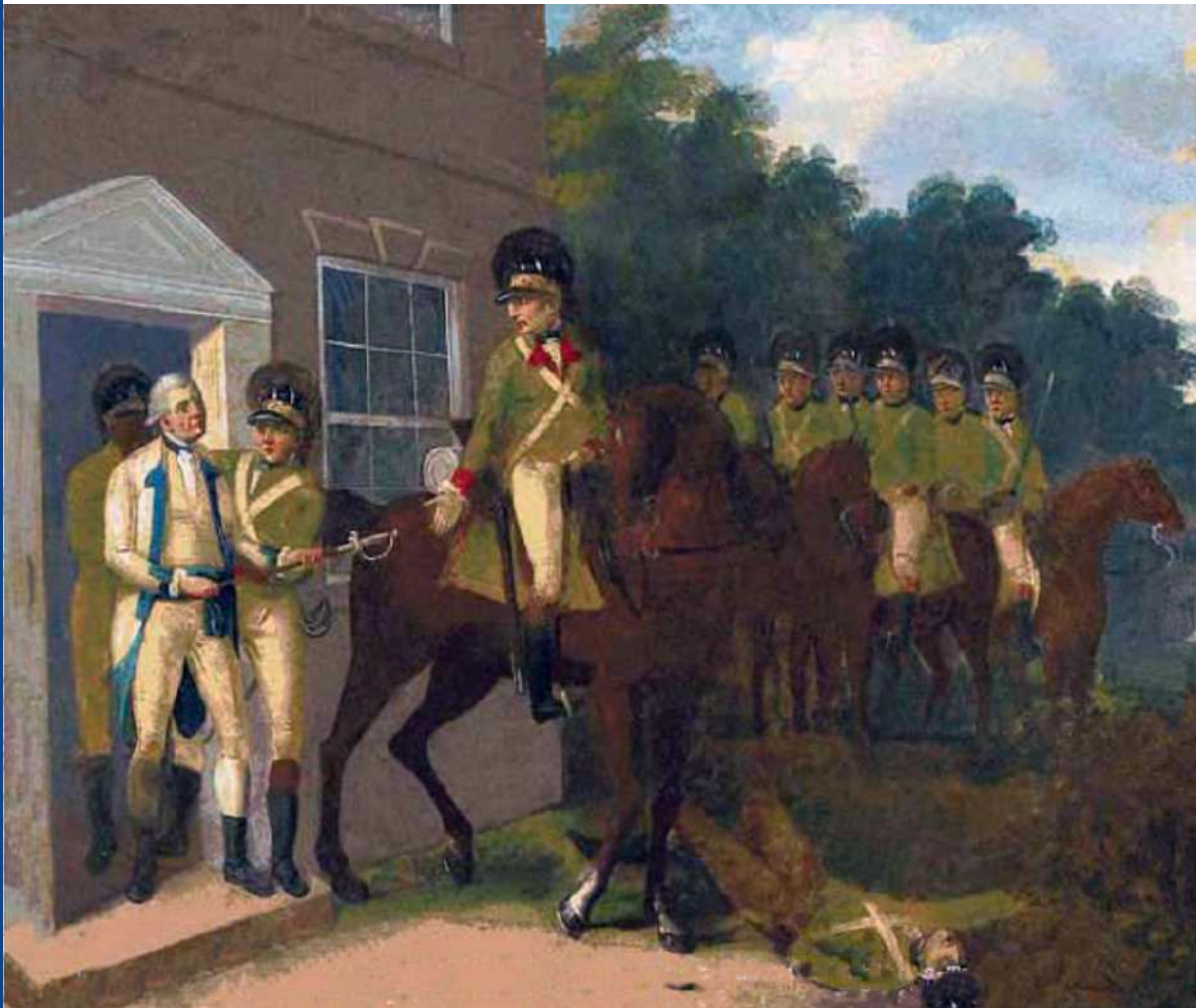
Who departed this life

On the 11th of April

1827

Aged 78 years"

Jean-Louis de Vernejoul
From Monflanquin, Agenais
Dragoon Captain, Continental Army
November or December 1776



Above:

Top: The church of Saint André at the "Bastide" (fortified village) of Monflanquin, in the Province of Agenais (today in the Département of Lot et Garonne), has certainly not changed since the time of our

Patriot volunteer. He was baptized in that church.

Photo: <https://www.france-voyage.com/tourism/monflanquin-1595.htm>

Bottom: Charles Lee captured by Banastre Tarleton on 12th December 1776 at the Widow White's Tavern in Basking Ridge, New Jersey, on December 13, 1776, by Unknown artist, New Jersey State Museum

<https://www.britishbattles.com/war-of-the-revolution-1775-to-1783/battle-of-monmouth/>

Jean Louis de Vernejoul (also spelled at times **de Virnejoux**, or **Vernejout**, or **Vernejoux**, but original [genealogical records](#) in France use the spelling **Vernejoul**) was a French army officer present in America during the early years of the Revolutionary War, and he is best known for a dramatic episode that occurred on December 13, 1776.

- He was born in the 13th century fortified village ("Bastide") of Monflanquin, in the Region of Agenais (today the département of Lot-et-Garonne), on December 18, 1751, from a large family (he was the 3rd child and had 13 siblings!). His father Jacques VIII de Vernejoul, Sieur de Paris, was himself from a large family, he had 11 siblings).
- He served as a Gendarme du Roi, however we do not know the circumstances of his enrollment in America.
- He was traveling as a foreign volunteer or observer alongside Major General Charles Lee and fellow French officer **René Gaiault de Boisbertrand** (whom we introduced in our June 2026 Bulletin) when the group was surrounded at Widow White's Tavern in Basking Ridge (present-day Bernardsville), New Jersey. British dragoons had been tipped off to Lee's location by local Loyalists, and the resulting raid led to Lee's capture.
- Vernejoul's presence at this moment is historically notable in part because France had not yet formally entered the war as an American ally—that alliance would not be finalized until 1778—making his and Boisbertrand's involvement an embarrassing diplomatic moment.

Service as a Dragoon Captain at Saratoga:

- The following year, in 1777, Vernejoul signed on as captain of a troop of Continental Dragoons. In this role, he served in the Schoharie Valley and later took part in the Saratoga campaign under General Gates, where he was present for both battles fought there. His troop was part of a mixed unit that combined his Continental dragoons with Light Horse militiamen from Connecticut, the whole formation placed under the command of a recently promoted militia major, Elijah Hyde.

Departure Before Burgoyne's Surrender

- Despite his presence throughout the Saratoga engagements, Vernejoul reportedly left ("ran away," in the source's phrasing) before Burgoyne's formal surrender. One historical interpretation offered for this departure is that Vernejoul, as a French officer, may have found it difficult to accept being subordinated to Major Hyde, a militia officer of comparatively recent promotion—though this remains speculative rather than documented fact. Another kinder version might be that he didn't want to be overly spotted by the British prior to France's official entry into the war.

- We do not know much about the rest of his life, except that he was made Chevalier de l'Ordre Royal et Militaire de Saint Louis.
- He reportedly went into exile during the French Revolution, went to Ireland where he married and had children. He died sometime after 1819 in Kilkenny, Ireland.

Jacques Le Maire de Gimel
From Vitry-le-François, region of Champagne
Volunteer Supply agent, 1776
Lieutenant-Colonel, Dragoons, Virginia Militia, 1779



Above:

The town hall in Vitry-le-François, Champagne Region (today the département of Marne), pop. 10,996 in 2023 (7,385 in 1793). Photo by Prosopée - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=11738033>

Jacques Le Maire de Gimel was born on January 2, 1749, in Vitry-le-François, in Champagne.

- He became a Gendarme de la garde (a mounted royal constable) on September 1, 1764, serving under the alternate name M. de Lussemont.
- After being discharged, he obtained the court's approval to travel to the United States in 1776, embarking at Brest as a volunteer officer attached to the Agenois Regiment and carrying letters of introduction from Patrick Henry to Benjamin Franklin and William Lee.
- He was employed to procure arms and military supplies to the Insurgents. In 1778, the Virginia legislature sent him back to France to help William Lee procure arms and ammunition for the state.

- Benjamin Franklin himself later confirmed this mission in a certification written at Passy on March 30, 1784:

"I do hereby certify whom it may concern, that Col. Lemaire came from Virginia to France in the Year 1778, with Letters of Recommendation to me from Patrick Henry Esquire then Governor of that State, by whom he was employed

to procure Arms and military Stores here for the Use of their Army; which Commission, as far as I have ever heard, he executed with Fidelity & Ability, to the Satisfaction of the Government there.

B Franklin"

— Certification for Jacques Le Maire de Gimel, 30 March 1784, *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, vol. 42, Yale University Press, available via Founders Online, National Archives: <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Franklin/01-42-02-0061>

- The mission proved difficult in practice, however, straining his relations with the Lee brothers and exhausting his personal funds, leading him to turn to Franklin for help.
- He sailed back to America in early 1779 and remained until 1782, receiving a brevet commission and serving as a Virginia lieutenant-colonel of dragoons, apparently without pay.
- He was captured three times during his American service — most likely at Penobscot, where he was wounded and taken by Native forces, and later imprisoned at Québec and Halifax, escaping the latter. Attempting to return to France in 1782, his ship, *Le César*, was captured, costing him all his belongings and papers, valued at 50,000 livres; he was then taken aboard a privateer and brought to Jamaica.
- After his release, he traveled to Port-au-Prince under a flag of truce.
- By 1784, he described himself as ruined, left with nothing but an unfulfilled 2,000-acre Virginia land grant he was never able to use.

