

The War in the North, 1775-1778

Student Name _____ Date _____

Activity #1: “Shot Heard ‘Round the World”

Directions: Read the following document. As you read, keep in mind the questions that appear below. Be prepared to discuss your answers with the rest of the class.

[Paul Revere, Memorandum on Events of April 18, 1775,](http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=874)
[\(http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=874\)](http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=874)

Paul Revere (1735-1818) was a prominent silversmith in Boston and a staunch advocate of American independence. He had participated in the Boston Tea Party in 1774, and, expecting British retaliation, he helped to organize a group of local patriots to keep watch on British forces in the area. His “Midnight Ride” on the night of April 18, which he recounts in this document, is one of the most famous episodes in American History.

Question	Answer
What do we know about the author of this account?	
What was the individual’s role in the event? Why might that be important?	
What was the purpose for creating the record?	
To what extent might self-interest have influenced the account?	
Who was the intended audience? Was the audience public or private? Why is knowing that important?	
When was the record made? Why is the time important?	

The War in the North, 1775-1778

Student Name _____ Date _____

Activity #1: “Shot Heard ‘Round the World”

Directions: Read the following document. As you read, keep in mind the questions that appear below. Be prepared to discuss your answers with the rest of the class.

[General Thomas Gage Reports on the Battles of Lexington and Concord](http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=865) in an Excerpt of a Letter to the Earl of Dartmouth on April 22nd, 1775: <http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=865>

Thomas Gage (1719-1787) was commander-in-chief of all British forces in North America from 1763 to 1775. When martial law was declared in Boston in 1774, after the Boston Tea Party, Gage also became governor of Massachusetts, and in that capacity he ordered the arrest of prominent patriot leaders like Samuel Adams and John Hancock. To avoid capture both men fled to Lexington, and on the night of April 18 Gage ordered 700 British regulars to march to the town.

Question	Answer
What do we know about the author of this account?	
What was the individual's role in the event? Why might that be important?	
What was the purpose for creating the record?	
To what extent might self-interest have influenced the account?	
Who was the intended audience? Was the audience public or private? Why is knowing that important?	
When was the record made? Why is the time important?	

The War in the North, 1775-1778

Student Name _____ Date _____

Activity #1: “Shot Heard ‘Round the World”

Directions: Read the following document. As you read, keep in mind the questions that appear below. Be prepared to discuss your answers with the rest of the class.

[Lord Percy reports on the retreat to General Gage on April 20th, 1775:](http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=866)
<http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=866>

Lord Hugh Percy (1742-1817) was a powerful English nobleman (he was the Duke of Northumberland, in northern England) who had served as an officer in the British army since 1759. In 1775 he held the rank of Brigadier General, and on April 18 General Thomas Gage, the overall British commander in North America, ordered him to lead a detachment of troops in support of Major John Pitcairn’s advance toward Lexington.

Question	Answer
What do we know about the author of this account?	
What was the individual’s role in the event? Why might that be important?	
What was the purpose for creating the record?	
To what extent might self-interest have influenced the account?	
Who was the intended audience? Was the audience public or private? Why is knowing that important?	
When was the record made? Why is the time important?	

The War in the North, 1775-1778

Student Name _____ Date _____

Activity #1: “Shot Heard ‘Round the World”

Directions: Read the following document. As you read, keep in mind the questions that appear below. Be prepared to discuss your answers with the rest of the class.

[Major John Pitcairn reports on the Battles of Lexington and Concord to General Gage on April 26th, 1775: http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=867](http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=867)

John Pitcairn (1722-1775) was a Major in the British Royal Marines, and was stationed in Boston when that city was placed under martial law after the 1774 Boston Tea Party. On April 18 General Thomas Gage, the commander-in-chief if British forces in North America, assigned him to lead an advance party of British troops in their march on Lexington. Less than two months after writing this account Pitcairn was killed in the Battle of Bunker Hill, and was buried beneath the Old North Church in Boston, where his body remains interred today.

Question	Answer
What do we know about the author of this account?	
What was the individual’s role in the event? Why might that be important?	
What was the purpose for creating the record?	
To what extent might self-interest have influenced the account?	
Who was the intended audience? Was the audience public or private? Why is knowing that important?	
When was the record made? Why is the time important?	

