



VICTORY TRAIL QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME _____

UNIT _____

This form is to be used by each hiker of the Victory Trail. The directions in italics should be followed completely to get you from one historic site to the next. At each site, fill in the question based on information available at each site. Also read the accompanying historical account as it tells you of this site's importance in Colonial History.

At the end of the hike turn in the completed questionnaire to your unit leader.

1. How many flag poles at the Waterfront Veterans' Memorial Park? _____

The hiking trail starts at the foot of Elizabeth Avenue in Elizabeth, at the corner of Front Street. Travel west up Elizabeth Avenue.

At dusk on the night of June 6, 1780 a very nervous American spy pulled a boat from the marsh reeds on the Staten Island shore opposite this point, and rowed carefully across the narrow Arthur Kill. A half hour later he handed his message to Colonel Elias Dayton, Commander of the 250 regulars of the New Jersey Brigade who were guarding Elizabeth. What Colonel Dayton read made his flesh crawl. The British were preparing to invade New Jersey. An army of 5,000 men was moving across Staten Island at that very moment.

This trail will follow the approximate route taken by the British Army as it marched through what is now Elizabeth, Roselle Park, Union and Springfield in its attempt to reach Morristown. You will also learn how the New Jersey Militiamen were successful in turning back the British invasion, saving the colonies from certain defeat. Along the course of the trail you will also pass other sites of historic interest dating back to colonial times.

Proceed up Elizabeth Avenue to Third Street, read the plaque at the boundary marker in front of the Liberty Square Senior Citizen Center.



2. What was Elizabeth Avenue formerly known as? _____

Take the left fork up First Avenue to where it re-intersects with Elizabeth Avenue. Stop at the Minuteman Statue.

Five hours later Ogden and his men, crouched behind a roadside fence near here, heard the tramp of marching feet. Soon they saw a man on horseback, and behind him a mass of red coats--the British army. Ogden told his men to aim at the rider and whispered, "Fire."

The 12 muskets erupted. Cries of pain and panic rose from the British ranks. Ogden and his men ran toward Broad Street, while return volleys of British musketry sent bullets whistling harmlessly through the night.

In Elizabeth, Colonel Dayton heard Ogden's report, and then ordered his son, Captain Jonathan Dayton to ride for Morristown to warn George Washington. The British invasion could not have come at a worse time. In Morristown, the worst winter of the war had badly weakened the American army. Over 600 men had deserted rather than endure the near-starvation rations on which they had been forced to live. The main army had dwindled to less than 3,600 men.

Then there was the New Jersey Militia, 16,000 part-time soldiers who were supposed to turn out in emergencies like this one. Would they? Colonel Dayton could only pray that they still supported the Cause. Otherwise there was little or no hope of stopping the British. By morning they could be over the Short Hills, within a few hours march of Morristown, where the American artillery and tons of ammunition could be captured easily. The Americans had no horses to move them. If Washington's out-numbered army was forced to flee, New Jersey might be knocked out of the war. Such a major defeat in the North could wreck the Revolution.

Colonel Dayton could not know that the Americans already had a great stroke of luck. One of the bullets fired by Ogden's men had crippled the general commanding the British advance guard, Brigadier Thomas Stirling, one of the toughest, most aggressive officers in the British army. Colonel Ludwig Von Wurmb, who replaced him, was more cautious. He decided to wait until dawn before advancing another step. Von Wurmb was especially anxious for the invasion to succeed because the man in command was like him a German.

George III had hired over 25,000 German troops to fight beside his British regulars in America. The commander-in-chief of these German mercenaries was Lieutenant General Wilhelm von Knyphausen. Knyphausen hoped to win a quick easy victory that would make him conquering hero of the Revolution.

3. What is the Minuteman holding in his right hand? _____

Continue up Elizabeth Avenue, crossing over to the right side of the street at one of the intersections. Continue on Elizabeth Avenue, under Route 1. Turn right on Catherine Street and go over one block to East Jersey Street, turn left. Along East Jersey Street, you will see three houses of historic interest. With the exception of Boxwood Hall, which groups can tour by appointment, these houses are not open for public display.

