

**A BGES Revolutionary War Field
University Program
Washington Between the Fourths in 3 Parts:
Part 2: Battling for Philadelphia—October to
December 1777**

Presented by Gary Ecelbarger
June 20-24, 2023; from King of Prussia, PA

As we approach the 250th Anniversary of the Revolutionary War, this landmark period in our history is already in the midst of a renaissance with a renewed dedication to “The Cause” expressed in literature as well as in the arts. Fresh attempts during the Digital Age to address the history of the Revolution and the war that it spawned have produced new discoveries and intriguing interpretations of traditional sources. More fortuitously, lands and properties have become more accessible today than they were even at the turn of the 20th century. For interpretive history programs, this renaissance has produced the most accurate and exciting results imaginable; in some instances, an up-to-date tour of the battlefields and other sites related to a military campaign has rendered obsolete similarly themed programs even a generation ago. This is particularly true for the Philadelphia Campaign (1777), Valley Forge (1777-1778), and the Monmouth Campaign (1778).

BGES continues this updated, Revolutionary War program with its second installment of a three-part series that chronologically covers all three campaigns. Beginning in the third week of June 2023, we complete the Philadelphia Campaign. Our tour leader for this series is historian Gary Ecelbarger, a 20-year veteran of touring this campaign who is nearing completion of the manuscript of his 10th book, *George Washington Between the Fourths*—a single year campaign biography of His Excellency and his headquarters, July 4, 1777 to July 4, 1778. This perfect pairing of guide and history theme assures a top-notch offering by BGES.

Tuesday, June 20, 2023

6:00 PM: Meet at the Holiday Inn Express to greet all the members of the program as well as pick up your nametags and handout packets. Gary Ecelbarger will present an introduction to the summer and early autumn of 1777 and follow up with an overview of the program, including a Q & A session.

Dinner is on your own.

Wednesday, June 21, 2023

8:00 AM: Our program opens dramatically, setting the stage for a battle every day in the field. Our morning destination is Malvern, the postwar town that contains the Paoli Battlefield. We will be joined here by Jim Christ, the mover and shaker of the preservation and interpretation of the “Paoli Massacre.” Together, Jim and Gary will present the minutia of Charles “No Flint” Grey’s surprise midnight attack against Brig. Gen. Anthony Wayne’s Pennsylvania Continentals (and the Maryland militia coming to their support), on September 20-21, 1777, as well as the big-picture implications of this contest.

We will follow Wayne’s and Smallwood’s retreat route and from there transition to the simultaneous activity conducted by George Washington from September 17 to 20. This begins at Yellow Springs, where His Excellency learns how weather has crippled his army’s firepower and takes us to the sites of Warwick and Reading Furnaces, where Washington operates against the clock to swiftly resupply his army. We then cross the swollen Schuylkill River at Parker’s Ford as we follow the path where Washington races his men 46 miles in two days to block every possible ford and ferry that Crown Forces commander William Howe can possibly use to cross to the Philadelphia side of the river.

After lunch, we will plant ourselves at one of those ten crossings of the Schuylkill where we will discuss a mind-boggling decision that became THE turning point of the Philadelphia Campaign on September 21, 1777. From there, we head to the bank of Perkiomen Creek, where the first recorded criticism of Washington’s leadership was generated from within his military family. We then follow Washington’s retrograde movement all the

way to the Frederick Antes home at Swamp Creek. Here, at George Washington's headquarters, we will conclude our tour day with a big and dramatic Council of War, held on September 23.

Back to the hotel. Lunch is included, and dinner will be on your own.

Thursday, June 22, 2023

8:00 AM: We begin the day at Pennypacker's Mill on the Perkiomen, the scene of the encampment of the reinforced Continental Army at the close of September. General Howe has just captured Philadelphia, and Washington is crafting a plan to attack him after learning that the Crown Forces are divided into two wings and encamped several miles from each other.

We then follow Washington to the Peter Wentz farm, his headquarters on the eve of the Battle of Germantown. There, we will review the battle plan for an elaborate, multi-prong overnight approach to Germantown. From there, we make a brief stop at St. Thomas Church at Whitemarsh, where the army divided onto three routes to the battle.

