

In addition to freeing a substantial number of men who otherwise might have perished at Gloucester, the final arrangements released two of Cornwallis' officers, Majors Greene and Timpany, who had been paroled to New York.⁴⁵ Though not interned with the main body of the British Army, the paroled officers were an integral part of the problem of evacuating the army which capitulated at Yorktown.

⁴⁵Letter from Rochambeau to General Sir Henry Clinton, December 9, 1781, the Rochambeau Papers, p. 190-191; H.M.C., Report on American Manuscripts, III, 49.

CHAPTER IV

THE DISPOSITION OF THE PAROLED OFFICERS

The disposition of the British and German officers, left behind at Yorktown after the main force of prisoners started their inland march, constituted a special problem. The procedure to be used in evacuating these men had been outlined in Article VI of the Articles of Capitulation, which specified that the officers were to go on parole to Europe or some British base in America. Transportation was to be provided within ten days by Count de Grasse, or in the event that the French could not supply sufficient vessels, the paroled officers were to receive passports to go by land to New York.

In addition to the above provisions, Article VIII of the terms of surrender had reserved to Cornwallis one of the British ships, the sloop, Bonetta, which was to carry his final dispatches to Clinton at New York. The Bonetta was to proceed with her original crew, carrying any men the British commander preferred not to surrender to the Continental forces. The latter provision had been demanded by Cornwallis in order to protect the lives of Loyalists and American deserters who were serving with his troops.

Due to the small number of men involved, Article VI and VIII were executed without the delay and confusion which attended the disposition

of the rank and file. Following the surrender ceremony, on October 19, the men whom Cornwallis had selected to leave on the Bonetta gathered at Gloucester¹ and from there went aboard the sloop. Four days later preparations for the ship's departure were completed and she sailed from Yorktown, clearing De Grasse's fleet in the bay on the twenty-fourth.² In addition to approximately two hundred and fifty deserters³ she carried the ailing Lieutenant Colonel Simcoe,⁴ who had commanded the Queen's Rangers, and Lieutenant Colonel Robert Abercrombie, to whom Cornwallis had entrusted his dispatches to General Sir Henry Clinton. The Bonetta arrived in New York on October 31.⁵

Even though Article VIII had assured the immunity of the passenger list of the sloop, she did not sail without some protest from the Americans. On October 20, before the departure, Nelson wrote Cornwallis that he had been "informed that a number of Refugees from this State [Virginia] and also Negroes" were attempting to escape on the vessel. Nelson requested that Cornwallis take measures to prevent any violation of the surrender agreement.⁶ If the British commander made any reply, it

¹British General and Brigade Orders, II, 61.

²Frederick Mackenzie, Diary of Frederick Mackenzie, ... an Officer of the Regiment of Royal Welch Fusiliers during the Years 1775-1781 (Cambridge, Mass., 1930), II, 683. Hereafter cited as Mackenzie, Diary.

³Ibid., 685. Many of the rank and file aboard were members of the Queen's Rangers. Lieutenant Colonel John G. Simcoe, Simcoe's Military Journal; a History of ... the Queen's Rangers (N.Y., 1844), 254.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Mackenzie, Diary, II, 683.

⁶Letter from Nelson to Cornwallis, October 20, 1781, Calendar of Virginia State Papers, II, 560.

has not survived. When the Bonetta left on October 23, her departure was watched with dissatisfaction by some of the Americans, an attitude best expressed by Colonel Richard Butler who observed that she "fell down the river, with her iniquitous cargo of deserters, stolen negroes, and public stores that the British officers had secreted, in violation of treaty and in breach of honor...."⁷ Despite some such suspicions the Americans generally accepted Cornwallis's statement that the Bonetta did not violate the Articles of Capitulation.

While the foregoing events were taking place, Washington sought to speed up the evacuation of the prisoner officers. An early achievement of his goal was prevented by two complicating factors. First, he did not have available the ships needed to remove the men. Then, as he attempted to secure assistance in the form of shipping from De Grasse, a number of British officers protested the form of the parole presented them by Commissary Durie. The latter problem was the first resolved.