The brick house on the left is the Belcher-Ogden Mansion. The mansion was built by John Ogden in the late 1600's. Governor Jonathan Belcher, a royal governor of the Province of New Jersey, resided in the house from 1751 to 1757, when he died. William Peartree Smith, a leader of the Revolutionary



movement in New Jersey, resided next in the house and his daughter; Catherine married Elisha Boudinot, brother of Elias Boudinot, who was president of the Continental Congress, in a gala ceremony in the house. Among the wedding guests were George Washington, Marquis de Lafayette, Alexander Hamilton, General Thaddeus Kosciusko, Aaron Burr and Governor William Livingston. Aaron Ogden, a descendent of John, resided in the house while he served as governor of the state. The wooden house on the right is the Bonnell House, which is presumed to be the oldest standing house in Elizabeth.

Read the historic marker in front of the Bonnell House without entering the gate.

4. When was the Bonnell House built? _____

Proceed up East Jersey Street to Boxwood Hall.

Boxwood Hall was the home of Elias Boudinot, President of the Continental Congress. Other historic information is contained on the two plaques out front.

5. When was Elias Boudinot President of the Continental Congress? _____

At Madison Avenue, cross East Jersey Street and East Scott Place into Scott Park.

This park originally had a pathway down the middle bordered by Boxwood trees, from which Boxwood Hall got its name. At the far end of the park, facing Elizabeth Avenue was a two-story brick building. This building had the Elizabeth Municipal offices on the second floor and was a produce market on the ground floor. The present City Hall to the west of Scott Park was built by the Works Progress Administration during the depression of the 1930's.

Proceed along Scott Park to Elizabeth Avenue. At the Vietnam Memorial Monument cross Elizabeth Avenue and Bridge Street bridge over the Elizabeth River and turn right through the park, heading towards the large brick building.

According to a carefully preserved family tradition, Andrew Hamton is said to have eloped from Scotland with Lady Margaret Cumins. He settled in Elizabethtown in 1696 and built a house at this site, which was enlarged in 1765. Following a fire, the house was largely rebuilt as a brick structure in 1817, on the east wall are three cornerstones.

In 1749, the house and property were purchased by the Trustees of St John's Church on Broad Street to be used as a Parsonage.

6. What is at the top of the flag pole? _____

Be sure to stay on the stone walkways. Do not walk on the grass. Go up to the front walk to Pearl Street, turn right and proceed on Pearl Street to Broad Street. Turn right onto Broad Street; go past the firehouse, and cross Broad Street at Elizabeth Avenue. Read the historic markers in front of the Elizabeth Public Library.



7. In what year did Washington stop here? _____

Cross Rahway Avenue to the Court House. Proceed along Broad Street reading the signs in front of the Court House as you pass.

8. When was the present Court House built? _____

Stop at the First Presbyterian Church to read the plaques alongside the front door.

The Colonial Pastor of this church, Reverend James Caldwell, played an important and heroic role in fighting off the British invasion which this trail recounts. More will be heard about him farther on, in Union and Springfield.

Many of the Elizabethtown Patriots are buried in the cemetery here, including Hannah Caldwell, wife of Reverend Caldwell, whose ghost has been seen here recently.
The steeple of this church burned off after being struck by lightning.

9. What year was the church burned by the British? _____

Continue along Broad Street, staying on the left hand side.

The large church on the other side of the street, just past Caldwell Place, is St. Johns Church, the Parsonage of which you visited earlier.

This Church dates back to 1706. The present structure was built in 1859. During the Revolutionary War, the British used the original church as a barracks.

Continue along Broad Street. After going under the railroad arches, make the first left and then the first right. You should now be on Morris Avenue. At the next intersection, turn left onto Westfield Avenue. Stop at the bridge crossing the Elizabeth River.

In colonial times, there was a dam across the river where the bridge is now. The river, detained by the dam, formed a large pond in the area which was later filled and is now Municipal Parking lot #4.

The Mill Pond supplied water power for Crane's Mill which was located between the River and the area of the large apartment building.