The War in the North, 1775-1778

Student Name _____ Date _____

Activity #1: “Shot Heard ‘Round the World”

Directions: Read the following document. As you read, keep in mind the questions that appear below. Be prepared to discuss your answers with the rest of the class.

[John Dickinson to Arthur Lee: April 29th, 1775:](http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=869)

<http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=869>

John Dickinson (1732-1808) was a wealthy landowner from Maryland who became prominent in politics in the colony of Pennsylvania. He became one of the first Pennsylvania leaders to denounce British tax policies in North America, and in 1774 he was elected to the First Continental Congress. Although an advocate of resistance against what he considered British tyranny, Dickinson was skeptical of outright independence, and continued to hope for some sort of reconciliation with Great Britain.

Note: In the first line of this letter the author uses the term “*immedicabile vulnus.*” This is a Latin term which roughly translates to “hopelessness.”

Question	Answer
What do we know about the author of this account?	
What was the individual’s role in the event? Why might that be important?	
What was the purpose for creating the record?	
To what extent might self-interest have influenced the account?	
Who was the intended audience? Was this intended to be public or private? Why is knowing that important?	
When was the record made? Why is the time important?	

The War in the North, 1775-1778

Student Name _____ Date _____

Activity #2: Washington Takes Command

Directions: Using the documents below, answer the questions that follow.

Washington's acceptance of the command of the Continental Army: [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/hlaw:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(jc00237\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/hlaw:@field(DOCID+@lit(jc00237)))

The president from the chair informed Geo: Washington Esqr. that he had the order of the Congress to acq[ain]t him, that the Congress had by a unanimous vote made choice of him to be general and com[ander] in chief to take the supreme command of the forces raised and to be raised, in defence of American Liberty, and desired his acceptance of it. Whereupon Colonel Washington, standing in his place, spoke as follows:

"Mr. President,

"Tho' I am truly sensible of the high Honour done me, in this Appointment, yet I feel great distress, from a consciousness that my abilities and military experience may not be equal to the extensive and important Trust: However, as the Congress desire it, I will enter upon the momentous duty, and exert every power I possess in their service, and for support of the glorious cause. I beg they will accept my most cordial thanks for this distinguished testimony of their approbation.

"But, lest some unlucky event should happen, unfavourable to my reputation, I beg it may be remembered, by every Gentleman in the room, that I, this day, declare with the utmost sincerity, I do not think myself equal to the Command I am honored with.

"As to pay, Sir, I beg leave to assure the Congress, that, as no pecuniary consideration could have tempted me to have accepted this arduous employment, at the expence of my domestic ease and happiness, I do not wish to make any proffit from it. I will keep an exact Account of my expences. Those, I doubt not, they will discharge, and that is all I desire."

Question	Answer
What was Washington's reaction to his appointment as commander?	
How much payment does Washington expect for his service? Why?	
From this document, what can you determine about Washington's character and the qualities he brought to positions of leadership?	

Commission for General Washington (from the Continental Congress): [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/hlaw:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(jc00238\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/hlaw:@field(DOCID+@lit(jc00238)))

The committee appointed to draught a commission to the general, reported the same, which, being read by paragraphs and debated, was agreed to and is as follows:

IN CONGRESS

The delegates of the United Colonies of New Hampshire, Massachusetts bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the Counties of New-Castle, Kent, and Sussex, on Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina; To George Washington, Esq.

We, reposing special trust and confidence in your patriotism, valor, conduct, and fidelity, do, by these presents, constitute and appoint you to be General and Commander in chief, of the army of the United Colonies, and of all the forces now raised, or to be raised, by them, and of all others who shall voluntarily offer their service, and join the said Army for the Defence of American liberty, and for repelling every hostile invasion thereof: And you are hereby vested with full power and authority to act as you shall think for the good and welfare of the service.

And we do hereby strictly charge and require all Officers and Soldiers, under your command, to be obedient to your orders, and diligent in the exercise of their several duties.

And we do also enjoin and require you, to be careful in executing the great trust reposed in you, by causing strict discipline and order to be observed in the army, and that the soldiers be duly exercised, and provided with all convenient necessaries.

And you are to regulate your conduct in every respect by the rules and discipline of war, (as herewith given you,) and punctually to observe and follow such orders and directions, from time to time, as you shall receive from this, or a future Congress of these United Colonies, or committee of Congress.

This commission to continue in force, until revoked by this, or a future Congress.