It had been customary for the Commissary of Prisoners to demand in the parole signed by the captured officers a statement that the signer, so long as he was on parole, pledged himself to report to any place required by Washington or an official representing him.⁸ Several officers in the Yorktown army protested to their commander that such a requirement deprived them of the benefits due them by their capitulation. Acting in their behalf, Cornwallis wrote Washington, requesting

⁷Richard Butler, "General Richard Butler's Journal of the Siege of Yorktown," Historical Magazine, VIII (March, 1864), 111.

⁸Cf. Journals of Continental Congress, IV, 119.

that he reconsider the form of the parole.⁹ The Continental Commander immediately replied that he was surprised that the officers objected to a clause which was "essential in every parole" and that he had no intention of complying with this request. Further, he suggested that Cornwallis advise the officers to sign the parole if they wanted to depart for New York and Europe.¹⁰ Washington's firmness must have been convincing since no evidence of further protestations has survived. Cornwallis signed his parole on October 28, and the final paragraph afforded ample proof of the futility of his earlier request.¹¹

Having settled the dispute over the parole, Washington turned his attention to the evacuation of the officers. The removal of the

⁹Letter from Cornwallis to Washington, October 27, 1781, Continental Army Returns, Washington Papers, Library of Congress, No. 106, fol. 18 3/4.

¹⁰Letter from Washington to Cornwallis, October 27, 1781, Fitzpatrick, ed., Writings of Washington, XXIII, 274-275.

¹¹The final paragraph of Cornwallis' parole reads as follows:
Do pledge my Faith and Word of Honor, that I will not do or say any thing injurious to the Said United States or Armies thereof, or their Allies, until duly exchanged; I do further promise that whenever required, by the Commander in Chief of the American Army, or the Commissary of Prisoners for the same, I will repair to such place or places as they or either of them may require.

Given under my Hand at York Town 28th of October 1781

Cornwallis

Original in the Virginia State Library, photostatic copy on exhibit at the Swan Tavern, Colonial National Historical Park, Yorktown, Va.

northbound elements of the Continental Army to the upper Chesapeake required most of the available American transports; therefore, additional shipping had to be found among the privately owned vessels in the York River or those seized by De Grasse. Apparently prospects of obtaining the former were not too promising for on October 23, Washington wrote De Grasse requesting two vessels for use in transporting the officers.¹² His appeal to the French Admiral was supported by a letter from Rochambeau five days later.¹³ By the thirty-first their efforts had produced results, as on that date Washington instructed the Continental Commissaries of Supply to provision the vessels bound for New York.¹⁴ On November 3, the first of the ships left Yorktown,¹⁵ and by Monday the fifth, four more had sailed.¹⁶

Two of the five flags¹⁷ designated to carry the paroled officers to New York were the Lord Mulgrave and The Andrews, British transports which had been seized at Yorktown by the French navy. The Cochrane was privately owned but had been with the British fleet surrendered by

¹²Letter from Washington to De Grasse, October 23, 1781, Fitzpatrick, ed., Writings of Washington, XXIII, 255-256.

¹³Letter from Rochambeau to De Grasse, October 28, 1781, the Rochambeau Papers, p. 178.

¹⁴Instructions to Colonel Ephraim Blaine and Charles Stewart, October 31, 1781, Fitzpatrick, ed., Writings of Washington, XXIII, 313.

¹⁵Cf. Journal of Baron von Closen, I, 396.

¹⁶Letter from Washington to De Grasse, November 5, 1781, Fitzpatrick, ed., Writings of Washington, XXIII, 337.

¹⁷Vessels traveling under a flag of truce were commonly referred to as flags or cartels throughout the Revolution.

Cornwallis.¹⁸ The two small sloops which completed the convoy were the Delight and the Molly, both probably belonging to colonial traders. The military personnel aboard the ships included Cornwallis, O'Hara and 237 lesser officers, the soldiers assigned to their military families, and their servants. They were accompanied by twenty-six Loyalist merchants who no longer desired to remain in Virginia. The distribution of the prisoners aboard ship, as established in the passports issued by Washington on November 4,¹⁹ was as follows:

<u>Cochrane</u> (or <u>Cockran</u>)	Cornwallis; 26 additional staff officers; 42 soldiers.
<u>Lord Mulgrave</u>	103 officers; 125 soldiers; servants.
<u>The Andrews</u>	101 officers; 118 soldiers; servants.
<u>Delight</u>	5 military commissaries; 1 commissary of prisoners (not a prisoner); 13 merchants.
<u>Molly</u>	3 officers; 13 merchants.