The portion of Westfield Avenue that you just hiked was known then as Mill Lane. Only a narrow bridge crossed over the river to the Mill complex.

10. When was this bridge last rebuilt? _____



Continue west on Westfield Avenue for 1.5 miles. Cross to the right-hand side of the road at the Elmora Avenue intersection. Farther on, cross and turn right onto Galloping Hill Road. At Colonial Road, stop to read the historical marker.

At dawn on June 7, 1780, following their skirmish with the Elizabethtown Patriots below Broad Street the British resumed their march and moved through Elizabeth into the fields beyond the town by this route.

11. A. Whose son was killed near here? _____
B. How was he killed? _____

Follow Galloping Hill Road for a mile, to the Five Points intersection just past The YWCA 5 Points Wellness Center, turn right onto Chestnut Street, just past the Galloping Hill Inn. Follow Chestnut Street down under the Garden State Parkway and Route 22. Very carefully, cross Stuyvesant Avenue at the Wewanna Road Crosswalk and go up the steps to the front of the Connecticut Farms Presbyterian Church. Read the plaque on the front of the church.

12. What two officers' names appear on the plaque? _____

On the outskirts of Connecticut Farms, a little village three miles inland from Elizabeth, Colonel Dayton and his men waited for the invading British army.

They had just been joined by two other regiments of the New Jersey Brigade, bringing their strength to a little over 500 men.

On the road between Elizabeth and Connecticut Farms, groups of militiamen skirmished with the British. Colonel von Wurmb sent his light infantrymen, especially trained in open-formation fighting, into the fields on both sides of his column. They swiftly dispersed these daring guerrillas with a series of bayonet charges.

In Connecticut Farms, the New Jersey Brigade dug in along a deep, narrow ravine that ran through the center of the village. By 8 a.m., the 500 regulars had been reinforced by at least a thousand militiamen. A tremendous fight began. Colonel von Wurmb's regiment of green-coated German light infantry, called Jaegers (huntsmen), armed with short-barreled rifles, joined the British in the battle that rolled up and down the ravine.

After about an hour, the German and British soldiers lost heart. Their officers had told them there would be no hard fighting, that the Americans were ready to surrender. Pressing their advantage, the Americans counterattacked and drove the enemy out of the ravine entirely. But as they fell back, they found reinforcements- the 2nd Division, plus the 3rd Division commanded by General Knyphausen-- waiting for them.



Fresh regiments surged to the left and right, outflanking the Americans in the ravine. Colonel Dayton and the commander of the New Jersey Brigade, Brigadier General William Maxwell, agreed to retreat.

But it was a slow, grudging retreat. The houses of Connecticut Farms were turned into fortresses, orchards and thickets into defensive strongholds. Meanwhile, more and more American militiamen streamed into the battle. Around noon, General Maxwell ordered another counterattack that sent the Jaegers and British light infantry reeling. But Knyphausen refused to panic. There were not enough Americans to break up the solid central mass of his army, and soon he was driving the Americans back again.

Reverend James Caldwell, Pastor of the Elizabeth Presbyterian Church and one of the most fervent supporters of the Revolution in New Jersey spent the day riding up and down the dusty roads west of the battlefield, urging militiamen to hurry to the front. Enough of them responded to his exhortations to slow the British advance to a crawl. By 4 p.m., Washington had marched his men from their base camp in Morristown to the Short Hills, where they seized the high ground the British had hoped to possess. Washington sent his elite Life Guards regiment forward to assist the fighting men.

By now the Americans were making a desperate stand on the bank of the Rahway River, the western boundary of Connecticut Farms. They were trying to stop the British from getting across the Rahway River Bridge into the town of Springfield at the foot of the Short Hills. The Life Guards and fresh militia launched a counterattack just before sunset, which broke the momentum of the British advance. Knyphausen decided his tired troops, who had no sleep the previous night, needed rest. After setting fire to most of the houses in Connecticut Farms, he pulled back to a low hill near the village and broke off the battle.

Go all the way back down the stairs to the concrete sidewalk and follow the red footprints to the right along Stuyvesant Avenue and around onto West Chestnut street. Turn right onto Caldwell Place. Stop to read the two plaques at the Caldwell Parsonage.