Question	Answer
For what reasons did Congress choose Washington as commander?	
What powers does Washington have over this army? From where is Washington to seek guidance concerning his duties?	
Is the language used in this document political rhetoric, or were members of Congress sincere in their estimation of Washington's character?	

Instructions for General Washington: [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/hlaw:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(jc00240\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/hlaw:@field(DOCID+@lit(jc00240))) :

The committee appointed to draught instructions to the general, reported the same, which being read, were agreed to, and are as follows:

To George Washington Esqr.

This Congress having appointed you to be General and Commander in chief of the Army of the united Colonies and of all the forces raised or to be raised by them and of all others who shall voluntarily offer their service and join the said army for the defence of American liberty and for repelling every hostile invasion thereof, you are to repair with all expedition to the colony of Massachusetts bay and take charge of the army of the united colonies.

For your better direction

- 1st You are to make a return to us as soon as possible of all forces which you shall have under your command together with their military stores and provisions. And also as exact an Account as you can obtain of the forces which compose the British Army in America.
- 2dly You are not to disband any of the men you find raised until further direction from this Congress and if you shall think their numbers not adequate to the purpose of security, you may recruit them to a number you shall think sufficient, not exceeding double that of the enemy.
- 3d In all cases of vacancy occasioned by the death or removal of a Colonel or other inferior officer, you are by brevet or warrant under your seal to appoint another person to fill up such vacancy until it shall be otherwise ordered by the provincial Convention or Assembly of the colony from whence the troops in which such vacancy happen, shall direct otherwise.
- 4. You are to victual [supply] at the continental expence all such volunteers as have joined or shall join the united Army.
- 5. You shall take every method in your power consistent with prudence, to destroy or make prisoners of all persons who now are or who hereafter shall appear in Arms against the good people of the united colonies.
- 6. And whereas all particulars cannot be foreseen, nor positive instructions for such emergencies so before hand given but that many things must be left to your prudent and discreet management, as occurrences may arise upon the place, or from time to that time fall out, you are therefore upon all such accidents or any occasions that may happen, to use your best circumspection and (advising with your council of war) to order and dispose of the said Army under your command as may be most advantageous for the obtaining the end for which these forces have been raised, making it your special care in discharge of the great trust committed unto you, that the liberties of America receive no detriment.

Question	Answer
What instructions were given to Washington concerning the retaining and recruiting of troops?	
Ultimately, what powers and discretion does the Congress give to Washington? Why?	

George Washington to Martha Washington (his wife), 18 & 23 June 1775:

<http://gwpapers.virginia.edu/documents/revolution/martha.html>

My Dearest,

I am now set down to write to you on a subject which fills me with inexpressable concern—and this concern is greatly aggravated and Increased when I reflect on the uneasiness I know it will give you—It has been determined by Congress, that the whole Army raised for the defence of the American Cause shall be put under my care, and that it is necessary for me to proceed immediately to Boston to take upon me the Command of it. You may believe me my dear Patcy, when I assure you, in the most solemn manner, that, so far from seeking this appointment I have used every endeavour in my power to avoid it, not only from my unwillingness to part with you and the Family, but from a consciousness of its being a trust too far great for my Capacity and that I should enjoy more real happiness and felicity in one month with you, at home, than I have the most distant prospect of reaping abroad, if my stay was to be Seven times Seven years. But, as it has been a kind of destiny that has thrown me upon this Service, I shall hope that my undertaking of it, designed to answer some good purpose—You might, and I suppose did perceive, from the Tenor of my letters, that I was apprehensive I could not avoid this appointment, as I did not even pretend to intimate when I should return—that was the case—it was utterly out of my power to refuse this appointment without exposing my Character to such censures as would have reflected dishonour upon myself, and given pain to my friends—this I am sure could not, and ought not to be pleasing to you, & must have lessened me considerably in my own esteem. I shall rely therefore, confidently, on that Providence which has heretofore preserved, & been bountiful to me, not doubting but that I shall return safe to you in the fall—I shall feel no pain from the Toil, or the danger of the Campaign—My unhappiness will flow, from the uneasiness I know you will feel at being left alone—I therefore beg of you to summon your whole fortitude & Resolution, and pass your time as agreeably as possible—nothing will give me so much sincere satisfaction as to hear this, and to hear it from your own Pen.