¹⁸Correspondence of General Washington and Comte de Grasse, 1781 August 17 - November 4, Senate Document No. 211, 71st Cong., 2nd. Sess., ed. Institut Francais de Washington (Washington, 1931), 125.

¹⁹Fitzpatrick, ed., Writings of Washington, XXIII, 337n. In addition to Cornwallis, the Cochrane is known to have carried General O'Hara, Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton, and Lieutenant Bartholomew James, the latter of the Royal Navy. Journal of Baron von Closen, I, 396; John Knox Laughton, ed., Journal of Rear Admiral Bartholomew James, 1752 - 1828 (Navy Records Society: London, 1896), 129, 1896, 129.

The departure of the ships mentioned accounted for all but three of the 240 officers of the British land forces, for whom Rochambeau had requested transportation.²⁰ The officers who were not available when the convoy departed were Captains Apthorpe and Champagne of the Twenty-third Regiment, and Lieutenant Fraser of the Seventeenth Regiment. Taking advantage of a clause in Article VI of the terms of surrender which permitted them to go by land in the event of a shortage of shipping, the three men left Yorktown in the last week of October, arriving in New York on November 11.²¹ Washington tried to avoid having any of the paroled officers pass through the country side and though the prisoners carried passports he attempted unsuccessfully to bring them back to Yorktown.²²

The voyage northward from the Virginia Capes proved to be a trying one for the passengers on the cartels. Enroute they encountered heavy seas which separated the ships, each seeking the course best suited to ride out the storm. All of the vessels had been among those sunk or scuttled at Yorktown and apparently the passengers had little confidence in their seaworthiness.²³ During the gale one of the smaller vessels carrying Lieutenant Colonel Dundas and the other officers of the Eightieth Regiment began to take water and Dundas requested a transfer

²⁰Letter from Rochambeau to De Grasse, October 28, 1781, Rochambeau Papers, p. 178. There were actually 241 British officers, excluding naval prisoners, if Cornwallis is not included.

²¹Mackenzie, Diary, II, 692.

²²Cf. ibid., and 699.

²³Ibid., 699-700.

to The Andrew, a larger ship. On board the latter were all the German officers and several from the Queen's Rangers. Despite the protests of the Germans, the transfer was effected. The Andrew reached New York on November 24.²⁴

Notwithstanding the storm encountered, the Cochrane made good time, arriving on the nineteenth.²⁵ However, the Lord Mulgrave was not as fortunate. She lost contact with the convoy and for nearly three weeks the authorities in New York dispaired of her survival.²⁶ Word finally reached them on December 11 that she had made port safely in Charleston,

²⁴Ibid., 700-701. There is no mention of the arrival of either the Delight or the Molly at New York. Since only the latter of the sloops was scheduled to carry officers, it is reasonable to assume that Dundas transferred from her. Similarly, from the evidence of two contemporary (probably somewhat exaggerated) reports, the Molly foundered off the New Jersey coast. Major William Crogham, in a letter to Colonel William Davies dated November 30, wrote, "Tis said a vessel with Forty British officers on parole from Virginia, for New York was over sett or wracked" near Egg Harbor and that "the whole perished." Calendar of Virginia State Papers, II, 627. Alexander Wall, citing the New Jersey Gazette for November 28, 1781, says that the wreck of a sloop carrying thirty or forty persons was reported on a bar off Corson's Inlet (just below Egg Harbor) and that papers found on the thirteen bodies which were recovered indicated that the men were prisoners on parole bound for New York from Virginia. Wall's The Story of the Convention Army, p. 28. Wall's assertion that these men were prisoners from Burgoyne's Army is groundless, all those troops having left Virginia before the siege of Yorktown. Mackenzie, Diary, II, 659).

²⁵Mackenzie, Diary, II, 698; Letter from Cornwallis to Rochambeau, November 25, 1781, Charles Ross, ed., Correspondence of Charles, First Marquis Cornwallis (London, 1859), I, 128.

