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## Washington's Army.

General Howe, having sallied forth from Philadelphia, where he had established his headquarters, several times during the early part of December to give battle to General Washington, but finding the latter's forces were too formidable, Howe finally decided to go into winter quarters in Philadelphia on December 9, and Washington, seeing that the campaign on the part of Howe would hardly be resumed before spring and not having an army formidable enough for attack, decided to go into winter quarters himself. He selected Valley Forge, about 30 miles northwest of Philadelphia. Washington and his army arrived there on December 11, 1777, and at once began the erection of huts. They were arranged in streets, giving the place the appearance of a city. It was the first of the year before they occupied it and previous to that the suffering of the army had become great.

Although the winter was intensely cold the men were obliged to work at the buildings, with nothing to support life but flour mixed with water, which they baked into cakes at the open fires. The horses died of starvation by the hundreds, and the men were obliged to haul

their own provisions and firewood. Sickness spread rapidly. "The unfortunate soldiers," wrote Lafayette in after years, "were in want of everything; they had neither coats, hats, shirts, nor shoes; their feet and their legs froze until they became black, and amputation was frequently necessary."

Congress seemed to be woefully inefficient to render assistance. The suffering and the shameful neglect spurred Washington to write to congress: "Since the month of July we have had no assistance from the quartermaster general. The 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 we have indeed now little occasion for as few men now have more than one shirt, many only the moiety of one, and some none at all. In addition to which, as proof of the little benefit received from a clothier general, and as further proof of the inability of an army, under the circumstances of this, to perform the common duties of soldiers, we have, by a field return this day made no less than 2898 men now in camp unfit for duty,

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