

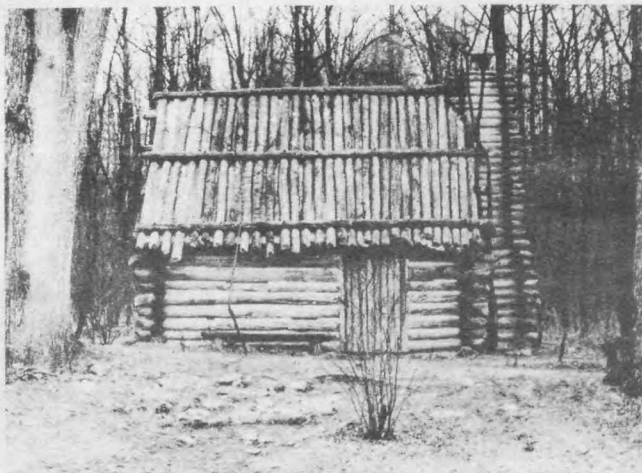
the raw Pennsylvania militiamen, but caught in the swirl of Mercer's fleeing band, the Pennsylvanians would not stand. Everywhere was confusion. The reinforced Americans, outnumbering the enemy ten to one, were yet in danger of being utterly destroyed. Furiously spurring his huge, white horse, the commander in chief raced madly from regiment to regiment, shouting to his men that they were confronted by "but a handful of the enemy," that they could yet achieve victory. He shamed them, cursed them, swinging a column here, a column there and even exposed himself purposely to the direct volley of the enemy in order to revive the courage of his troops. He succeeded at last in rallying a sufficient force to continue the fight, and when his experienced troops finally arrived he broke the British line and sent it fleeing in disorder. In Princeton other British soldiers put up a fight, but were soon subdued.

Though the British called the move on Princeton a great military accomplishment, Washington was disappointed. His hungry, exhausted men were dropping to the ground, overcome by sleep, and Cornwallis was swiftly drawing near. Marching on New Brunswick was out of the question. He ordered a small detail to destroy the strategic bridge still standing over Stony Brook. When someone commented on how few men were chosen for this important job, Washington is said to have answered with quiet bitterness: "Enough to be cut to pieces." And they almost were, for Cornwallis' men opened fire on the detachment as it was completing its task. Hastily now Washington snatched a supply of much-needed blankets, exchanged two of his cannon for superior British types, burned a hay depot and, leaving behind his wounded, marched his men quickly across the Millstone River. Here, too, the bridge was destroyed and the army went on through Kingston to Millstone, about 15 miles from Princeton. The Americans had just managed to escape from royal troops at their rear, while in front of them, another British contingent fled out of Millstone with 20 wagons of baggage just before the Americans arrived in the town at nightfall.

The British were in a panic. Cornwallis hurried his tired army to New Brunswick, expecting to find Washington there. But Washington, continuing north after stopping at Pluckemin on January 5, arrived at Morristown on the 6th and there set up winter quarters.

In the days that followed the commander discovered what a splendid retreat Morristown afforded. Here he could observe the enemy and still be protected by the wooded Watchung hills which rose like gigantic stairs from the valley of the Raritan River. And from the mountain town, he could send down raiding parties to make life miserable for the comfort-loving British garrisons, now for the most part confined worriedly to crowded quarters at New Brunswick and Perth Amboy.

Difficulties were not vanquished with the victories at Trenton and Princeton. Though the Delaware was free of the enemy, and the spirit of the army and its sympathizers had soared, it was yet a mammoth task to keep that army intact and reasonably comfortable. And New Jersey itself was far from supporting the rebellion completely. On Washington's side were the rabble, the under-privileged who had suffered greatly in the depression immediately preceding the war, a few philosophical idealists and an increasing proportion of plain farmers; opposing them and loyal to the king were many of the wealthy slaveholding landowners and rich merchant



*Replica of Soldiers' Hut*