²⁶Mackenzie, Diary, II, 699-703.

South Carolina.²⁷ Eight days later The John, a cartel from that port, arrived in New York bearing thirty of the Lord Mulgrave's passengers,²⁸ the others to follow as transportation became available.

Plans for the disposition of the paroled officers after their arrival at the British post had been completed by November 13. Regimental cantonments were appointed in various areas on Long Island and Staten Island.²⁹ Two weeks later, Sir Henry Clinton issued orders that one field officer, two captains and six subalterns of the prisoner regiments, including the officers interned, were to remain in America, the remainder to go to Europe. On the same day preparations for the departure of a European convoy were undertaken.³⁰

Due to the number of vessels to be provisioned and watered,³¹ it was not until December 2 that the first division of the convoy left the East River, and a week later before the ships began to form

²⁷ Ibid., 704.

²⁸ Ibid., 706.

²⁹ Ibid., 694.

³⁰ Ibid., 701. Excluding the Loyalist units assigned to Cornwallis' command, Clinton's orders would have required a total of 99 British officers to remain in America, 25 at New York and 74 with the interned prisoners. These totals compare favorably with the requests for subsistence payments by the regimental units as listed in H.M.C., Report on American Manuscripts, II, 376ff.

³¹ Mackenzie says that the convoy consisted of about 130 ships and that nearly 100 officers went aboard as passengers. A majority of them were those paroled from Yorktown. Diary, II, 703-704.

in the lower New York harbor. Finally on December 15 the fleet passed through the Narrows and into the North Atlantic, escorted by two ships of the line, the Robuste and the Janus. After having been at sea only three days the fleet encountered high winds which increased in force until the convoy became hopelessly scattered. Because of the storm, the Robuste and the Janus were forced to turn back to the West Indies, and so the transports were left an unguarded prey for the enemy.³² For at least one of the ships the suggested fate was not long in coming.

On January 14, the transport, Greyhound,³³ carrying Cornwallis, his aides, and several other British officers, was overtaken and seized by a French privateer, the Boulogne. Julian Durontois, First Lieutenant of the latter, was made prize master of the Greyhound and ordered to take her into a French port. Under normal weather conditions the plan would have succeeded, but the storm continued to be the controlling factor. The Greyhound suffered considerable damage from the heavy seas and finally, on January 17, off Ram's Head on the English coast, Durontois bargained with his passengers. In effect, he extracted from the British officers a pledge of safe-conduct for himself, his crew and the ship in exchange for landing the prisoners at an English port.³⁴

³²Cf. ibid., 703-705.

³³Mackenzie incorrectly states that Cornwallis and his suite left New York aboard the Robuste. Diary, II, 704.

³⁴Earl Cornwallis, Document among correspondence in Cornwallis MSS Bundles 5, 6, and 7, British Reproductions, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress. In addition to Cornwallis the agreement is signed by Lord Chewton, Major Alexander Ross and Lieutenant H. Haldane, aides-de-camp; Captain Thomas Tonken, Royal Navy; Captain Alexander Mercer, Engineers; J. Simpson, Secretary to the King's Commissioner; Major Henry Rooke, and Joseph Clarke, Master of the Greyhound.

The outcome of the above affair was not recorded in any of the available documents, however, the dates of the published correspondence of Lord Cornwallis indicate that the agreement was adhered to.³⁵ Some of the other ships in the scattered convoy had managed to reach England as early as January 5,³⁶ and, since none were reported to have turned back to an American base, the remainder probably reached the British Isles in late January or early February. Thus, except for those to whom Clinton had assigned American billets, pending the final disposition of the rank and file, all of the paroled officers had been evacuated by the first month of 1782.

³⁵Charles Ross, ed., Correspondence of Charles, First Marquis Cornwallis, I, 132ff.

³⁶Laughton, ed., Journal of Rear-Admiral Bartholomew James, 130.

