

# Washington Crossing State Park - Titusville, NJ - American Guide Series on Waymarking.com

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Washington Crossing State Park - Titusville, NJ  
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**Quick Description:** On December 25, 1776 General George Washington crossed the Delaware River here, with 2,400 troops, artillery and supplies, setting the stage for the Battle of Trenton, a decisive victory for the Continental Army in the American Revolutionary War.

**Location:** New Jersey, United States

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## Long Description:

*"Along the riverbank is WASHINGTON CROSSING STATE PARK (open all year), where the Continental troops landed their big flat-bottomed boats, poled through the ice-choked river. Many of Washington's men, disheartened by the defeats of Long Island and New York, had deserted. The term of service for others had nearly ended. Only 2,400 to 2,700 remained, the*

*British holding New Jersey with three times their number. "I fear the game is nearly up," Washington then wrote to his cousin, but as he wrote he planned the recrossing of the river and the blow at Trenton. A staff officer reported: I am writing in the ferry house. The troops are all over, and the boats have gone back for the artillery. We are three hours behind the set time. Glover's men have had a hard time to force the boats through the floating ice with the snow drifting in their faces. I have never seen Washington so determined as he is now. The storm is changing to sleet and cuts like a knife. The last cannon is being landed.*

*To carry his army across the river, Washington had gathered from up stream and downstream the so-called Durham boats, named for the designer, Robert Durham. These flat-bottomed, sharp-ended craft, some of them 66 feet long, were capable of holding 15 tons. They were propelled either by oars or by sails.*

*Washington wrote to Congress that his soldiers march through the storm "did not in the least abate their ardor, and when they came to the charge each seemed to vie with the other in pressing forward." Many of the men crossed barefoot or with old rags wrapped around their feet in place of shoes, and thus they marched all night and fought and won in the bleak morning (see TRENTON).*

*In the park are memorials to these events. Daughters of the Revolution have installed an old-fashioned flower garden in the rear of the ferry house. The rival Daughters of the American Revolution have erected a historic marker for the landing site on the riverbank. An old-fashioned Colonial pump on one of the public water-supply wells was given by the Sons of the American Revolution, and a tall flagpole displaying the colors came from their rivals, the Sons of the Revolution. The American Tree Association has planted 13 American elms, one for each of the 13 Colonies. In SULLIVAN GROVE and WASHINGTON GROVE tables and other picnicking facilities are available. A third grove at the east end of the park is being developed and will be named for Gen. Nathaniel Greene, a division commander in the battle.*

*In the old-fashioned garden is a fountain, erected by the Patriotic Order Sons of America in honor of John Honeyman, a spy who aided Washington with information before the battle. Learning of the Hessian plans for a drunken celebration, Honeyman left Trenton, allegedly to buy more cattle for the British. He allowed himself to be "captured," gave his information to Washington and was allowed to escape. At Griggstown, where he lived, Honeyman was first denounced by his neighbors. When Washington appeared there and told the people of Honeyman's great services, the spy became a hero.*

*Nearly half of the open land within the 293 acres of the park has been planted with seedling evergreens, enough to create a small forest. These were provided by a State Forest Nursery adjoining the park, where 2,500 seedlings are grown annually.*

*--- New Jersey, A Guide to Its Past and Present, 1939*

Records indicate that a ferry was established here around 1700 for commerce and passenger transport. Washington used this existing ferry to bring all his troops across the Delaware River undetected, landing in New Jersey, in a strategic location. After nine miles of marching,

Washington's men engaged the Hessian and British Army on December 26, 1776 at the Battle of Trenton, an important victory for the Continental Army.

In 1912, Washington Crossing State Park was established with 100 acres on the overlook of the ferry location where the troops landed. During the Great Depression in the 1930s, the park was further developed by the Work Projects Administration (WPA) and now includes 1,399 acres. The visitors' center has an impressive museum with Revolution Era relics, such as documentation, uniforms, muskets and cannonballs.

In addition to historic sites in the park, including the Johnson Ferry House and Nelson House, the park has historical hiking trails, picnicking, camping, fishing, bicycling and horseback riding.

**Book:** New Jersey

**Page Number(s) of Excerpt:** 521-522

**Year Originally Published:** 1939

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