



“The Hour of Victory: Washington on His March to Trenton, December 26, 1776”

1904, Percy Moran, from the Mount Vernon collection.

“All of our hopes were blasted by that unhappy affair at Trenton.”

— Lord George Germain, British Foreign Secretary

# Washington Victory Trail

The March to Trenton, 1776

A Self-Guided Driving Tour of the Continental Army's March to the Battle of Trenton

**About the March** Following its well-known crossing of the Delaware River on Christmas night 1776, the Continental army of about 2,400 men under General George Washington's command began its march to the pivotal battle of Trenton at about 4 am on December 26th. It was a grueling four-hour march of nearly ten miles in ice and snow with 18 cannon in tow.

## Taking The Victory Trail

**Directions:** The Tour begins at Washington Crossing State Park, 355 Washington Crossing Pennington Road, Titusville, NJ 08560.

**1 WASHINGTON CROSSING STATE PARK: Where the March Began, 4 a.m.** Washington Crossing State Park preserves not only the spot where the soldiers climbed out of the Durham boats on the night of December 25th, but also much of the landscape for the first leg of their march.



Above: March to Trenton interpretive sign near the Park's Visitor Center.



Right: Entrance to Continental Lane, near the Park's entrance.

Visitors can walk in the footsteps of the soldiers on Continental Lane, which stretches for nearly the entire length of the park—a distance of about one and one half miles.

One of several trailheads to the Continental Lane can be found near the Johnson Ferry House, an 18th-century farmhouse and tavern which was likely used by General Washington and his officers during the crossing. Look to the right of the Stone Barn.

continued...

## The Victory Trail

The Victory Trail retraces the route of Washington's army on today's roads, from Washington Crossing State Park to the site of the Battle of Trenton. Roadside signs marking the route were provided by the Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage Area. The Victory Trail and its interpretive signs instill a better understanding of and appreciation for Washington's march to Trenton.



**Our Park** Washington Crossing State Park of New Jersey was established in 1912 at the site of the historic river crossing by General George Washington and his troops on Christmas, 1776.

Presented by the Washington Crossing Park Association: PO Box 83, Titusville, NJ 08560

[www.wcpa-nj.com](http://www.wcpa-nj.com)



Washington Crossing Park Association



When leaving the park, you will be following the main section of the Continental Army marched on what is today Route 546, on the eastern edge of the park.

A note for your passengers: Washington ordered complete silence on the march by punishment of death

**Directions: Exit Washington Crossing State Park, turning left on Washington Crossing-Pennington Road (CR 546). Proceed about .5 mile to the traffic light and turn right onto Bear Tavern Road (CR 579).**

## 2 BEAR TAVERN ROAD (River Road)

Bear Tavern Road, which was known in Colonial Times as “River Road,” extended all the way to Trenton and passes through the Bear Tavern/Jacobs Creek Crossing Rural Historic District which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The road surfaces in 1776 rutted easily, making footing difficult for the Continentals and horses on the dark, moonless, and stormy night. Many soldiers marched with no shoes, ragged clothes and bloody, frostbitten feet. Some soldiers froze to death that night.



*View from Bear Tavern Road bridge over Jacobs Creek in the general area where Washington’s army crossed. Visitors can walk across this bridge.*

**Directions: Follow Bear Tavern Road for 1.4 miles where you will cross the Jacob’s Creek Bridge.**

## 3 FORDING JACOBS CREEK

Drivers will find a pulloff with three interpretive signs just past the bridge, which did not exist at the time of the March.

While heading down the steep and icy slope of the Jacobs Creek ravine, General Washington’s horse slipped and started to fall, saved only by his superb horsemanship according to one witness.



*Top Left: Across the bridge you’ll see the site where 18 cannon were eased down this steep, then snow-covered slippery slope by ropes to Jacobs Creek.*

**Directions: After the Bridge, follow Bear Tavern Road for about 2.2 miles to the intersection of Bear Tavern and Upper Ferry Roads at West Trenton.**



*Bottom Left: Interpretive signs near Jacobs Creek.*



*Historic marker on right side of Bear Tavern Road just before Upper Ferry Road.*

## 4 BIRMINGHAM: Where the Army Split, 6 am

As shown on the map, Washington split his army at Birmingham (now called West Trenton). General Sullivan’s division continued on River Road to Trenton, while General Greene’s division — accompanied by General Washington — made a left turn at Birmingham, eventually taking Pennington Road into Trenton. Thanks to Washington’s careful synchronization of watches, both divisions entered Trenton within a few minutes of each other. This two-pronged approach increased the chances of victory by attacking the Hessians from opposite directions at the same time.

**Directions: To take Sullivan’s route, proceed through the intersection onto Grand Avenue which turns into Sullivan Way. At its terminus at Route 29, bear left onto West State Street.**

**To follow the direction of Greene’s route, turn left on Upper Ferry Road which turns into Parkway Avenue. Take Parkway to Pennington Road and turn right. Follow Pennington Road into Trenton to its terminus at the Battle Monument.**

## 5 TRENTON: Where the Battle Began, 8 am

Entering Trenton from Pennington Road, General Greene’s division placed cannon, critical to victory, on high ground where the Battle Monument stands. General Sullivan’s division entered Trenton near today’s West State Street, engaging the main body of the Hessians near Warren (then King) Street.



*The Trenton Battle Monument is in a park at the northern terminus of Warren and Broad Streets. General Washington stands atop the 150 foot granite monument dedicated in 1893.*