CHAPTER V

THE INTERNMENT IN VIRGINIA, MARYLAND AND PENNSYLVANIA

During the same period in which most of the paroled officers were being removed from the North American scene, the main body of the Yorktown prisoners were discovering the hardships which were a part of living in the American internment camps. The period of confinement for these troops covered nearly eighteen months, ending with their release in April, 1783. However, the end of the war did not find the prisoners at the places to which they were originally assigned, nor were the complements of most of the regiments the same as when they were first interned. The story of the events which produced these changes falls naturally into two parts, the two months when the entire body was confined on the frontier and the period after the relocation of the men in January, 1782. Because the incidents of the former months established the pattern for those succeeding, it is that period which has received the greatest attention. Specifically, the narrative continues to follow the troops who left Yorktown under General Lawson. They were the largest group of the prisoners who were moved at one time and a relation of their activities in confinement best represents the final disposition of Cornwallis' army.

Winchester, the place at which Lawson's column arrived on November 5, was a frontier town of about three hundred buildings, among which were a courthouse, a recently built jail, five churches or chapels, and several warehouses, most of them constructed of hewn logs. The population

of the town and neighboring countryside was predominantly German, a circumstance that was later to prove beneficial to the prisoners.¹

The British and German troops were housed, as has already been mentioned, in the New Frederick Barracks outside of the town. The shelter which they found there was far from comfortable despite the diligent efforts of the local authorities to prepare adequate facilities. Immediately following the surrender at Yorktown, Governor Nelson had instructed Colonel John Smith, militia commander for Frederick County, to arrange quarters and guards for two thousand five hundred men. Due to Smith's absence at that time, the responsibility fell upon Colonel Joseph Holmes, Deputy Commissary of Prisoners. In two letters to the Executive, dated October 26, Holmes stated that he would summon and assume command of the militia guard, but that it would be impossible to provide adequate shelter for so many prisoners. The barracks already standing could house only eight hundred men conveniently, and there was little chance of securing local workmen to build additional cabins since they had not been paid for the work previously done. Holmes suggested that the troops be made to build their own cabins.²

¹Doehla, Tagebuch, 164. Good contemporary descriptions of Winchester can be found in Duke de la Rochefoucault-Liancourt, Travels through the United States of North America, ... in the Years 1795, 1796, and 1797, trans. H. Neuman (London, 1799), II, 102-106; Ferdinand M. Bayard, Voyage dans l'interieur des Etats Unis, a Bath, Winchester, dans la Vallee de Shenandoa, ... pendant l'ete de 1791 (Paris, 1797), 188-190; Count Luigi Castiglioni, Viaggio negli Stati Uniti dell' America Settentrionale, fatto negli anni, 1785, 1786, e 1787 da Luigi Castiglioni, ... (Milano, 1790), I, 362-363.

²Letters from Holmes to Nelson and Colonel William Davis, October 26, 1781, Calendar of Virginia State Papers, II, 569-570.

The conditions which Colonel Holmes reported had changed very little when the prisoners reached Winchester, although the problem of an adequate guard detail had been relieved by the arrival of General Muhlenberg's brigade of the Virginia Militia.³ On November 6, Holmes wrote the Chairman of the Virginia Board of War that about twenty-one hundred rank and file and forty officers had arrived the previous evening. His letter further stated that due to the lack of sufficient cabins one thousand of the men had to sleep out in the open stockade.⁴

Though far from satisfied with the condition of their future quarters, the men were too weary to make more than a verbal protest. The New Frederick Barracks were located in a hillside clearing, surrounded by forest. The quarters were a series of connected cabins built in two wings, one above the other. Throughout they were constructed of heavy logs, chinked with clay, poorly roofed and without windows or a sufficient number of doors. The fireplaces were poorly constructed, frequently filling the barracks with smoke and in no cabin was there a chair, bench, bed or blanket. Into these quarters the prisoners were crowded, thirty-two to thirty-six in a cabin, which left barely enough room for them to stand. Some idea of the feelings of the men can be gathered from Doehla's statement that they "were imprisoned like dogs," their rooms "worse than pigstys and dog kennels in Germany."⁵

³Doehla, Tagebuch, 165.

⁴Letter from Holmes to Davies, November 6, 1781, Calendar of Virginia State Papers, II, 579.

The paroled officers did not remain at the barracks but found lodgings in the town. Cf. Graham, ed., Memoir of General Graham, 70.