French Canadians and other notable early French volunteers:

Licott Jean	"	"	"	"	Enlist ^d 81 Must ^d in 82
Lorsell Joseph	"	"	20	"	Dead 5 Feb'y 77
Lavoix Lewis	"	"	16	Dec	"
Le Corde Francois	"	"	"	"	Enlist ^d Mar: 81 Must ^d Mar 82
Lorchant Lewis	"	"	17	"	Enlist ^d Feb'y 81
Lemois Antoine	"	"	18	"	Pri st Jan'y 78
Liuat Joseph	"	"	19	"	Enlist ^d Sep ^r 77
L'esperance Joseph	"	"	1	"	"
La Prairie Thomas	"	"	1	Nov	Enlist ^d May 78 in Goshelm Co 81
Liebert Phillip	Captain	"	"	"	Transfer'd to Invalids Mar: 82
L'esperance Joseph	Musick	Liberts C	16	"	"
Lavoix Michel	Pt.	"	12	"	Pri st 4 Sep ^r 77 Must ^d July 78
Lavigne Jacques	"	"	16	"	"
Lewry Daniel	"	Carliles C.	3	Jan'y 77	Dead same day
Lea Noah	Lieut	Whites C.	3	Mar 76	Capt ^d Oct ^r 80
Larva Hyat	Capt	Reids C.	30	Jan'y 77	Lieut ^d Feb'y 77 Enlist ^d June
Lucky Andrew	"	"	7	Feb'y	Capt ^d Feb'y 77

Above: : Philippe Liébert listed on Regiment Muster Roll, Fold3 File #291772648, Volume 10, List of Officers and Men of Col Moses Hazen's 2d Canadian Regiment, known as "Congress's Own"
<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/601003?objectPage=49>

As this short excerpt shows, many French Canadians volunteers, at least 300. enlisted to fight for the independence of the United States:

"...

Jean Licott,(probably Licotte)

Louis (Lewis) Lavoix,
François Lecoste,
Louis Lonchant, (probably Lonchamp)
Antoine Lemois,
Joseph Liart,
Joseph Lesperence, (probably L'Espérance)
Thomas Lapariere, (probably La Prairie)
Philippe (Philipp) Liebert,
Michel Lacroix,
Jacque Lavigne,
Daniel Lervey...
"

*There are many, many more, and we salute our friends and colleagues at
Le Souvenir Français in Canada for their ongoing memorial work.*

We are listing below French Canadians who were born in France:

Philippe Liébert
From Nemours, Province of Gâtinais
Est. Montréal, Québec
Captain, Continental Army
February 10, 1776





Above:

Top: Hôtel de Ville (City Hall) of Nemours, France where Philippe Liébert was born, Photo by Calips - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=88891127>

Bottom: Church of the Visitation of the Virgin Mary, Montréal, Québec; Philippe Liébert Architect, Photo By Tango7174 - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=10834620>

Some of the earliest volunteers joined as early as June 1775! And many were French Canadians.

Philippe Liébert was born on August 9, 1733, in Nemours, France, in the old-regime province of Île-de-France, the son of Philippe Liébert and Anne Des Porques.

- At just sixteen years old, he was recruited into a French Marine Company (Compagnie Franche de la Marine) on May 22, 1750, and left Port Louis aboard the ship La Catin bound for Canada, arriving in New France around September 1750 at age seventeen.
- He went on to serve as a soldier in Montcalm's Berry regiment, fighting at the Battle of Québec during the Seven Years' War, and remained in Québec alongside fellow soldier Clément Gosselin for 23 years, from 1754 to 1777. In 1761, he married Françoise Lenoir in Pointe-aux-Trembles (Montreal), and the couple went on to have ten children together.

Joining the Continental Army

- By June 1775, Liébert was actively supporting the American cause, and that year he left behind his wife and five young children, including a newborn, to join the Continental Army.
- He received his captain's commission on either February 10 or March 10, 1776 (sources differ), in the newly formed 2nd Canadian Regiment—commonly known as Hazen's Regiment—under Colonel Moses Hazen, taking command of the regiment's 7th Company.

Extensive Revolutionary War Service

- Liébert went on to compile an unusually long and varied combat record, including participation in the Canada Campaign (January–July 1776), the Battle of Saint-Pierre (March 1776), the Battle of Long Island (August 1776), the Battle of Staten Island (August 1777), the Battle of Brandywine Creek (September 1777), and the Battle of Germantown (October 1777).
- He endured the harsh winter encampment at Valley Forge (December 1777–June 1778) and later the Morristown Encampment (December 1780–June 1781), before taking part in the Southern Campaign and the pivotal Siege of Yorktown in October 1781.
- In March 1782, he was transferred to the Invalid Corps and assigned to garrison duty at the Fishkill encampment, ultimately resigning from service in April 1783.

Postwar Struggles for Compensation

- After the war, Liébert spent years pursuing financial compensation for his service. In 1784, he petitioned Congress for reimbursement related to food and shelter he had supplied during the conflict, and the New York State Commissioner awarded him \$100 (about \$3,000 in today's dollars).
- Still awaiting a fuller settlement in 1788, he joined Major Laurent Olivier in filing a complaint against Moses Hazen to force resolution of their accounts, and in October 1789 he won a judgment against Hazen in the Supreme Court for approximately \$350 (about \$13,000 in today's dollars)
- By 1801, when the Ohio Tract lands were being distributed to Revolutionary War refugees, Liébert's claim—along with those of several other veterans—was dismissed on the grounds that he had already been adequately compensated with 1,000 acres from New York State.

Later Life as a Sculptor

- Both before and after his military service, Liébert built a notable career as a talented sculptor and wood-carver in Québec, best known for his decorative work on the Church of La Visitation-de-la-Bienheureuse-Vierge-Marie in Montreal, the oldest surviving church in the city (pictured above).
- He died on either September 23 or 27, 1804, in Montreal, and a road in the eastern part of the city was later named in his honor.

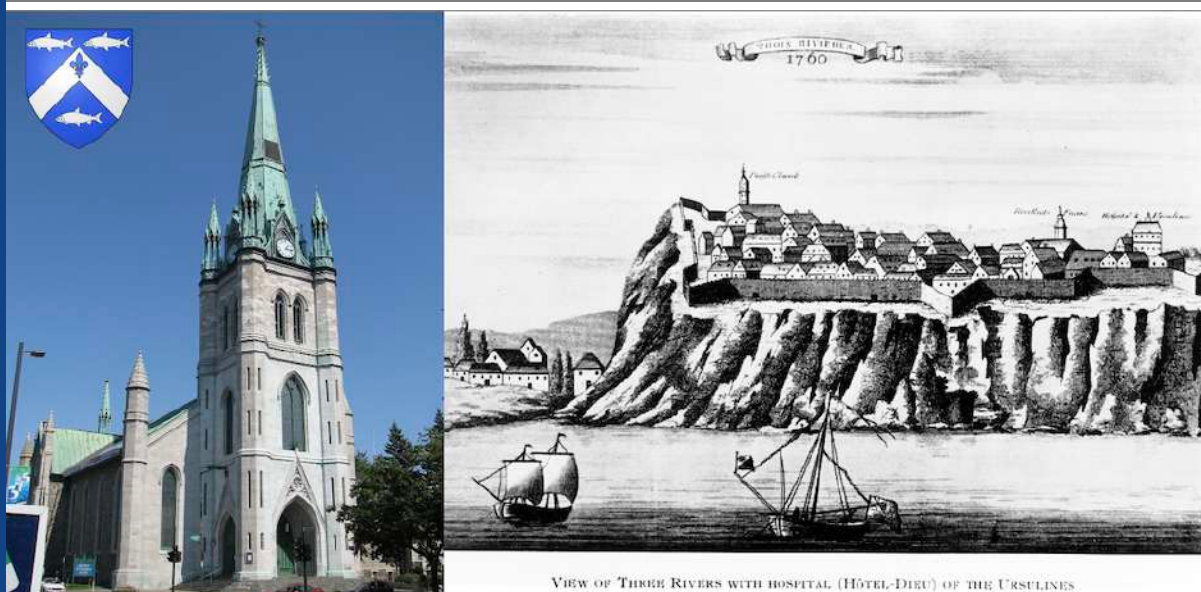
Christophe Pélissier

From Lyon, Province of Lyonnais

Military Supplier

Lieutenant Colonel, Continental Army

June 7, 1776



Above:

Top: Hôtel de Ville, (City Hall) of Lyon, facade completed by Mansard in 1704, By MarcD., CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=54122888>

Bottom Left: Cathédrale de Trois-Rivières (Québec), By Stéphane Batigne - Own work, CC BY 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=7759>

Bottom Right: Trois-Rivières, 1760, shortly after Claude Péliissier came from Lyon, France, CC BY 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=36376553>

Christophe Péliissier was born on April 29, 1728, in Lyons, France, and emigrated to Quebec around 1752, initially working as a king's scrivener. He became closely tied to the Saint-Maurice ironworks near Trois-Rivières, eventually becoming the dominant partner in the operation.

- By 1767, he and several other investors had secured a 16-year lease on the ironworks property from the crown, and by April 1771 Péliissier had bought out

most of his partners' shares, giving him effective control of the enterprise. Under his direction, the ironworks were substantially restored and became a productive and profitable operation.

Support for the American Cause During the Invasion of Canada

- When American forces invaded Canada in 1775–76 as part of their campaign to draw Quebec into the rebellion, Pélissier emerged as a committed supporter of the insurgent cause.
- He was described by a contemporary as a strong adherent of John Wilkes's philosophy of political freedom, which inclined him favorably toward the American rebels. In concrete terms, Pélissier used his ironworks to materially aid the American war effort, supplying ammunition, bombs, and cannonballs to support the American siege of Quebec.
- He also corresponded directly with the Continental Congress, writing on January 8, 1776, to advise them on measures needed to make the siege succeed—positioning him as both a military supplier and something of a strategic advisor to the American cause.