If it should be your desire to remove into Alexandria (as you once mentioned upon an occasion of this sort) I am quite pleased that you should put it in practice, & Lund Washington [one of Washington's cousins, whom he hired to manage his estate] may be directed, by you, to build a Kitchen and other Houses there proper for your reception—if on the other hand you should rather Incline to spend good part of your time among your Friends below, I wish you to do so—In short, my earnest, & ardent desire is, that you would pursue any Plan that is most likely to produce content, and a tolerable degree of Tranquility as it must add greatly to my uneasy feelings to hear that you are dissatisfied, and complaining at what I really could not avoid.

As Life is always uncertain, and common prudence dictates to every Man the necessity of settling his temporal [worldly] Concerns whilst it is in his power—and whilst the Mind is calm and undisturbed, I have, since I came to this place (for I had not time to do it before I left home) got Colo. Pendleton [Washington's lawyer] to Draft a Will for me by the directions which I gave him, which Will I now Inclose —The Provision made for you, in case of my death, will, I hope, be agreeable....

I shall add nothing more at present as I have several Letters to write, but to desire you will remember me to Milly & all Friends, and to assure you that I am with most unfeigned regard, My dear Patcy Y[ou]r Affect[ionat]e

Geo. Washington

Question	Answer
According to this letter, how does Washington feel about having been given command of the Continental Army?	
What does Washington ask his wife to do during his absence?	
Describe the provisions Washington makes before embarking to war.	
Compare Washington's public statements to this private communication. Is there a difference? If so, which is more likely to represent his true thoughts? Why?	
Washington was in the habit of attending meetings of the Continental Congress wearing the uniform of the Virginia militia; everyone else present wore civilian clothes. What might this tell us about Washington's real thoughts on being asked to command the Continental Army?	

Washington's General Orders on Profanity, 3 August 1776:

http://gwpapers.virginia.edu/documents/revolution/profanity_1.html

That the Troops may have an opportunity of attending public worship, as well as take some rest after the great fatigue they have gone through; The General in future excuses them from fatigue duty on Sundays (except at the Ship Yards, or special occasions) until further orders. The General is sorry to be informed that the foolish, and wicked practice, of profane cursing and swearing (a Vice heretofore little known in an American Army) is growing into fashion; he hopes the officers will, by example, as well as influence, endeavour to check it, and that both they, and the men will reflect, that we can have little hopes of the blessing of Heaven on our Arms, if we insult it by our impiety, and folly; added to this, it is a vice so mean and low, without any temptation, that every man of sense, and character, detests and despises it.

Question	Answer
What orders does Washington issue here? Why do you think he issued them?	

The War in the North, 1775-1778

Student Name _____ Date _____

Activity #3: The Course of the War

Directions: Use the interactive map

(<http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/neh/interactives/americanrevolution/>) to follow the course of the war in the North. After you have done so, list in the left-hand column of the following chart what you consider to be the three most important battles of this phase of the war. In the right-hand column indicate your reasons. Be prepared to defend your choices in class.

Battle (Name and Date)	Why was it important?
1.	
2.	
3.	

The War in the North, 1775-1778

Student Name _____ Date _____

Activity #4: “The Times that Try Men’s Souls”

Directions: Read the documents that follow, consulting the interactive map (<http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/neh/interactives/americanrevolution/>) for information about events of the war that are referred to in these documents, or are related to the situation being described in these documents. Using both the documents and the map, create an interactive timeline with the online utility at <http://www.readwritethink.org/materials/timeline/index.html>. Follow the directions your teacher gives you on how to use this site. Your timeline should include all of the documents below, as well as all the events on the map associated with them.

Something Must Be Attempted to Revive Our Expiring Credit: George Washington to Joseph Spencer, December 22, 1776: [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mgw:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(gw060324\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mgw:@field(DOCID+@lit(gw060324)))

[Note: Washington wrote this to Spencer, a politically well-connected general from Connecticut, from his winter quarters in northeastern Pennsylvania, following the Continental Army’s retreat from New York after the Battle of White Plains.]