⁵Doehla, Tagebuch, 164-165; "Popp's Journal," 250.

The militia commander, being aware of the colder weather to come, urged the prisoners to repair the buildings for their own future comfort. Using "shovels, hatchets, and saws" borrowed from the neighboring farmers, they made many improvements during the initial week of their confinement,⁶ but when the first winter snow fell the men were still overcrowded.⁷ Some took advantage of the freedom granted them by the Commandant of the Barracks and obtained employment with the local inhabitants, thereby securing not only better living quarters but better food.⁸ The majority remained at the barracks and their continued distress became the source of one of the more interesting incidents during the internment.

By the middle of November the number of men at the barracks had been considerably increased by the arrival of the first convoy of convalescents and the detachment of the Twenty-third Regiment who had remained behind to help establish the hospital facilities at Gloucester Point.⁹ The future weeks promised additional men and certainly no improvement in the weather. In consequence of this situation Captain

⁶Doehla, Tagebuch, 165; "Popp's Journal," 250.

⁷Doehla, Tagebuch, 166.

⁸Graham, ed., Memoir of General Graham, 67-68. Many of the prisoners, particularly among the Germans, were artisans or had formerly been apprenticed to weavers, carpenters, masons, tailors, shoemakers, etc., and were therefore in high demand as workmen. Doehla, Tagebuch, passim.

⁹This undoubtedly added one hundred and fifty to two hundred men to the total already present. Cf. above, 22. 24.

Graham, the senior British officer present, asked Colonel Holmes for permission to move some of the troops into a little-used church in Winchester. The Commissary of Prisoners consented and, accordingly, about five hundred men of the Seventy-sixth Regiment were removed to the church, thus relieving somewhat the congestion in the barracks. When the news of the transfer reached Brigadier General Daniel Morgan at "Saratoga," his home near the town, he promptly ordered Captain Graham to return the men to the barracks.¹⁰ The British officer was shocked to learn of Morgan's attitude and immediately wrote a letter of remonstrance in which he stated the full circumstances that had brought about the exchange of quarters.¹¹ On November 28 the same date as Graham's letter, Morgan responded, chastising the prisoners for their apparent inability to help themselves and informing Graham that Colonel Holmes had no authority to permit the men to reside in the town. Morgan further stated that he had informed General Washington of the happenings and that he felt certain that the Commander-in-chief would concur with his action in the matter.¹²

¹⁰Graham, ed., Memoir of General Graham, 68.

¹¹Letter from Graham to Morgan, November 28, 1781, ibid., Appendix AA, 306-307.

¹²Letter from Morgan to Graham, November 28, 1781, ibid., 68-70. This letter and the one cited immediately above provide such an interesting sidelight on the internment, as well as on the characters of the two correspondents that both have been added in full in the Appendicies below.

The immediate outcome of the above exchange of letters was not recorded by either of the correspondents. Soon afterward Graham had General Morgan to dinner at the house of Colonel Holmes. By this time rumors of the projected removal of the prisoners to Maryland and Pennsylvania had reached Winchester and perhaps over a full table the British officer gained permission to leave his men in the town until the anticipated change took place.¹³ Meanwhile a more serious situation confronted the officers.

The provisioning of both the prisoners and their guards was a problem for the local authorities from the time the troops first arrived. The Continental Congress had failed to provide adequate funds for the subsistence of the men and the Virginia people, already heavily taxed for the cost of the Yorktown campaign, were reluctant to endure additional privations for the benefit of their enemies. With the latter in mind, in its November session the General Assembly repealed the emergency statutes which had empowered the military to impress supplies. This action deprived the State officials of their only means of procuring provisions.¹⁴

¹³Ibid., 70-71. Washington's reply to Morgan's letter respecting the affair thanked the latter for his interest in the matter but informed him that the prisoners were now under the supervision of Major General Lincoln, the Secretary at War, whom he understood had ordered Colonel James Wood to act on the matter.

¹⁴Cf. letter from the Virginia Delegates in Congress to the Governor of Virginia, n.d. (ca. November 18, 1781), Calendar of Virginia State Papers, II, 614; letter from Governor Harrison to the Virginia Delegates in Congress, December 1, 1781, Official Letters of the Governors, III, 103; letter from Harrison to General Daniel Morgan, December 11, 1781, ibid., III, 108.