Flight to America and Service as a Lieutenant-Colonel

- When the momentum of the American campaign in Canada collapsed and Pélissier learned that British Governor Guy Carleton was displeased with his activities, he judged it prudent to flee rather than face the consequences of his collaboration.
- On June 7, 1776, he left Trois-Rivières for the United States, carrying his gold and silver along with a bill for 2,000 louis representing advances he had made to the Congressional army—funds he was able to recover once in American territory.
- Once in the United States, he worked for a time at Ticonderoga, New York, serving as a military engineer with the rank of lieutenant-colonel, placing him among the ranks of French-born officers who contributed technical engineering expertise to the American war effort. Following this service, he eventually returned to Lyons, France.
- Rather than arriving from France to enlist as a fresh volunteer, he was a well-established Quebec businessman who converted his existing industrial resources and cross-border position into direct material and intelligence support for the American cause before ultimately taking up a formal military engineering role himself.

Louis Gourlet Duplessis

From Paris
Sergeant, 1776

Louis Gourlet Duplessis (or Gourlet Duplessy), another French volunteer who came through Canada, hailed from Paris. He had lived in Québec for 26 years when he enlisted as a sergeant in Colonel James Livingston's Canadian regiment. He played a key role in recruiting fifty Canadians for the regiment. He participated in several military actions, particularly the Battle of Rhode Island. Eventually, he was taken prisoner and returned to France after being released. In 1780, he resided in Noyon, Picardie, where he sought assistance from Benjamin Franklin.

Antoine Paulin

**From Saint-Paul-de-Varces, Dauphiné
Captain, "Congress's Own regiment"
November 3, 1776**



Above:

Top: Massif du Vercors, province of Dauphiné, By Johan N - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0,

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1588563>

Town Hall of the tiny village of Saint-Paul-de Varces, Dauphiné, birthplace of Antoine Paulin (pop 551 in 1793, 2,218 in 2023), Photo by By Milky - Own work, Public Domain,

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=10515190>

Bottom: Tomb of Antoine Paulin and Daughters of American Revolution plaque, Shutes cemetery, near 202 Rapids Rd, Champlain, NY 12919

GPS: [44.953220](#), [-73.427120](#) Photos added by Mary B on 11 Dec 2022,

<https://www.findagrave.com/user/profile/49950146>

Antoine Paulin (at times spelled Paulint, Paulain, Poland, etc..., but Paulin is attested by [genealogical records](#) in France) was born on April 24, 1734, in Saint-Paul-de-Varces, in the Dauphiné region of France.

- He came to Canada as a recruit in Montcalm's forces, serving in the Régiment de la Reine and later the Royal-Roussillon Regiment during the Seven Years' War. After the war, he remained in Québec and continued serving in the local militia.

Joining the American Cause

- When the American War of Independence began, Paulin gathered a number of his old war comrades to take up arms against the British once again. Because they were Catholic, they were barred from joining the existing colonial militias, so instead they formed an independent company of Canadian volunteers under the command of Arnold and Livingston — a mixed force of roughly 50 Americans and 300 French Canadians.
- This company went on to capture Fort St. Jean and Fort Chambly. Paulin was commissioned captain of this Independent Company of Canadian Volunteers on November 20, 1775, and according to his wife's later pension request, he had joined the colonial army in Québec that same year.

Early Campaigns

Paulin took part in the attack on Fort Chambly under General Montgomery, then moved on to Fort St. Jean and the assault on the Cap Diamant bastion at Québec City. He subsequently returned to Chambly to help organize the retreat from Fort St. Jean.

Service in Hazen's 2nd Canadian Regiment

- On November 3, 1776, Paulin was appointed captain in the 2nd Canadian Regiment — Moses Hazen's "Congress's Own" Regiment, formally established on January 20, 1776 — placing him among the same French-Canadian officer corps as Philippe Liébert.
- He went on to fight in nearly every major engagement of the war except Trenton, including Staten Island (August 1777), Brandywine (October 1777), and Germantown (September 1777).
- He met General Lafayette during the harsh winter encampment at Valley Forge in 1777–78, then fought at the Battle of Monmouth in June 1778. He endured further difficult winters at Redding Camp, Connecticut (1778–79) and Morristown, New Jersey (1779–80), and was present at the decisive Siege of Yorktown in the fall of 1781, continuing his service until July 1, 1782.

Later Life

- He married and had two children, Pierre (1778) and Mary Angélique (1780). Paulin died on September 7, 1813, in Coopersville, New York, at the age of 79.
- He is buried at Shutes cemetery, a historic, inactive 1802 burial ground, situated on roughly three-fourths of an acre in the Town of Champlain, NY, about **two miles southeast of the main Village of Champlain** and approximately 0.9 miles from Saint Joseph's Cemetery in the hamlet of Coopersville:

Tomb of Antoine Paulin and Daughters of American Revolution plaque, Shutes cemetery, Shutes cemetery, near 202 Rapids Rd, Champlain, NY 12919

GPS: [44.953220](#), [-73.427120](#)

• Inscription:

“Revolutionary War Soldier

Antoine Paulin

Captain -Col. Hazen's 2nd Canadian Regt, Continental Army

Also Known As "Congress Own Regiment" Member Of The Society Of The Cincinnati

Born In France 1737

And Died 7 September 1813 Champlain, NY
Marker Placed By
Linares & Saranac Chapters, NSDAR
September 17, 2022"

Laurent Olivier
From St-Maurice-de-Cazevieille, Languedoc
Lieutenant, "Congress's Own" Regiment
February 1776



Above:

A general view of Saint-Maurice-de-Cazevieille, Languedoc, about 45 miles north of Montpellier, in today's département du Gard, Photo by Ben3011 - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0,

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=28914919>

*We briefly listed **Laurent Olivie** in our past June bulletin; however, further research revealed a richer corpus of biographical information — illustrating the difficulty presented by different spellings of surnames, in this case, **Olivier**. Still, even though he died in the little town of Chazy, NY, in 1807, we haven't been able (yet) to identify the location of his grave.*

Laurent Olivier (also spelled Olivie in American records) was born around 1731 in the parish of St-Maurice-de-Cazevieille, in the Languedoc region of southern France.

- He later emigrated to New France (present-day Québec), where he established himself as a well-to-do farmer before the outbreak of the Revolutionary War.

Raising and Leading Troops

- When war broke out, Olivier joined the 2nd Canadian Regiment — Moses Hazen's "Congress's Own" — as a lieutenant in February 1776. In 1776, acting under Hazen and General David Wooster's direction, he personally raised a company of 64 men in Albany, New York, covering their costs and wages for four months out of his own pocket on the promise of quick reimbursement, then marched them to deliver to Washington at Morristown — again largely at his own expense.
- He was promoted to captain in April 1777 and went on to serve throughout the war alongside the regiment's other Canadian and French-American officers, including fellow captain Philippe Liébert.

Recognition and Promotion

- While the army was still encamped at Yorktown, Lieutenant Colonel Antill — who had led the Canadian regiment while Hazen commanded a brigade — recommended Olivier for promotion to major. Hazen enthusiastically endorsed the recommendation to Washington.
- In September 1783, Congress ordered honorary (brevet) promotions of one rank for officers who had held their current grade since 1777; Olivier accordingly became a brevet major, alongside fellow officer Clément Gosselin, though this brought prestige rather than any tangible benefit. He served until the regiment was formally disbanded in June 1783.

Postwar Struggles for Compensation

- Like Liébert, Olivier spent years afterward trying to collect on the money he had personally advanced to raise and supply his company — funds that were tangled up with Hazen's own unresolved accounts.
- In 1785, he petitioned Congress directly, noting that all he had to show for his advances was a personal note from Hazen, and that his promised majority had only ever materialized as an unpaid brevet rank. Congress referred him to New York State's Commissioner of Accounts, but frustrated by the lack of resolution, Olivier and Liébert had Hazen arrested in Albany in 1788, and Olivier sued him for £1,000 — a debt Hazen acknowledged as genuinely owed but contested on the question of payment in specie versus paper currency. The dispute, further complicated by a separate 1782 loan of \$266 from Hazen, dragged on until 1790, when it was finally resolved through an out-of-court compromise settlement.

Later Life and Settlement

- After the regiment's disbandment, Olivier became a leader among the displaced Canadian and Nova Scotia refugee community.
- On August 13, 1787, he joined fellow officers in petitioning Congress regarding land allotments for these refugees, and he eventually settled permanently along the western shore of Lake Champlain, in the Town of Champlain, New York — near where fellow veteran François Amable Monty also settled in nearby Chazy.
- Local records show him established there by 1787 with a household of four, and the 1798 Chazy assessment roll lists his property: a wood house on the lake's west shore along with a log stable and two acres of land.
- Olivier died in 1807. We do not know the location of his grave.



Above:

American and French soldiers at the siege of Yorktown, by Jean-Baptiste-Antoine DeVerger, watercolor, 1781. The watercolor depicts the variety of soldiers fighting for American independence, depicting, from left to right, a Black soldier from the First Rhode Island Regiment, a New England militiaman, a Western Frontier rifleman, and a French officer. By Jean Baptiste Antoine de Verger (1762-1851) - Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=39299004>

**Pierre Jacques Cavallé
Ensign, Gorgia Regiment
January 14, 1776**

Pierre Jacques Cavallé was born on April 29, 1758, and left France for America remarkably young — at just seventeen years old — departing in November 1775, making him one of the earliest French volunteers to join the American cause, arriving even before the formal start of large-scale French recruitment efforts in 1776. He joined the Georgia Regiment as an ensign on January 14, 1776.

Capture and Exchange

- His service was marked by repeated captures and close calls. He was first captured on August 19, 1777, and held until his exchange on December 15 of that year. He then went to sea from February 5 to April 25, 1778, before falling ill and heading back to France — only to be captured again, this time by a British privateer, and taken to Plymouth, England.
- He managed to escape captivity alongside six companions, but was subsequently wounded and taken prisoner once more. After his eventual release, he embarked on a voyage from November 5, 1782, to January 18, 1783.