"We are all of Opinion my dear General that something must be attempted to revive our expiring Credit give our Cause some degree of Reputation and prevent a total Depreciation of the Continental Money which is coming on very fast. That even a Failure cannot be more fatal than to remain in our present Situation in short some Enterprize must be undertaken in our present Circumstances or we must give up the Cause....Will it not be possible My dear Gen[era]l. for your Troops or such Part of them as can Act with Advantage to make a Diversion or something more at or about Trenton. The greater the Alarm the more likely Success will attend the Attacks. If we could possess ourselves again of New Jersey or any considerable Part of it the Effect would be greater than if we had never left it. Allow me to hope that you will consult your own good Judgment and Spirit and not let the Goodness of your Heart subject you to the Influence of Opinions from Men in every Respect your Inferiors. Something must be attempted before the 60 Days expires which the Commissioners have allowed; for however many affect to despise it, it is very evident that a very serious Attention is paid to it and I am confident that unless some more favourable Appearance attends our Arms and Cause before that Tune a very great Number of the Militia Officers here will follow the Example of those of Jersey and take Benefit from it. I will not disguise my own Sentiments that our Cause is desperate and hopeless if we do not take the Opp[ortunit]y of the Collection of Troops at present to strike some Stroke. Our Affairs are hastening fast to Ruin if we do not retrieve them by some happy Event. Delay with us is now equal to a total Defeat.

...Sir: When I wrote to you on the 14th instant, I had little doubt of receiving considerable support from the Militia of this State, and was taught to believe, that a large part of the old Troops (coming on with General Lee) had reinlisted: In the first, I have every reason in the world to fear a disappointment; in the latter, I find myself woefully deceived. It is easier there fore to conceive, than describe, the situation I am in, left or shall be, in a very few days, with only a very few Southern Regiments (reduced almost to Nothing) to oppose Howe's Main Army, already posted in such a manner as to pour in his whole Force upon us, so soon as the frost affords him a passage over the Del aware, and our numbers such, as to give no effectual opposition...

Excerpt from Thomas Paine, “The American Crisis,” December 23, 1776: <http://odur.jet.rug.nl/~usa/D/1776-1800/paine/AC/crisis01.htm>

[Note: Thomas Paine (1737-1809) was probably the most popular writer in America at the time, and his pamphlet "Common Sense," published early in 1776, was enormously influential in generating public support for independence. Paine wrote the following as he accompanied the Continental Army in its retreat from New York into northeastern Pennsylvania in late 1776. For more on Paine, visit this site: <http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/B/tpaine/paine.htm>.]

THESE are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: it is dearness only that gives every thing its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as freedom should not be highly rated. Britain, with an army to enforce her tyranny, has declared that she has a right (not only to tax) but "to bind us in all cases whatsoever," and if being bound in that manner, is not slavery, then is there not such a thing as slavery upon earth. Even the expression is impious; for so unlimited a power can belong only to God.

Whether the independence of the continent was declared too soon, or delayed too long, I will not now enter into as an argument; my own simple opinion is, that had it been eight months earlier, it would have been much better. We did not make a proper use of last winter, neither could we, while we were in a dependent state. However, the fault, if it were one, was all our own; we have none to blame but ourselves. But no great deal is lost yet. All that Howe has been doing for this month past, is rather a ravage than a conquest, which the spirit of the Jerseys, a year ago, would have quickly repulsed, and which time and a little resolution will soon recover.

I have as little superstition in me as any man living, but my secret opinion has ever been, and still is, that God Almighty will not give up a people to military destruction, or leave them unsupportedly to perish, who have so earnestly and so repeatedly sought to avoid the calamities of war, by every decent method which wisdom could invent. Neither have I so much of the infidel in me, as to suppose that He has relinquished the government of the world, and given us up to the care of devils; and as I do not, I cannot see on what grounds the king of Britain can look up to heaven for help against us: a common murderer, a highwayman, or a house-breaker, has as good a pretence as he....

Excerpts from a Report by a Committee of the Continental Congress on the Conduct of the Enemy, April 18, 1777: [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/hlaw:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(jc00783\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/hlaw:@field(DOCID+@lit(jc00783)))

...The committee appointed to enquire into the conduct of the enemy, brought in a report which was read, as follows:

That, in every place where the enemy has been, there are heavy complaints of oppression, injury, and insult, suffered by the inhabitants, from officers, soldiers, and Americans disaffected to their country's cause. The committee found these complaints so greatly diversified, that, as it was impossible to enumerate them, so it appeared exceedingly difficult to give a distinct and comprehensive view of them, or such an account, as would not, if published, appear extremely defective, when read by the unhappy sufferers, or the country in general.

