

W3R®-US Auto Tour through Massachusetts

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Brief Overview of the French March South

From June 1780 to December 1782 Boston was the main port for resupply and repair of the French fleet in U.S. waters. In 1781 June a British squadron was blocking the sea route to Providence RI, where Rochambeau's forces were gathering for the march west to join the Continental Army in New York. Consequently a squadron bringing 600 reinforcements for Rochambeau's army docked at Boston rather than at Newport RI. About 400 of the new troops were well enough to march south to Providence RI. The auto route below parallels the route of these French troops in 1781.

Consider the economic benefit to Massachusetts from repairing and provisioning many French warships and troop transports.

The French March North: In December 1782 (a year after the siege of Yorktown) most of the 4,000-man French army retraced the 1781 route north from Providence to Boston. Several thousand French troops camped at Wrentham, then at Dedham, and boarded troop transports in Boston, bound for the Caribbean Islands.

For more historical details see the home menu under "HISTORY of French and Other Aid".

Auto Tour through Massachusetts

- 1 -- Start in Boston at the Boston Massacre Monument, at the corner of State and Congress Streets (very hard to park nearby)
- 2 -- Go 0.2 mile W on Court St and turn left onto Tremont St.
Go 1.2 m S and turn left onto Dwight St.
Go 0.2 m E and turn right onto Washington St.
- 3 -- Go 9.7 m S through Roslindale to Dedham.
Washington St becomes Rt 1A
- 4 -- Go 9.9 m S through Norwood to South Walpole.
Turn left on Water St and then right onto Rt 1.

Go 8.7 m S through Wrentham to North Attleboro.
Bear right on North Washington St.

5 -- Go 0.8 m S and bear right onto Old Post Road.
At 2.0 m this becomes Newport Ave.
Go 3.1 m S to South Attleboro.
At Irving (or Lockwood) Ave turn right and then left onto Rt 1.

6 -- Go 2.7 m S, turn right on Exchange St
Go 0.2 m E crossing the river and turn left on Roosevelt Ave
Go 0.2 m S to end at Slater Mill Site in Pawtucket RI.



Base map is copyright 2005 DeLorme (www.delorme.com) Street Atlas USA

Pearls along the Necklace – Nearby Revolutionary-Era Sites

LEXINGTON: Minuteman National Historic Park and the five-mile **Battle Road Trail** from Lexington to Concord MA. There are many additional sites in the nearby towns of Charlestown, Lincoln, and Quincy (home of John Adams). The Visitor Center has no street address, but it is across the street from the Jacob Whittemore House, 44 Marrett St, Lexington, MA 02421.
URL: <https://www.nps.gov/mima/index.htm>

BOSTON: The Freedom Trail is a 2.5 mile red-brick walking trail that connects visitors to sixteen major Revolutionary War sites, including Kings Chapel Burying Ground (with the grave of a French officer), Benjamin Franklin Statue / Boston Latin School, (Huguenot) Paul Revere's Home, and the U.S.S. Constitution (a 50-gun frigate from the War of 1812). The trail starts at the Boston Common Visitors Center, 139 Tremont St, Boston, MA 02111. To get to the Boston Common Parking Garage set your GPS unit for 0 [yes, zero] Charles Street, Boston, MA 02116.
URL: <http://www.thefreedomtrail.org/index.html>

ROXBURY: The Roxbury Redoubt: As they marched out of Boston in 1781 on a narrow causeway to Roxbury the French troops passed a redoubt (an earthen fortification) that the British had built to protect the causeway from attack. Over the next 100 years the marshland on either side of the causeway was filled in and built up, so you can no longer approach this site by water. The historical plaque describing this is on the wall of the entry to the West Village complex of Northeastern University (500-510 Parker St., Roxbury MA).

DEDHAM: French Camp 54 was the last campsite for the French troops as they marched north toward the transport fleet in Boston. The Charles River (half a mile to the north) provided water for the troops and their horses and oxen. The historical marker is located next to the traffic circle where Marsh St. ends at Court St. in Dedham MA.

WRENTHAM: French Camp 53 was located where the King Philip Regional High School now stands at 201 Franklin St., Wrentham MA. There is no historical marker here. The French army stayed here on December 1, 1782, on its way north to Boston. They used the water of Lake Archer, a quarter mile west.