When the prisoners reached Winchester in the first week of November, the shortage of food supplies did not immediately affect them. The men still had "hard" money and with it they could supplement the basic ration¹⁵ by purchases from the inhabitants of the area.¹⁶ However, their funds were not inexhaustible and before many days had passed the prisoners were reduced to bartering their clothes and equipment for the offerings of the farmers and townspeople.¹⁷ But this medium of exchange had its limitations too, and unfortunately for the welfare of the men its expiration coincided with the repeal of the impressment articles. Hence, when the prisoners fell back on their basic ration, they found it inadequate for proper nourishment.

It was about this time, December 1, that Major Gordon, the field officer commanding the interned British regiments, visited Winchester. Taking cognizance of the condition of the troops, he

¹⁵The basic ration for the Continental Army, as established in the first year of the war, was as follows: corned beef or pork for four days, fresh beef for two, and salt fish for one, each ration of beef weighing two pounds, that of pork 18 ounces; for bread, when not provided, each man was permitted one pound of flour per day; three pints of dried peas or beans weekly and fresh vegetables when available; six ounces of butter or nine of lard per week and spruce beer or molasses daily, when obtainable. Cf. Washington's Orders, December 24, 1775, Fitzpatrick, ed., Writings of Washington, IV, 180.

This allowance varied, depending upon the locality, and despite the assurances of the Articles of Capitulation the prisoners at Winchester received only a small part of it; meat was available but could not be kept due to the scarcity of salt, and flour was at a premium.

¹⁶Doehla says that the men were able to purchase "bread, cheese, butter, eggs, ... turnips, potatoes, cabbages, brandy, punch, cider, rum, and beer in abundance." Tagebuch, 165.

¹⁷Doehla states that "many of the English negotiated and exchanged for rum, brandy, and whiskey their entire uniforms from head to foot and covered themselves afterwards only with their blankets or made themselves coats from the same, which they pulled over their bodies." Tagebuch, 166.

appealed to the local authorities for some improvement in their supplies, particularly requesting a regular issue of flour.¹⁸ Though his representations received the immediate attention of the county commissioners¹⁹ they produced little change in the situation and, thus finding his presence of no assistance, Gordon returned after two or three days to his quarters in Maryland.²⁰ In some cases individual officers were able to obtain funds to relieve the sufferings of their men,²¹ but in general the distressed state of the prisoners continued into January when they were moved to new places of confinement.²²

Meanwhile the State and Continental officials, recognizing the serious consequences of the above circumstances for both the prisoners and the country,²³ were making every effort to relieve the situation.

¹⁸Graham, ed., Memoir of General Graham, 71. General Morgan, in a letter to Governor Harrison dated December 11, 1781, informed the latter that the prisoners rations were twenty days behind. See Calendar of Virginia State Papers, II, 646-647.

¹⁹On December 7, Major Robert Forsyth, Deputy Commissary General of Purchases for Virginia, wrote Colonel Davies that he planned to sell army flour in the lowland counties to secure funds for supplies to relieve the plight of the prisoners. See Calendar of Virginia State Papers, II, 642.

On December 14, in a letter to Governor Harrison, Forsyth stated that twelve to fourteen days had passed since his plan to sell flour was announced but no flour had come in. He further said that there was little prospect of any arriving in time to be of use. Calendar of Virginia State Papers, II, 658.

²⁰Graham, ed., Memoir of General Graham, 71.

²¹On December 13, Major von Beust negotiated a loan with a Winchester merchant enabling the officer to provide for his men. Doehla, Tagebuch, 168.

²²On December 27, one of the Queen's Rangers noted the issuance of five days rations of beef but still no flour. Charles W. Heathcote, ed., "Diary of Jacob Smith -- American Born," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, LVI (July, 1932), 264; letter from Captain Edmund Read to Harrison, January 5, 1782, Calendar of Virginia State Papers, III, 8.

²³The pressure of hunger and unsatisfactory quarters had increased the attempts of the prisoners to escape. Cf. below, 73.