Later Career in Saint-Domingue

- Cavallé went on to Saint-Domingue in September 1784, where he served as captain of the Cape militia (likely referring to Cap-Français), and later served as aide-de-camp to Louis Tousard — himself a notable French officer who had lost an arm fighting for the American cause at the Battle of Rhode Island — in 1790 and 1791. Cavallé died around 1821.

Jean-Baptiste Benoît de Beauvoir
Chevalier de Saint-Aulaire
Captain, March 21, 1776

The **Chevalier de Saint-Aulaire**, a member of the noble Beauvoir de Saint-Aulaire family, was among the earliest French volunteers to enlist in the American cause.

- On March 21, 1776, he was formally employed as captain of an independent company assigned to serve in Canada, as part of the Continental Army's ongoing invasion of Quebec (the Canadian Campaign), a context in which French-speaking officers were especially valuable.
- Independent companies commanded by men like Saint-Aulaire served a specific strategic purpose: they helped the Continental Congress communicate with, recruit, and lead local French-Canadian sympathizers, some of whom went on to form units like the 1st and 2nd Canadian Regiments (the latter being Moses Hazen's regiment, in which Philippe Liébert (see above) served). *A Note of Caution on the Yorktown Claim*
- Some secondary sources attribute to Saint-Aulaire a later role in the assault on the redoubts during the Siege of Yorktown in 1781, a likely confusion with another Saint-Aulaire who was a Lieutenant on board the Neptune, which participated in the Battle of the Chesapeake.

Gille de Lomont
Engineer, Continental Army
June 10, 1776

Gille de Lomont (1) was a young military engineer, recruited by Barbeu-Dubourg on June 10, 1776, at a moment when the Continental Army was desperate for trained engineering talent to design and build fortifications.

- Dubourg vouched for him directly in his correspondence, "*He is a young man of rare merit, to whom nothing is wanting except to have served in war.*"
- In another letter Barbeu-Dubourg writes: "*I have engaged two engineers: one M. Potter de Baldivia, very young, but well educated, the son of a Chevalier of St. Louis, who was an engineer attached to the Duke of Orleans; the other, Gille de Lomont, a young man of remarkable merit, although he has not yet been employed except in peace.*"

Traveling Companions:

- Lomont did not travel to America alone. He was recruited and set sail alongside **Jacques Potier de Baldivia**, a French infantry captain and military draughtsman whose father was attached to the household of the Duke of Orléans.
- The Potier de Baldivia family had an established reputation in French colonial engineering, and Jacques himself had built a career in the field well before this voyage: from 1755 to 1762 he worked in Saint-Domingue (Haiti), where the Duke of Orléans had sent him to construct new fortifications and strengthen the colony's role as a naval base protecting France's valuable sugar trade.
- While there, he also produced watercolors that would later fetch a fairly high price at auction, as recently as 2012. In 1762, Potier de Baldivia was wounded in a clash with the English and returned to France, where he was honored as a Knight of the Order of Saint-Louis.
- He went on to serve as an adviser on military engineering to the Duke of Orléans until shortly before the French Revolution in 1789 — giving Lomont's traveling companion a documented career of real technical substance, in contrast to Lomont's own far more obscure trail once in America.

A Faint Historical Footprint

- Despite clear documentation of his recruitment, contract, and departure for America in the summer of 1776, Lomont's actual activities and fate once in American service remain largely undocumented.
- This obscurity was fairly common among early French volunteers who arrived before the formal Franco-American alliance of 1778: Congress was overwhelmed by foreign officers seeking elevated rank, language barriers created constant friction, and many such volunteers either returned to France early or ended up serving in local militia roles under heavily anglicized or garbled versions of their names — making them difficult to trace in the American documentary record today.

Note (1): Case in point: the 19th-century historian Thomas Balch appears to have misread Jacques Barbeu-Dubourg's letter, mistaking its reference to 'Gille de Lomont' for the far more famous mineralogist François-Pierre-Nicolas Gillet de Laumont, who was also serving in the French Army at the time.

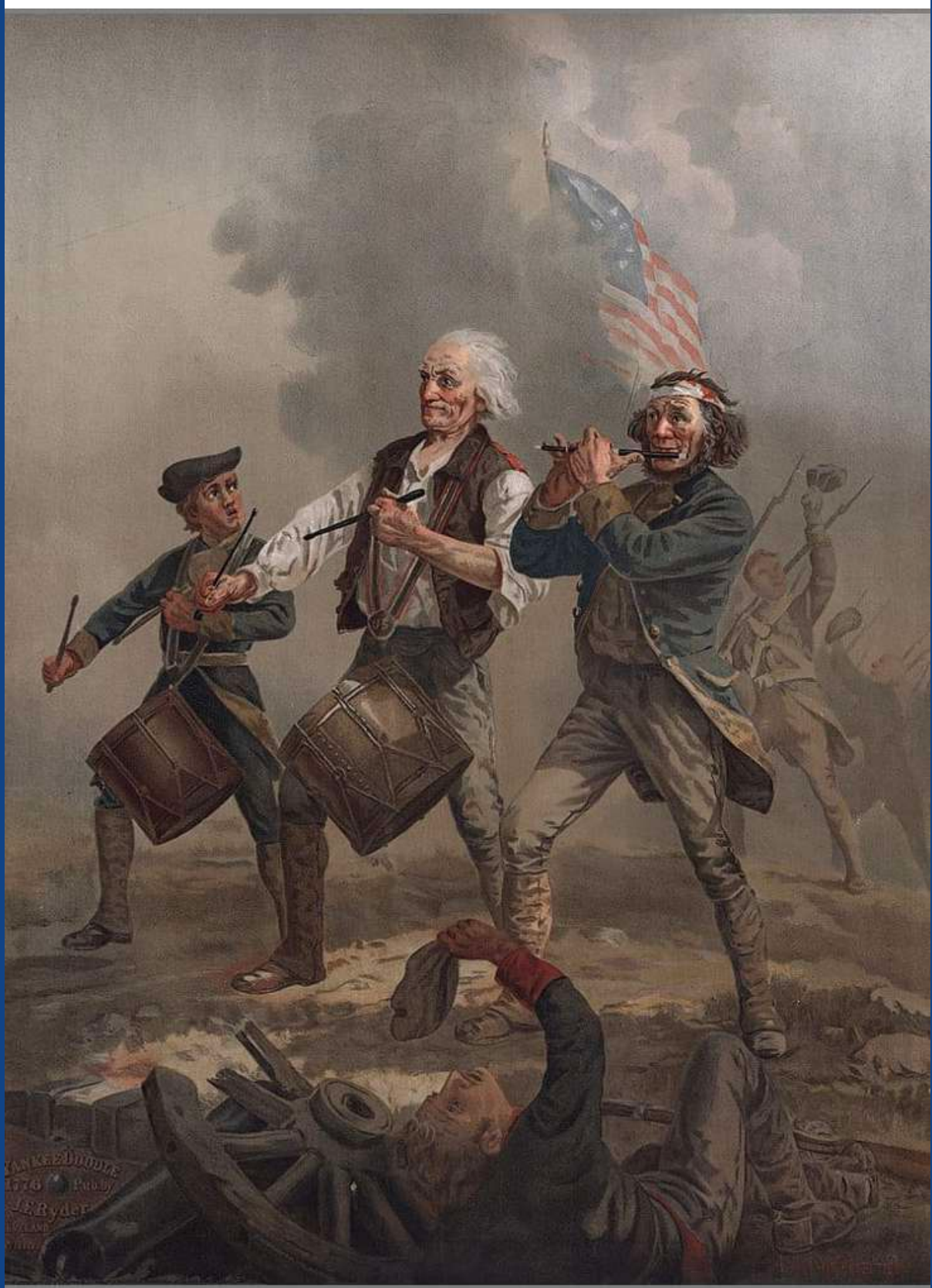
The result was a composite biography that modern historians have since untangled — though the mistake is still occasionally repeated today.

De la Roche de Kerandraon Colonel, Continental Army July 1776

De la Roche de Kerandraon (at times transcribed as Kerandroan was a naval ensign in French service before Congress appointed him an engineer for the United States in July 1776, with pay of sixty dollars a month and the rank of lieutenant-colonel. He served in General Gates's army, notably within the celebrated corps of riflemen commanded by Daniel Morgan—placing him in the same unit as du Bouchet, discussed earlier. He retired from American service with the rank of colonel on March 5, 1778.

- Biographical records further indicate that "Just over three months later, on June 17, 1778, he was killed serving aboard the French frigate *Belle-Poule*, a ship that gained fame that same month for a skirmish with a British squadron that helped precipitate open war between France and Britain."
- However, he *may* be parent with François-Ives de la Roche Kerandraön, a French naval officer born on February 25, 1758, who lost an arm at the above mentioned victory of *La Belle Poule* in 1778 against HMS *Arethusa*. He went on to serve aboard the 64-gun ship *Le Jason* during the Franco-American naval campaign, including operations connected to the march to Philipsburg in the summer of 1781. He kept detailed logs and journals of these operations, was inducted in the Society of the Cincinnati, and remained in the French Navy well beyond the Revolutionary War, continuing his career through the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic periods as a honorary rear-admiral and died in 1822.

Shadows of the Past: Ranks half-remembered



Above:

The Spirit of '76, the famous painting depicting a group of patriots during the American Revolutionary War, 1875, by Archibald Willard, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=499045>

French Volunteers for which we have scant information:

(Listed in "*Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army During the War of the Revolution, April 1775 to December 1783*" by Francis B. Heitman,

Jacques- Paul Govert, breveted captain - lieutenant of artillery by Congress the **29th of July, 1776**.

Saint-Martin, enlisted as volunteer in the War of Independence. Congress gave him the rank of lieutenant-colonel the 23d of July, 1776. He was ordered to New York to serve under General Washington. He was wounded at the Battle of White Plains on October 28, 1776.