...On the whole, the committee are sorry to say, that the cry of barbarity and cruelty is but too well founded; and as, in conversation, those who are cool to the American cause, have nothing to oppose to the facts, but their being incredible, and not like what they are pleased to stile, the generosity and clemency of the English nation; the committee beg leave to observe, that one of the circumstances most frequently occurring in the enquiry, was, the opprobrious, disdainful names given to the Americans. These do not need any proof, as they occur so frequently in the newspapers printed under their direction, and in the intercepted letters of those who are officers, and call themselves gentlemen. It is easy, therefore, to see what must be the conduct of a soldiery, greedy of prey, towards a people, whom they have been taught to look upon, not as freemen defending their rights on principle, but as desperadoes and profligates, who have risen up against law and order in general, and wish the subversion of

society itself. This is the most candid and charitable manner in which the committee can account for the melancholy truths which they have been obliged to report. Indeed, the same deluding principle seems to govern persons and bodies of the highest rank in Britain. For, it is worthy of notice, that not pamphleteers only, but king and parliament constantly call those acts lenity, which, on their first publication, filled this whole Continent with resentment and horror.

From the Diary of Albigeance Waldo, Surgeon at Valley Forge, 1777.
<http://odur.let.rug.nl/~usa/D/1776-1800/war/waldo.htm>

[Note: Valley Forge was the town where the Continental Army spent the dismal winter of 1777-1778. During this same period British troops occupied Philadelphia, where the Declaration of Independence had been signed only seventeen months earlier.]

December 14—Prisoners and Deserters are continually coming in. The Army which has been surprisingly healthy hitherto, now begins to grow sickly from the continued fatigues they have suffered this Campaign. Yet they still show a spirit of Alacrity and Contentment not to be expected from so young Troops. I am Sick - discontented - and out of humour. Poor food - hard lodging - Cold Weather - fatigue - Nasty Clothes - nasty Cookery - Vomit half my time - smoak'd out my senses - the Devil's in't - I can't Endure it - Why are we sent here to starve and Freeze - What sweet Felicities have I left at home; A charming Wife - pretty Children - Good Beds - good food - good Cookery - all agreeable - all harmonious. Here all Confusion - smoke and Cold - hunger and filthiness - A pox on my bad luck. There comes a bowl of beef soup - full of burnt leaves and dirt, sickish enough to make a Hector spue - away with it Boys - I'll live like the Chameleon upon Air. Poh! Poh! crys Patience within me - you talk like a fool. Your being sick Covers you mind with a Melancholic Gloom, which makes every thing about you appear gloomy. See the poor Soldier, when in health - with what cheerfulness he meets his foes and encounters every hardship - if barefoot, he labours thro' the Mud and Cold with a Song in his mouth extolling War and Washington - if his food be bad, he eats it notwithstanding with seeming content - blesses God for a good Stomach and Whistles it into digestion. But harkee Patience, a moment - There comes a Soldier, his bare feet are seen thro' his worn out Shoes, his legs nearly naked from the tatter'd remains of an only pair of stockings, his Breeches not sufficient to cover his nakedness, his Shirt hanging in Strings, his hair dishevell'd, his face meagre; his whole appearance pictures a person forsaken and discouraged. He comes, and crys with an air of wretchedness and despair, I am Sick, my feet lame, my legs are sore, my body cover'd with this tormenting Itch - my Clothes are worn out, my Constitution is broken, my former Activity is exhausted by fatigue, hunger and Cold, I fail fast I shall soon be no more! and all the reward I shall get will be - "Poor Will is dead." People who live at home in Luxury and Ease, quietly possessing their habitations, Enjoying their Wives and families in peace, have but a very faint Idea of the unpleasing sensations, and continual Anxiety the Man endures who is in Camp, and is the husband and parent of an agreeable family. These same People are willing we should suffer every thing for their Benefit and advantage, and yet are the first to Condemn us for not doing more....

Excerpts from a letter from George Washington to the Continental Congress, December 23, 1777:
[http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mgw:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(gw100200\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mgw:@field(DOCID+@lit(gw100200)))

[Note: Washington wrote this from the Continental Army's winter quarters in Valley Forge.]

Sir: ...I am now convinced, beyond a doubt that unless some great and capital change suddenly takes place in that line, this Army must inevitably be reduced to one or other of these three things. Starve, dissolve, or disperse, in order to obtain subsistence in the best manner they can; rest assured Sir this is not an exaggerated picture, but [and] that I have abundant reason to support what I say...

