

My name is Linda Borkow, and I have come on behalf of the Dobbs Ferry Historical Society.

My purpose today is to ensure that Dobbs Ferry, New York, receives appropriate historical recognition on the map which accompanies the Washington Rochambeau National Historic Trail legislation and that it also receives appropriate recognition in the National Park Service Study which is related to this legislation.

The 1781 encampment of the American and French armies, in Dobbs Ferry and neighboring localities, has great historical significance. The strategy which led to victory at Yorktown, was adopted at the encampment in mid-August, 1781. And the first steps of Washington's march from New York to Virginia were taken on Dobbs Ferry's main roads and principal intersection, Ashford Avenue and Broadway, when the Continental army broke camp on Aug 19, 1781

Please examine the first page of your packet. Here we have a primary resource, the map of the encampment prepared by General Rochambeau's cartographer.

At the top of the map, we see that Dobbs Ferry is named.

As the legend indicates, the map shows the locations of the American army, the French army, General Washington's headquarters, and General Rochambeau's headquarters.

Number 7, very close to the Hudson River, shows the location of Sheldon's Dragoons, the first cavalry unit of the United States.

Dobbs Ferry's importance as the starting point of Washington's march to Virginia is highlighted on the next map (page 2), prepared at the United States Military Academy. Dobbs Ferry is also highlighted as the point-of-origin of Washington's march to Virginia on the map on page 3, which was

prepared by the National Park Service, apparently for a different project, and which does not accompany the legislation under discussion today.

When we look at the map which does accompany the legislation (page 4), we note 18 localities which are named along the Washington-Rochambeau Route, but Dobbs Ferry is not one of them. This is a serious omission, and we urge that it be corrected.

We respectfully ask this question: ***Apart from Yorktown itself, what site along the route of Washington's march to Virginia is more significant than its starting point?***

Historian Benson Bobrick underscores the importance of Washington's March from New York to Virginia when he describes it as ***"the largest and perhaps boldest movement of the war."***

Its success required the utmost secrecy and the precise timing and coordination of multiple naval and land movements. It is this march, from New York to Virginia, that gives the entire Washington-Rochambeau Route its great historical importance.

Let's turn now to additional primary sources. Excerpts from Washington's correspondence at the time of the 1781 encampment can be found on the next pages of your packet. In July and August of that year Washington wrote approximately a hundred letters with the place-names, "Head Quarters Dobbs Ferry," "Head Quarters *Dobbs's* Ferry," "Head Quarters near Dobbs Ferry," or "Camp near Dobbs Ferry" appearing at the top of each letter.

From this abundance of documentation we can see that "Dobbs Ferry" or "*Dobbs's* Ferry" was Washington's preferred designation for the location of the 1781 encampment of the allied American and French armies.

We do not know why the Washington-Rochambeau National Historic Trail Study and the map accompanying this legislation omit Dobbs Ferry. We submitted a *lengthy written response* to the National Park Service on December 2, 2006, during the public comment period. Our response is

included in your packet. In that response we explained our concerns about the omission of Dobbs Ferry and provided a great deal of supporting historical documentation.

While we would welcome any feedback-- including any disagreement, or challenge that is based on historical evidence-- no one, to date, has challenged the historical accuracy of our lengthy written response.

So we are very hopeful that the National Park Service will recognize that Dobbs Ferry is ***not just one more location*** along the Washington-Rochambeau Route but that it is, instead, a **key site**, of special historical significance.

We are here to support the National Historic Trail legislation. But at the same time, we urge that the Study and the map be corrected.

If the role of Dobbs Ferry is not clarified in the Study and on the map, our mission, to educate the public, and to raise the level of public awareness of the great events which transpired in our communities during the Revolutionary War, will be undermined.

There has been a major effort in Dobbs Ferry over the past year to inform the public about these great events in our history. Persons working towards this goal include Dr. Mary Donovan, President of the Historical Society, Joseph Bova, Mayor of Dobbs Ferry, the trustees of the Historical Society and the trustees of the Village of Dobbs Ferry. In order to succeed, we need your support.