Jean-Louis Guillotin de La Viguerie (b. 1734, Saint-Domingue) — first cousin of Dr. Guillotin, inventor of the guillotine — served in the French Bigorre and Saintonge regiments before traveling to New England in 1776, where he was captured almost immediately upon arrival. Exchanged in 1778 through the Comte d'Estaing, he served as first regimental adjutant under d'Estaing at Savannah, and was made a Knight of Saint-Louis in 1780.

Henry Jasme de La Clause (also spelled La Close) declared on December 1, 1780, that he had served the United States from March 1776 until July 26, 1780. He was part of Pulaski's Legion and went back to France on September 4, 1780, due to health issues.

Fidèle Darre, or Darrè, or Dorré, although mentioned as visiting George Washington at the Motier House in New York City, may not have received any commission. "Volunteer, recommended on the 29th of July, 1776, by Congress to Washington, that he should give him employment suited to his ability." We were not successful in finding additional information on genealogy sites such as geneanet.

Same for **Davin**, " former very distinguished sergeant-major," as described by Dubourg, who engaged him in June, 1776, for America, with some advance pay, the journey paid, and the promise of the rank of captain.

"Mons." Dugan played a role in the American Revolution but should not be confused with another Patriot soldier by the name of Jeremiah Dugan, of Irish descent, established in Québec, who commanded a unit composed of French-Canadians volunteers. There was also a James Dugan, an Enseign in the Pennsylvania State Regiment...

We know from the Journals of Congress that:

" Tuesday, February 27, 1776. Resolved, That the sum of 100 dollars be paid to Mons. Dugan for his services in the cause of the United Colonies in Canada, and that it be recommended to the commanding officer of the forces of the United Colonies in that province, to advance him to a post in the army suitable to his merit and services." — *Journals of Congress*, p.76

Note: \$100 in 1776 would be approximately \$3,850 in today's dollars.

We also know that a French volunteer by that name called on George Washington in New York City a few weeks later, probably with this resolution in hand.

Early Service in the Canada Campaign?

- We also know from the Journal of Congress that a soldier by the name Jeremiah Dugan, received a reward on April 27, 1776, for his contributions during the Canada campaign, which was the unsuccessful American invasion of Quebec in the winter of 1775–1776. "Tuesday, March 26, 1776: The committee appointed to confer with colonel Ritzema and Mr. Dugan brought in their report, which was read. Resolved, That an order for 1,000 dollars be

drawn on the treasurers in favour of Mr. Jeremiah Dugan, as a reward for his services in Canada. Resolved, That Mr. Jeremiah Dugan be appointed a major, with the rank of lieutenant-colonel, to command a body of three hundred rangers." — *Journals of Congress*, p.111

Note: \$1,000 in 1776 would be equivalent to about \$38,500 today, a considerable sum that suggests this is a different individual. Furthermore, the use of "Mons." (short for "Monsieur") in one instance and "Mr." in the other reinforces this hypothesis.

Just as the Historical Register has a "New, Revised and Enlarged Edition, With Addenda" by Robert H. Kelby, published in 2008, added new names, we are hopeful that new information will surface in the future, allowing us to properly remember and honor all these "Ranks half-remembered"...

ERRATA and COMMENTS from our last Bulletin:

- A reader pointed out the fact that King Louis XVI of France and King Charles III of Spain were first cousins, twice removed. However, Louis XVI referred to him as 'My uncle' in his handwritten correspondence, and not 'cousin,' as he did with King George III of Great Britain (as was customary in all correspondence with other kings). He may have done so to keep a deferential tone, as he was doing his utmost to convince Spain to join the fray. In the end, faced with constant hesitation from Spain, Louis XVI decided to go it alone.
- According to a variety of official and reliable sources, the number of US soldiers killed on D-Day alone was 2,501, not 2,400. Our sincere apologies to our Veterans and their families.
- The Association of French Reserve Officers in the United States (ACREFEU) helped us finance in its entirety the bronze marker for artillery Capt. Louis d'Ohicky Arundel inaugurated this past July 9th. Our apologies for the omission, and our renewed thanks for making this marker a reality.
- We also apologize to our readers for several typos. We will do our best in the future to have paragraphs reviewed by apps such as grammarly or AI.



Above:

Allegory of France Liberating America, 1784, by Jean Suau, 1784, oil on canvas, 1.35 × 1.86 m. Musée Franco-Américain du Château de Blérancourt, MNB © Photo RMN-Grand Palais (Château de Blérancourt) / Gérard Blot

Several more French volunteers received commissions from Congress in 1776, however they did not land in America until the beginning of 1777, including the most famous of all: the Marquis de Lafayette.

We will pay tribute to his companions as well as other French volunteers of 1777 and 1778 in future Bulletins!

PART TWO

**Tribute to the American Volunteers
who joined the Lafayette Flying Corps:**

Every month, we are paying tribute to an American volunteer who fought for France, freedom and democracy. This month, we honor:

**First Lieutenant Benjamin Stuart Walcott
Declared "Mort Pour la France"
December 12, 1917
at Saint-Soupplets (77 - Seine-et-Marne, France)**

Note*: "*Mort pour la France*" meaning "Died for France," is a legal term in France. It is an honor given to men or women who lost their lives in conflicts while serving the country. This phrase appears on their

PARTIE À REMPLIR PAR LE CORPS.

WALCOTT

Nom **WALCOTT**

Prénoms **Stuart**

Grade **Colonel - Aviateur**

Corps **Service de Marche de la Légion étrangère**

N° **41447** au Corps. — Cl. **E. F. 1918**

Matricule **12500** au Recrutement **Paris Central**

Mort pour la France le **12 décembre 1917**

Saint-Paul-de-Varènes (Seine et Marne)

Genre de mort **Disparue en**

Combat

Né le **8 juillet 1896**

à **Washington** Département **Etats Unis**

Arr. municipal (p. Paris et Lyon).
à défaut rue et N°.

Jugement rendu le **28 octobre 1921**

par le Tribunal de **Meaux**

acte ou jugement transcrit le **2 novembre 1921**

à **S. P. de Varènes**

N° du registre d'état civil **1 et 2**

300-705-1022. [20434]



Ord. **Walcott**

Mec. **Stuart**

Num. **Stuart**

Grade **2e. g. 1912 Cop.**

Recrutement **1912 C** N° M° au Recrut. **1912 12100**

Classe **1916** N° M° au 1er Groupe d'Aviation

Engagé le **8 juin 1912** au 1er Groupement de l'Aviation

Appelé le **10.6.17** en qualité de **C.P.**

Employé à l'Aviation le **6.9.17** Division **N**

Venu de **Paris** le **23.10.1917** à **18h**

Né le **8.7.1896** fils de **Charles**

A. Washington, Américain, pour Helena, Harve

Célibataire, marié, veuf, divorcé, père de garçons et filles

Profession avant la mobilisation **Étudiant**

Mobilisé le **8 juin 1912** au 1er Groupement de l'Aviation

Aviation - Paris

Signature: **Benj. Stuart Walcott**



LIEUT. BENJAMIN WALCOTT

Adresse de la personne à aviser : **Walcott, Charles, Smithsonian, Washington**

Mutations au G. D. E.

Facts R 94 B 26.10.17

Livret matricule

Arrivé, le **27.10.17**

Parti, le **27.10.17**

A **N-84**

Signature

Above:

Top Left: Livret Militaire of Benjamin Stuart Walcott, Ministère de la Défense, Public domain: Memorial Volume of the American Field Service in France, 1921.

https://www.memoiredeshommes.defense.gouv.fr:443/ark:40699/m00523a043807f38.moteur=arko_defaut_66fa612acbc0d

Top Right: Photo of Benjamin Stuart Walcott, (well protected from the cold!) added by Mark,

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/175436669/benjamin-stuart-walcott#view-photo=152845206>

Bottom Left and Right: Livret Militaire, Ministère de la Défense

https://www.memoiredeshommes.defense.gouv.fr:443/ark:40699/m00523ad2aa725fc.moteur=arko_defaut_66fa612acbc0d

Bottom Center: Civilian I.D. photo of Benjamin Stuart Walcott, Class of '17, Princeton University, Princeton Alumni Weekly, Dec. 19, 1917, Photo added by Tom Nichols on Sept. 16, 2017

Benjamin Stuart Walcott

Rank: Corporal, then First Lieutenant

Units: Régiment de marche de la Légion étrangère (RMLE) - Lafayette Escadrille

State: District of Columbia

Date of Death: 12-12-1917

Serial Number: 41447

Mention: Mort pour la France

Cemetery: Lafayette Escadrille Memorial, Marnes la Coquette

Decoration: Croix de Guerre, Médaille Militaire

Benjamin Stuart Walcott was born on June 2, 1896, in Washington, D.C.

"In the Spring of 1917 as part of the Class of 1917, Benjamin Stuart Walcott was anxious to contribute to the war effort and he departed Princeton University to join the U.S. Signal Corps. In April of that year he entered the U.S. Army and began flight training at Newport News, Virginia. He resigned from the Army in May and departed for France on the S.S. Chicago intending to join the Lafayette Flying Corps, the American volunteer pilots who served France before the USA entered the war. He joined France's Service Aeronautique on June 3, 1917.

Walcott underwent French aviation, aerobatic, and gunnery training at Avord, Pau, and the G.D.E. Because of his excellent piloting skills, he earned his brevet six weeks ahead of his classmates on September 6, 1917 and then graduated from the training pipeline on October 27, 1917. He was assigned to Escadrille SPA 84 to serve at the Front.