..Since the Month of July, we have had no assistance from the Quarter Master Gen[era]l [the officer in charge of supplying the troops]...; to this I am to add, that notwithstanding it is a standing order (and often repeated) that the Troops shall always have two days Provisions by them, that they may [might] be ready at any sudden call, yet, no

opportunity has scarce[ly] ever yet happened [offered] of taking advantage of the Enemy that has not been either totally obstructed or greatly impeded on this Acct., and this tho' the great and crying evil is not all. Soap, Vinegar and other Articles allowed by Congress we see none of nor have [we] seen [them] I believe since the battle of Brandywine; the first indeed we have now little occasion of [for] few men having more than one Shirt...and Some none at all; in addition to which as a proof of the little benefit received from a Clothier Gen[era]l, and at the same time as a further proof of the inability of an Army under the circumstances of this, to perform the common duties of Soldiers (besides a number of Men confined to Hospitals for want of Shoes, and others in farmers Houses on the same Acc[oun]t) we have, by a field return this day made no less than 2898 Men now in Camp unfit for duty because they are bare foot and otherwise naked and by the same return it appears that our whole strength in continental Troops (Including the Eastern Brigades which have joined us since the surrender of Genl. Burgoyne) exclusive of the Maryland Troops sent to Wilmington amount to no more than 8200 In Camp fit for duty. Notwithstanding which, and that, since the 4th Instt. our Numbers fit for duty from the hardships and exposures they have undergone, particularly on Acc[oun]t of Blankets (numbers being [having been] obliged and [still are to] do set up all Night by fires, instead of taking comfortable rest in a natural [and common] way) have decreased near 2000 Men.

Excerpt from a letter from George Washington to John Banister, 21 April 1778:

<http://gwpapers.virginia.edu/documents/revolution/banister.html>

[Note: John Banister was, like Washington, a Virginian, but was also an important member of Virginia's delegation to the Continental Congress. Less than a month after this letter was written word arrived in North America that the rebels had concluded an alliance with France. In June the British, fearing a French attack from the sea, withdrew from Philadelphia, and clashed with Washington's army at the Battle of Monmouth Courthouse.]

...I am pleased to find, that you expect the proposed establishment of the Army will succeed; though it is a painful consideration, that matters of such pressing importance and obvious necessity meet with so much difficulty and delay. Be assured the success of the measure is a matter of the most serious moment, and that it ought to be brought to a conclusion, as speedily as possible. The spirit of resigning Commissions has been long at an alarming height and increases daily Applications from Officers on furlough are hourly arriving... They will not be persuaded to sacrifice all views of present interest, and encounter the numerous vicissitudes of War, in the defence of their Country, unless she will be generous enough on her part, to make a decent provision for their future support. I do not pronounce absolutely, that we shall have no Army, if the establishment fails; but the Army we may have, will be without discipline, without energy, incapable of acting with vigor, and destitute of those cements necessary to promise success on the one hand, or to withstand the shocks of adversity on the other...Men may speculate as they will—they may talk of patriotism—they may draw a few examples from ancient story of great achievements performed by its influence; but, whoever builds upon it, as a sufficient basis, for conducting a long and bloody War, will find themselves deceived in the end. We must take the passions of Men, as nature has given them, and those principles as a guide, which are generally the rule of action. I do not mean to exclude altogether the idea of patriotism. I know it exists, and I know it has done much in the present contest. But I will venture to assert, that a great and lasting War can never be supported on this principle alone—It must be aided by a prospect of interest or some reward. For a time it may, of itself, push men to action—to bear much—to encounter difficulties; but it will not endure unassisted by interest.

...for without arrogance, or the smallest deviation from truth it may be said, that no history, now extant, can furnish an instance of an army's suffering such uncommon hardships as ours have done, and bearing them with the same patience and Fortitude—To see men without Clothes to cover their nakedness—without Blankets to lay on—without Shoes, by which their Marches might be traced by the Blood from their feet—and almost as often without Provisions as with; Marching through frost & Snow, and at Christmas taking up their Winter Quarters within a days March of the enemy, without a House or Hutt to cover them till they could be built & submitting to it without a murmur, is a Mark of patience & obedience which in my opinion can scarce be parallel'd...