13. What was Hannah Caldwell's maiden name? _____

Continue on Caldwell Place and turn left onto Elmwood Avenue. Follow Elmwood until it empties into Morris Avenue. Follow Morris Avenue for 1.5 miles, staying on the left-hand side of the road. Be careful crossing Rahway Avenue and Spruce Street. Cross to the right hand side of Morris Avenue where Spruce Street re-enters Morris (past Liberty Avenue). Stop on the Rahway River Bridge, at the Springfield Town Boundary. Read the plaque on the north side of the Bridge.

14. Who is honored by the plaque? _____

Following the hard fighting at Connecticut Farms, General Knyphausen decided to retreat to the town of Elizabeth and await reinforcements. For the next 16 days, Knyphausen and his men camped on Elizabethtown Point while the Americans skirmished with them.

On the night of June 22nd, the British sent a double agent into the American's camp with a phony story that they planned to attack by marching north toward the town of Passaic. They hoped to lure the



Americans out of the Short Hills into the lowlands around Elizabeth. But Major Nathanael Greene, Washington's second in command, smelled a trap. He refused to move his men out of their strong positions. His caution was more than justified; the next morning, the British came storming out of their Elizabethtown beachhead and advanced to the banks of the Rahway River.

Here Greene had posted a regiment from his home state of Rhode Island. The Rhode Islanders, numbering only 168 men, put up a ferocious fight at this bridge. With the help of a single cannon, they beat the British back three times.

Finally, the redcoats and the Jaegers forded the river and attacked from three sides. Through the swirls of smoke came a frantic cry: "More wadding! More wadding!" The Americans stuffed extra paper down their musket barrels to steady the ball and give the crude guns better aim. A few hundred yards behind the fighting was Pastor Caldwell who heard the cry and rode to the Springfield Presbyterian Church. There he filled his saddlebags with hymn books written by the English Clergyman, Isaac Watts. Back he rode to the desperate Rhode Islanders and flung them the hymn books, shouting, "Give 'em Watts, boys!"

Inspired by Caldwell's courage the Rhode Islanders stood their ground for 40 minutes. Then, with every fourth man a casualty, they retreated to a position behind another branch of the Rahway River, where New Jersey militia and regulars waited to support them.

Continue west on Morris Avenue, read the plaque on the front of the Cannonball House.

15. A. On what date did a cannonball hit this house? _____

B. On what side did a cannonball hit? _____

Farther along on Morris Avenue, stop and read the plaques at the Springfield Presbyterian Church.

16. How many sayings are there on the base of the Statue? _____

Following the American retreat from the Rahway River, the British grimly pressed forward. After another hour's hard fighting, Nathanael Green decided to let them occupy Springfield and withdrew his men to even stronger positions around the main pass through the Short Hills. General Knyphausen, studying the entrenched Americans, decided it was not worth the men it would cost to break through to Morristown. He assumed that the American artillery and ammunition had long since been moved to safety. He was wrong.

The precious guns and powder and shot were still sitting there for want of horses to haul them away.

The embittered Knyphausen let his men burn Springfield, as they had burnt Connecticut Farms, and swiftly retreated to Staten Island. Many Americans, not knowing what the British had hoped to gain beyond Springfield, looked at the two burnt-out villages and wrongfully felt they suffered a defeat. The British had suffered a harsh repulse; they never invaded New Jersey again. The state, often called the "Cockpit of the Revolution," remained firmly on the side of the Revolutionary Cause.



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®
PATRIOTS' PATH COUNCIL

The church is where hikers can be picked up in the parking lot across the street.

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE REINACTMENT OF OUR PAST HISTORY!

EXCERPTS TAKEN FROM “THE BATTLE WE NEVER KNEW WE WON” BY THOMAS FLEMING, AND REPRINTED BY PERMISSION OF THE AUTHOR, ILLUSTRATOR AND BOYS’ LIFE, PUBLISHED BY THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA.

Submit this completed document to your Scoutmaster

Document4

Prepared. For Life.™