On December 12, 1917 Walcott flew his first combat patrol. Over the Champagne sector, he engaged a German bi-place aircraft over enemy lines and succeeded in shooting it down. As he headed back for friendly territory, he was jumped by three enemy Albatross scouts and was shot down and killed near Saint Souplet. Initially buried by German troops at Leffincourt, his remains were moved to the Lafayette Flying corps Memorial just West of Paris in 1928. Having passed his entrance exams to transfer to American Aviation, his commission as a First Lieutenant in the U.S. Army arrived after his death. He was posthumously awarded the French Croix de Guerre with Palm as well as the Medaille Militaire."

Excerpt from: "The Lafayette Flying Corps: The American Volunteers in the French Air Service in World War One," by Dennis Gordon. Schiffer Military History, Atglen, PA: 2000

Walcott is buried at the Lafayette Escadrille Memorial in Marnes-la-Coquette, France, and a cenotaph in his honor also stands at Rock Creek Cemetery in Washington, D.C. (Source: Find a Grave memorial #175436669; Mémoire des Hommes, French Ministry of Defense archives.)

His name is engraved on the WWI Memorial at Princeton University.

Mark your calendar!

**The Society of the Cincinnati of Maryland
The Sons of the American Revolution Battle of Brooklyn Chapter, and
The Michael A. Rawley American Legion Post
present:**

**A Remembrance Ceremony &
Battle of Brooklyn Living History – NY
August 22, 2026**



August 22, 2026 @ 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM

**Old Stone House of Brooklyn, 336 3rd St
Brooklyn, NY 11215**

August 27, 2026 marks the 250th anniversary of the Battle of Brooklyn.

Old Stone House & Washington Park partners with the Society of the Cincinnati of Maryland, the Sons of the American Revolution Battle of Brooklyn Chapter, and the Michael A. Rawley American Legion Post to commemorate the Battle of Brooklyn.

This event includes reenactor regiments from the Battle of Brooklyn, battle strategies and daily life during the Revolutionary War, historical costumers, live music, and a scavenger hunt along the Gowanus Road to The Green-Wood Cemetery (today's 5th Avenue).

- Tickets: There are no paper or e-tickets. Attendees do not have to check in. Thank you for registering! Registration is helpful to give us an idea of participant numbers.
- Location: The Commemoration is held on the field West of Old Stone House. 336, 3rd Street Brooklyn, NY 11215
- Accessibility & Safety: This is an outdoor event. Water and a large shade tent are provided, but the event can run very hot. The ground floor of Old Stone House is wheelchair accessible with a 1.5 inch threshold. Please come in to keep cool and learn more about the site. Contact the organizers at [718-768-3195](tel:718-768-3195) with questions.

Portsmouth Historical Society
August 22 - 30, 2026

1776: Loyalty or Liberty?



Presented by the
BATTLE OF RHODE ISLAND CHAPTER, NSDAR
ridar.org/battleofrhodeisland

How were the lives of ordinary people affected by the events of the American Revolutionary War?

From an award-winning website to an in-demand pop-up exhibition, the "American Revolution Experience", a collaborative project of the American Battlefield Trust and the Daughters of the American Revolution is beginning a new phase in its quest to connect modern audiences with the fascinating story of our nation's origin. The American Revolution Experience will travel to scores of libraries, historical societies and museums through 2027, introducing visitors to a cast of historical characters with diverse experiences throughout the conflict and the places they visited on their journey.

This innovative exhibition includes display panels and interactive digital kiosks that use storytelling, illustration, technology and unique artifacts and primary accounts to connect modern audiences with the people and places that shaped the birth of our nation.

Free and open to the public, at the Portsmouth Historical Society Friday, 870 East Main Rd, Portsmouth, August 21st through Sunday August 30th.

Saturday Aug. 22nd, 11 AM - 5 PM, Theme - Genealogy. U.S. Park Rangers present a FREE Genealogy Workshop - 1 PM
Portsmouth Community Theater performance "Voices from Butts Hill". Readings from Revolutionary War diaries. - 3 PM

Sunday Aug. 23rd, 11 AM- 5 PM, Theme - Historical reenacting and material culture
Dirty Blue Shirts - 1PM - Living history demonstration of women and their wardrobes
Susan J. Jerome - 3PM - URI collections manager, historic textiles and costumes collection.

Wednesday Aug. 26th, 5 PM - 8 PM, Theme - Crafting Victory - A focus on Nathanael Greene
Speaker - Author Janet Uhlar - General Nathanael Greene 5:30-6:00
Intermission reception/refreshments 30 minutes 6:15- 6:45
Speaker- Ambassador George Krol - General Thaddeus Kosciuszko 6:45-7:15

Thursday Aug. 27th, 10 AM – 2 PM – Traveling Exhibit open to public
Friday Aug 28th, 10 AM – 2 PM – Traveling Exhibit open to public

Saturday Aug. 29th, 11 AM- 5 PM, Theme - Family Day
Ladies of the Greene- 18th-century reenactors, colonial life demonstrations, stories in the Schoolhouse and more.

Sunday Aug. 30th, 11 AM - 5 PM, "Forgotten Patriots", With freedom, liberty, and equality at stake, people of African descent made significant and often unrecognized contributions to the American fight for Independence. Speaker: Dr. Akeia de Barros Gomes, Director, Center for Black History, Newport - 1 PM Members of the Navy Choristers, small selection of Patriotic songs – 3 PM

Sunset Salute to Commemorate 248th Anniversary of the Battle of Rhode Island August 29, 2026



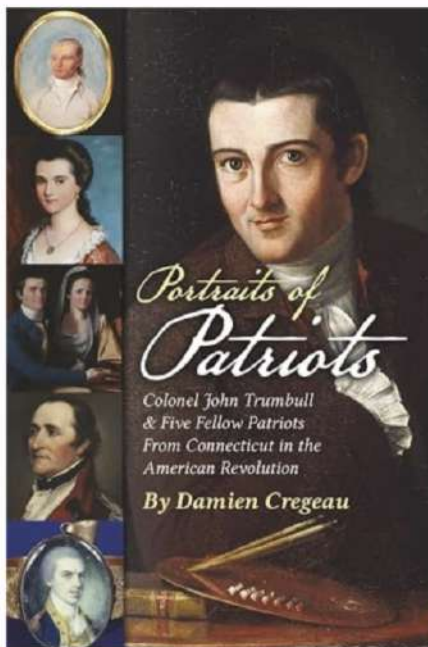
The Butts Hill Fort Restoration Committee (BHFR) of the Battle of Rhode Island Association (BoRIA) will hold a wreath-laying ceremony with a musket salute on the 248th anniversary of the Battle of Rhode Island on Saturday, August 29th, at 6:30 PM at Butts Hill Fort in Portsmouth, RI. We take this moment to remember and reflect on the events of that day in 1778. The public is invited and parking will be available at the Wealth Management lot on the top of Dyer Street off Sprague Street and the Portsmouth High School tennis courts. There is no parking on Butts Street.

This year's guest speaker is Damien Cregeau, author of *Portraits of Patriots: Colonel John Trumbull and Five Fellow Patriots From Connecticut in the American Revolution*. He will touch on the stories of two Battle of Rhode Island veterans: famed painter John Trumbull and Major Ebenezer Huntington of Connecticut. The battle was tactically inconclusive, with both sides suffering significant casualties, but it ultimately ended with the British maintaining control of Aquidneck Island. Most historians call it a "stalemate." Butts Hill Fort was the headquarters of patriot forces under the command of General John Sullivan.

Casualties (approximate): American - 30 killed, 137 wounded, and 44 missing.

British, Hessian and Loyalists - 38 killed, 210 wounded, and 12 missing.

If you're a reenactor and would like to participate please contact Jim Stearns, Director of Public Relations. publicrelations@battleofrhodeisland.org



Dedication
of our Memorial to French Sailors
Riverwalk, Yorktown, VA

October 18, 2026



Location of granite memorial

In 2022, we installed an interpretive marker dedicated to Admiral de Grasse explaining the crucial role of the French Navy 1778-1783. It has been seen by thousands of tourists on the Riverwalk, a few steps from the 4 sculptures of General Washington, Rochambeau, Lafayette and admiral de Grasse.

We have received the authorization from Yorktown authorities to install a granite memorial "In honor of 3,520 French sailors and soldiers who fought at sea and died for the independence of the United States 1778 - 1783 ". They do not have tombs as there are resting at the bottom of the ocean.

We are deeply grateful for the support from the Virginia Society, Sons of the Revolution. The inauguration is planned for October 18, 2026, on the eve of the 245th anniversary of the joint French-American victory.

Details will be included in our next Bulletin in September.

**Re-dedication
of the
Lapérouse Memorial
and inauguration of our Society's marker
Maui, Hawaii
Postponed to Fall 2026 (date to be announced)**



This restoration of the lava rock monument and installation of the marker would not have been possible without the constant support of **Marc Onetto**, West Coast Regional Delegate. Our interpretive marker, in three languages (English, Hawai'iian and French) and in Hawai'iian style, was installed last October and already visited by many tourists.

