



Haverford Township Historical Society



BRITISH INVASION OF HAVERFORD TOWNSHIP

By Andrew Morgan

[From the HTHS archives. See also the follow-up article [The British in Haverford – Another Look.](#)]

During the British occupation of Philadelphia in 1777-8, the residents of Haverford Township were subjected to the only invasion by foreign troops in the history of the Township.

It appears that the British under Cornwallis did not prefer making raids on the communities surrounding Philadelphia. They would much rather have had the cooperation of our farmers to the extent that plenty of food for themselves and their horses would be brought into the city and sold in the market places. However, either from fear of personal injury and loss of their goods or from feeling of patriotic necessity, very little of the farm products reached Philadelphia during the British occupation.

Finally, the British, angered by what they considered a lack of cooperation, decided to take what they needed by force and during the winter of 1777 made four raids on the Haverford farmers and residents in general. It is recorded that they found our community an area of astonishing prosperity, barns crowded with stock and stores of crops, houses with large stocks of food and every evidence of a happy self-sustaining population.

The raids took place on December 10, 11, 12 and 17th, when not only were their homes robbed of food stuffs, but in addition, items of clothing, tools, livestock and even such personal items as combs, soap, kitchen implements, pots, pans and dishes. In fact, it appeared that every effort was made to prevent our home folk from being able to continue their existence except by being in dire need and if it had not been for the spending response offered by their neighbors who had escaped these raids, they would have been reduced to a very pitiful condition.

After the Revolution was over and peace once again was established, our government agreed to recompense all individuals for following notice was displayed in certain public places "In pursuance of an act of assembly passed the 21st of September 1782, the commissioners of every county of Pennsylvania that had been invaded by the British, are directed to call on the assessors, to procure and return accounts and estimates of the damages that had been done by the enemy since the 18th of April 1775."

The following accounts were settled for Haverford:

From Martin Wifp by Cornwallis		35 £	13 s	0
Jacob Charles	Dec. 17	135	10	0
Sam'l McClure	11	13	4	6
Philip Moor	11	41	17	6
Thos. Cornog	11	44	0	3
Mordecai Morris	10	27	3	6

Nicholas Pechin	12	285	6	6
Samuel Johnson	12	67	11	0
Christian Peterman	11 & 12	95	17	9
Elizabeth Davis, Widow	11 & 12	166	9	9
Griffith Davis	11 & 12	34	19	0
James Davis	11 & 12	23	5	0
Ann Davis	11 & 12	26	10	0
Total		1299	7	0

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