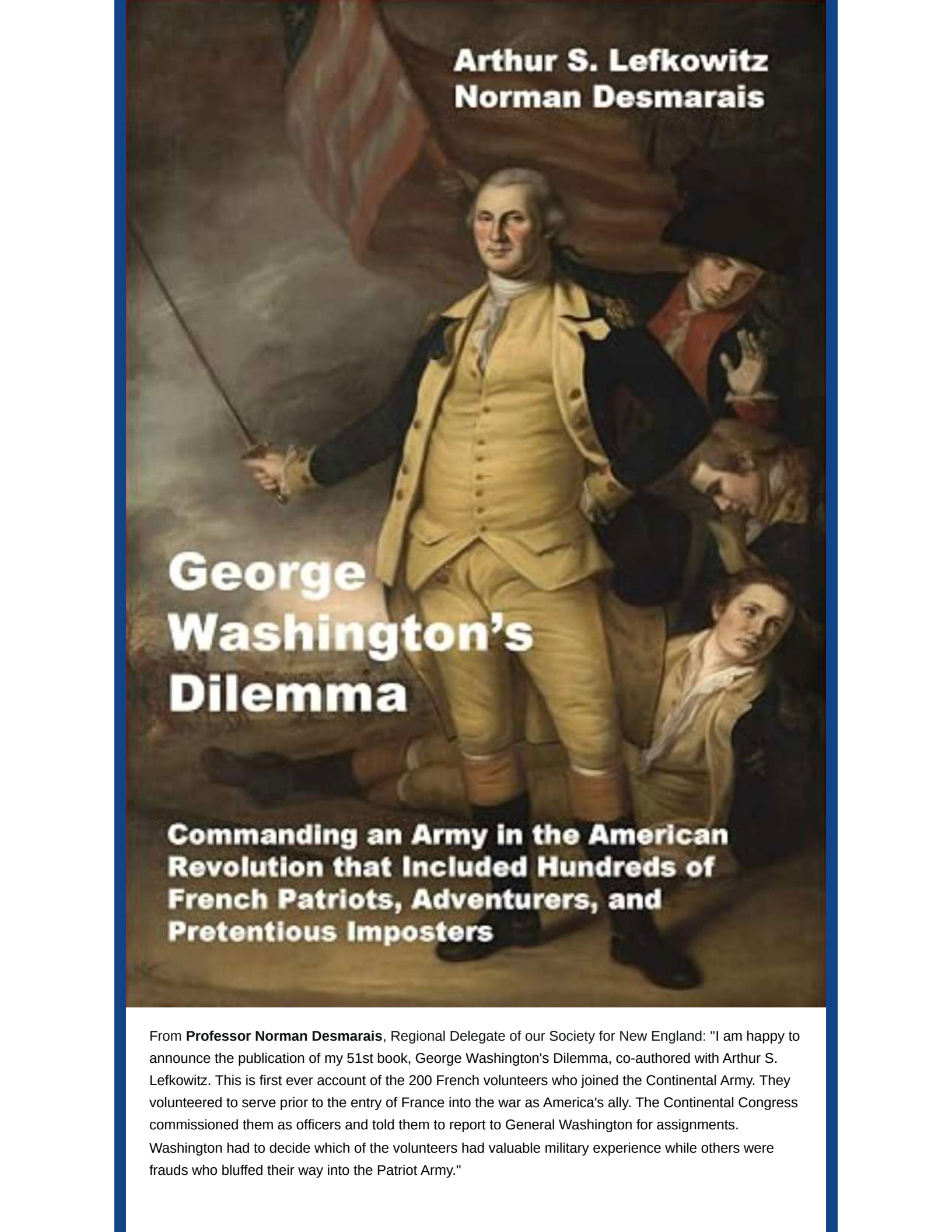
We were hoping to officially re-dedicate the site by the end of May 2026. Due to the French Ambassador's other pressing obligations, the ceremony has now been postponed.

We will announce the exact day of the rededication ceremony in a future Bulletin!

Summer Reading List!

From Prof. Norman Desmarais
and Arthur S. Lefkowitz:

"George Washington's Dilemma"



**Arthur S. Lefkowitz
Norman Desmarais**

George Washington's Dilemma

**Commanding an Army in the American
Revolution that Included Hundreds of
French Patriots, Adventurers, and
Pretentious Imposters**

From **Professor Norman Desmarais**, Regional Delegate of our Society for New England: "I am happy to announce the publication of my 51st book, *George Washington's Dilemma*, co-authored with Arthur S. Lefkowitz. This is first ever account of the 200 French volunteers who joined the Continental Army. They volunteered to serve prior to the entry of France into the war as America's ally. The Continental Congress commissioned them as officers and told them to report to General Washington for assignments. Washington had to decide which of the volunteers had valuable military experience while others were frauds who bluffed their way into the Patriot Army."

"...a team of unique Revolutionary War scholars have successfully tackled the story of the French volunteers who helped win American independence. They are Arthur Lefkowitz, who has a reputation for dogged research and Norman Desmarais who is fluent in French and has written extensively about French participation in the American Revolution. Their research has produced this groundbreaking book. It reveals that the Europeans who fought with the Patriots were either educated in France, officers in the French Army or influenced by the French to join the rebel cause. It lists 200 men who came from France as volunteers early in the war who were commissioned as officers in the Continental Army. Some of them were a great asset to General Washington while others were frauds who came to America to make money. The book focuses on some of the most interesting and important of the French volunteers. George Washington's Dilemma is a pioneering study of a previously ignored but fascinating aspect of the American Revolution."

Available on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

Major General Vincent de Kytspotter

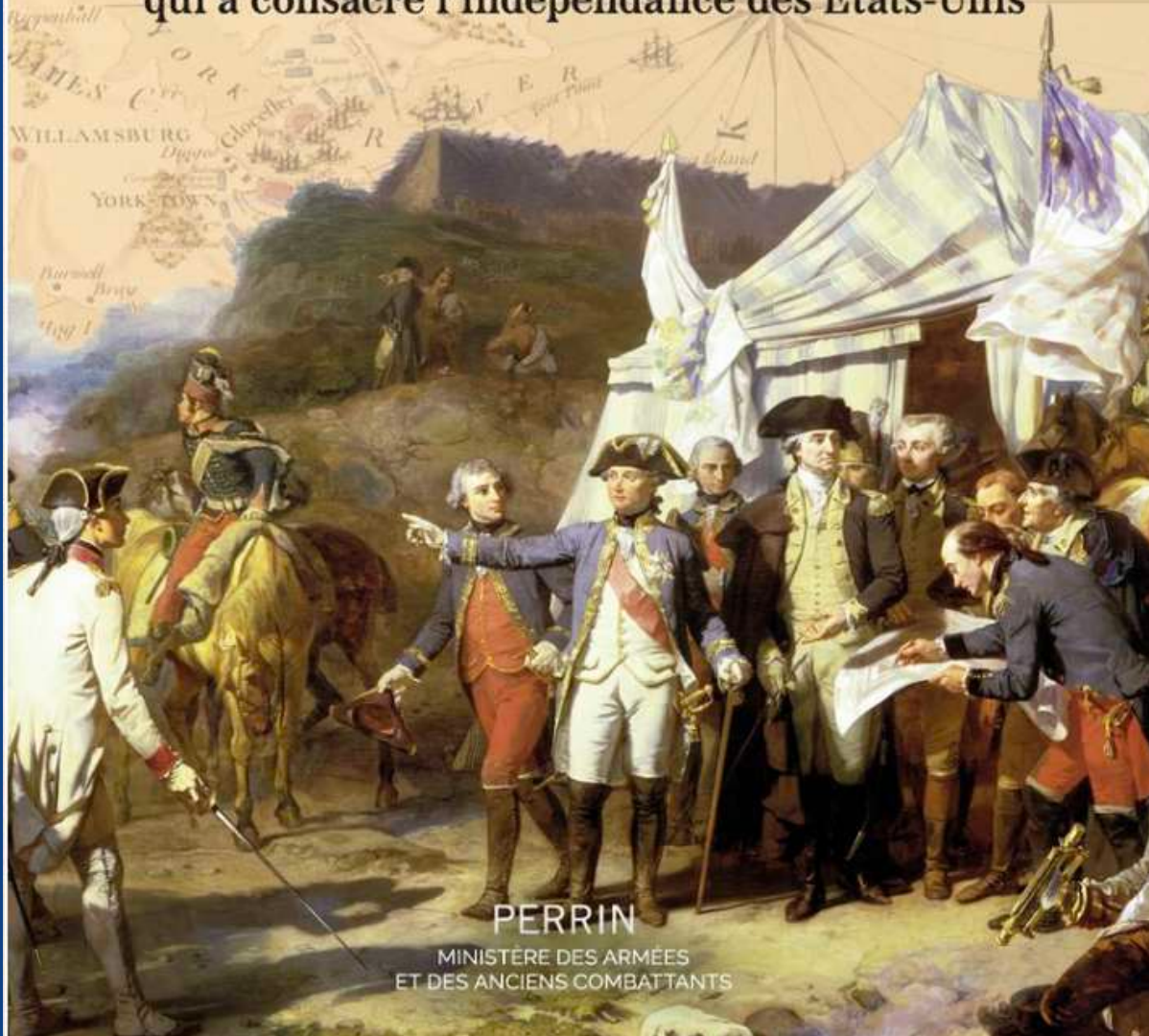
**Yorktown, October 1781
The Franco-American victory
that secured the independence
of the United States**

Général
Vincent de Kytspotter

YORKTOWN

OCTOBRE 1781

La victoire franco-américaine
qui a consacré l'indépendance des États-Unis



The forgotten victory that brought independence to the United States.

Yorktown, on October 19, 1781, was the last major battle of the American Revolutionary War, which, *in the end*, led the British Crown to relinquish its thirteen American colonies.

It was the culmination of France's tremendous political and military drive to avenge the humiliation of its defeat in the Seven Years' War (1756–1763) and to reclaim its central

place among the great European powers. This iconic and historic victory over the world's finest army was achieved thanks to the resolute and decisive commitment of the French expeditionary force under the command of exceptional and visionary general officers: General Count de Rochambeau for the land forces, and Admiral Count de Grasse for the Royal Navy.

The Siege of Yorktown also stands as a prime example of the seamless interoperability and coordination between the Continental Army of the United States and the French auxiliary force, both under the unified command of General Washington. This unprecedented military campaign, conducted between 1780 and 1782 in North America, served as a formidable testing ground for new French weapon systems—which would later bring glory to the Napoleonic armies—such as the Gribeauval artillery system and the Charleville musket. The corps of general staff officers of the Kingdom, the Republic, and later the Empire had its origins on the American battlefields. Rochambeau's captains would go on to become Napoleon's generals and marshals! It was also the last victorious military campaign of the Ancien Régime—one that the French Revolution, the wars of the Republic, and later the military exploits of the Empire would help to consign to oblivion.

Finally, the victory at Yorktown not only led to the independence of the United States—the 250th anniversary of which we are celebrating—but it also profoundly altered the balance of power for centuries to come, thereby contributing to the emergence of a new world.

Paperback, in French, \$39.60, available on [Amazon](#)

Dr. Raymond E. Sullivan, M.D.
Middlebury Historical Society, CT
(Foreword by Thierry Chaunu)

Rochambeau's French Army at Breakneck

Rochambeau's French Army at Breakneck



Raymond E. Sullivan, M.D.

"After the American victory at Saratoga in 1777, France formally entered the Revolutionary War under the command of General Rochambeau. In 1780, over 5,000 French troops landed in Rhode Island and later marched through Connecticut to join General Washington's army on the way to the decisive victory at Yorktown. This book tells the powerful story of that journey - focusing on their encampment at Breakneck Hill - and honors the sacrifice of the thousands of French soldiers whose courage helped secure America's independence."

Available at [Barnes & Noble](#) and on [Amazon](#)

Join Us!

**If you have not done so already....
Please renew now your Membership!**

Whether you are renewing, joining us for the first time, or after an absence, we send you our warm greetings of welcome.

Your contribution is essential to our activities!

- \$ 25 for Veterans and Students
- \$ 50 for a membership (\$80 for a couple)
- \$100 for a Supporting Level membership
- \$150 for a Benefactor Level membership
- \$250 donation for the 'America250 special fund' (installation of a bronze plaque at Gwynn Island, VA)
- \$500 donation for our granite memorial at Riverwalk, Yorktown, VA to honor the 3,250 French sailors who died at sea for the independence of the United States (1778-1783)
- Any amount for the sculpture of Le Petit Prince and Antoine de Saint Exupéry in Miami (with \$1,000, *your name will be on the Donors plaque inside the Museum*)
- **We are an IRS-qualified 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Dues and/or donations are tax deductible. Donations of \$250 or more automatically include membership for 2026**

Note: If you joined in the final quarter of 2025, your membership is automatically extended through the entirety of the calendar year 2026.

The list of our activities, achievements, projects, is extensive and can be discovered on our site: www.SouvenirFrancaisUSA.org as well as our monthly Bulletins.

Please help us promote the historical ties between France and the United States. We thank you for your membership and any donations you may make to help us promote our missions and values!

***You can send your Membership or donation
via PayPal:***

<https://souvenirfrancaisusa.org/donate/>

(100% secure - no need to have an account with PayPal - major credit cards accepted)

or

By check, payable to "American Society of Le Souvenir Français, Inc"

Mailing address:

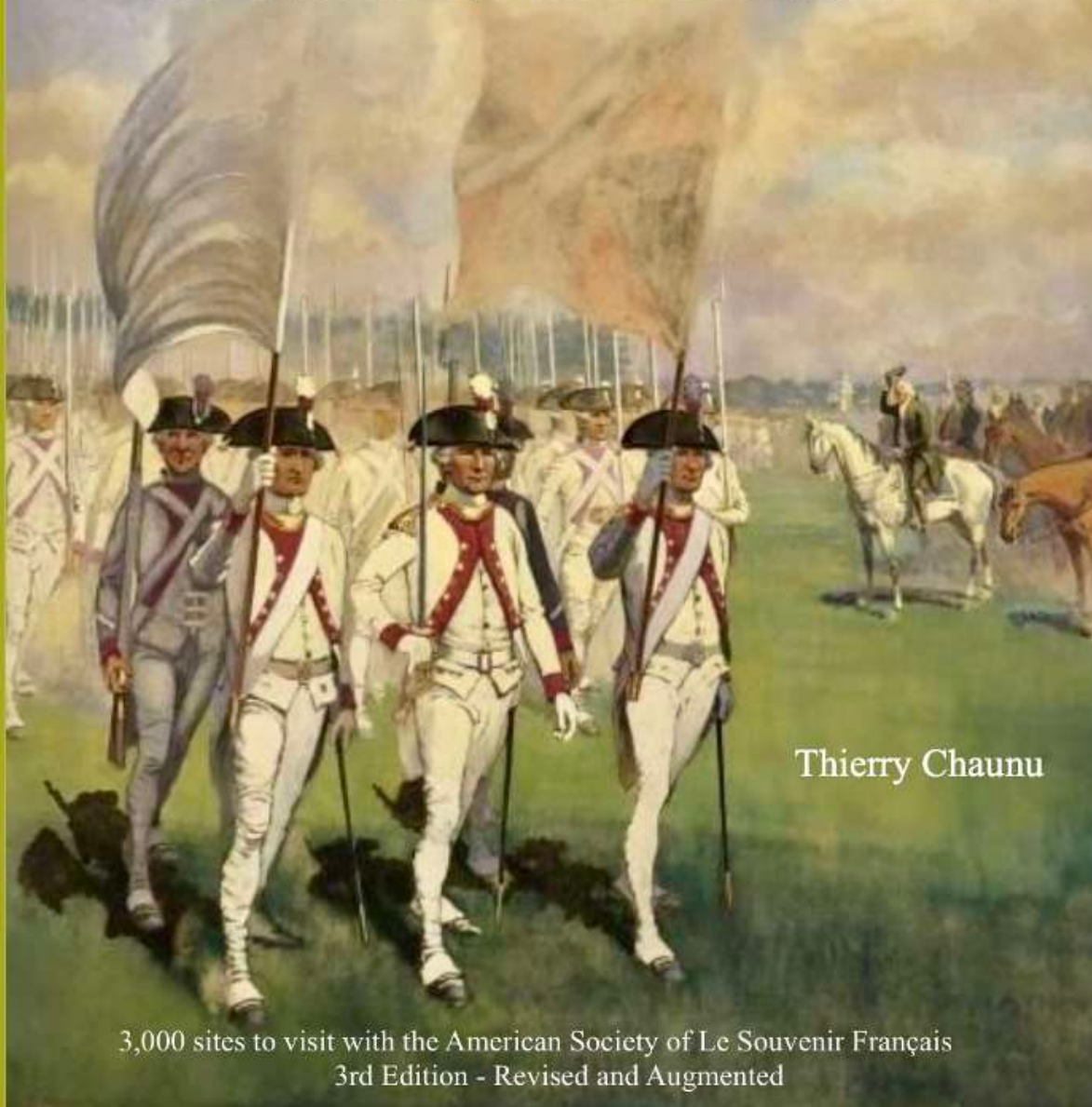
Yves de Ternay, General Secretary
5650 Netherland Avenue #4G Bronx NY 10471

*You will receive a Membership e-card, a donation receipt,
and
a unique link to access our compilation of French sites in the U.S.A.
(a \$19.5 value)*

JOIN US AND RECEIVE THIS GIFT!

Memories of France

Five Centuries of French presence in the United States of America



3,000 sites to visit with the American Society of Le Souvenir Français
3rd Edition - Revised and Augmented

The 3rd edition of Memories of France (Revised & Augmented) is now available on Amazon documents 3,000 sites of French presence across all 50 states and five centuries of American history, up from 2,000 from the previous edition.

Join us and receive a special link to access a free PDF special version !

OUR MISSIONS:

- To preserve the memory of the French soldiers, sailors and airmen who gave their lives for freedom, and who are buried in the United States.
- To honor French Citizens who did great deeds in the United States, or with a strong connection with the United States,
- To promote the appreciation for French culture and heritage in the United States, and the ideals that unite our two nations, in order to pass the torch of

memory to younger generations.

- To strengthen the long-standing traditional bonds of friendship between the American and French peoples, and to this end: erect or maintain memorials and monuments and encourage historical research, public presentations and publications in the media.

The American Society of Le Souvenir Français, Inc. is an independent American corporation, apolitical, established in 1993 in NY, with 501 (c) 3 non-profit status.

Board of Directors 2025 - 2028

Directors:

Françoise Cestac, Honorary President • Gabriel Chalom • Thierry Chaunu, President • Yves de Ternay, General Secretary • Patrick du Tertre, 1st Vice President • Francis Dubois • Alain Dupuis, 2nd Vice President • Daniel Falgerho • Dr. Patti Maclay, M.D. • Domitille Marchal-Lemoine • Mathias Maisonnier, Treasurer • Prof. Clément Mbom, 3rd Vice President • Jean-Hugues Monier, Auditor • Patrick Pagni • Harriet Saxon

We are pleased to announce that W. Robert Kelly, Jr. is our new Regional Delegate for Virginia as of June 1st, 2026.

Regional Delegates:

Jacques Besnainou, Great Lakes and Midwest • Bruno Cateni, South • Prof. Norman Desmarais, New England • W. Robert Kelly, Jr., Virginia • Alain Leca, Washington D.C. • Marc Onetto, West Coast • Brigitte Van den Hove – Smith, Southeast

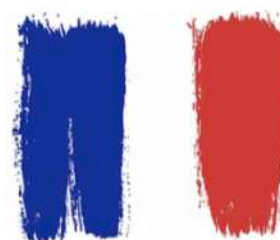
MONTHLY BULLETINS

OUR AIM: To turn the spotlight on a famous, or less famous, episode or historical figure during the long shared history between France and the United States, with illustrations and anecdotes.

You can have access to our past monthly Bulletins

(in English and French) at: www.SouvenirFrancaisUSA.org

Click on the illustrations on each page for further access to sources and references



The American Society of Le Souvenir Français, Inc. is a registered NY State non-profit corporation and has full IRS tax exempt 501(c)3 status. All donations are tax deductible.

Copyright © 2026 The American Society of Le Souvenir Français, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

Merci de nous contacter si vous souhaitez recevoir ce bulletin dans sa version traduite en français.

Contact: Thierry Chaunu, President
Email: tchaunu@SouvenirFrancaisUSA.org



© 2026 The American Society of Le Souvenir Français Inc. | 500 East 77th Street #2017 | NY, NY 10162 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!