After lunch, we dedicate the early and midafternoon to the Battle of Germantown, with an extended visit to the house and grounds of Cliveden, the Benjamin Chew house, which witnessed the battle's dramatic focal and turning point. We finish our battle and tour day at Stenton, the home of William Logan, which previously was George Washington's headquarters and was now William Howe's quarters. After a unique tour of the homestead, Gary will discuss the impact of the Battle of Germantown on the Americans, on the French, and particularly on William Howe.

Back to our hotel. Lunch is included, but dinner is on your own.

Friday, June 23, 2023

8:00 AM: Our entire day will be dedicated to the battle for control of the Delaware River. Michael C. Harris will be our special guest this day as he shares his research and expertise. Mike and Gary will lead us to the New Jersey side of the river for the morning. We will begin at Billingsport (across the river from Chester), and progress to Fort Mercer. We will develop the oft-overlooked, vicious Battle of Red Bank, the October 22 contest that produced nearly 400 casualties.

After lunch in the national park, we cross to the Pennsylvania side and head to Fort Mifflin. A portion of the wall dates from the 1777 campaign; regardless, Mike and Gary will re-create the appearance of the fort as well as the strategy and tactics involved in the battle for ultimate control of it and the river. By day's end, our group will have uniquely and thoroughly covered the River Campaign.

We will provide lunch; dinner is on your own.

Saturday, June 24, 2023

8:00 A.M. We spend our final, full day of touring by following George Washington and his army for two months, beginning in the aftermath of Germantown. We begin by visiting the grave of Brig. Gen. Francis Nash, the highest ranking American to fall at Germantown. From there, we head to the site of the Frederick Wampole house, where Washington lodged for a week after the battle. We move in his path to the George Emlen house at Whitemarsh, his six-week headquarters, where he learned of the initial conspiracy against him. We then ascend the height to visit the site of Fort Hill—including a witness tree—to discuss the reasons Washington had massed the largest single-region force on the face of the Earth.

After lunch, we will dissect the Battle of Whitemarsh fought at the close of the first week of December, including the scene of action of Daniel Morgan and his riflemen on Edge Hill; we'll visit the graves where four of them lie today. As we work our way back to our hotel, we will enter the scene of another battle, the fifth in our program. This is the Battle of Matson's Ford, fought on December 11, 1777. The implications of this contest, as well as Washington's intended destination, will lead us to part three of the series in December 2023.

Lunch is provided, but dinner is on your own.

About The Faculty

Gary Ecelbarger is an award-winning author of nine books relating to 19th-century personalities and events, as well as more than three dozen monographs, essays, and articles of Revolutionary War and Civil War-era topics. As a historian, symposium speaker, and tour guide for the past 25

years, he has led his audiences through complex campaigns and prides himself on crafting well-researched, thought-provoking programs that maintain an intriguing, chronological flow and feature off-the-beaten-path historical sites. This second installment of the “Between-the-Fourths” series continually exemplifies Ecelbarger’s dedication to this topic as illustrated not only by his current manuscript but also by five articles he has published in the *Journal of the American Revolution*, which directly relate to the August-September 1777 portion of the Philadelphia Campaign.

Meeting Site and Hotel

We will operate this program from the Holiday Inn Express-King of Prussia, 260 N. Gulph Road, King of Prussia, PA 19406 (610-968-9500). Your room will be \$132 per night, inclusive of tax, and the rate is good until May 22, 2023. Call the hotel or 866-338-0327 and ask for the Blue & Gray Education block.

Airport and Transportation Arrangements

The servicing airports are Philadelphia (PHL), 28 miles away; and Trenton (TTN), 44 miles away. Both will require a rental car to get to King of Prussia. You can also check Yelp.com for ground transportation options. Some town cars have a flat rate of \$95 one way.

Recommended Reading (prices include shipping)

You will receive maps that will meet your on-site requirements. The following books will further enhance your experience, and it is recommended to read one or more.

Robert Dunkerly, [*An Explorer’s Guide to America’s Revolutionary War*](#)

Douglas Southall Freeman, [*Washington \(an abridgement\)*](#)

Michael Harris, [*Germantown*](#)

James McIntyre, [*A Most Gallant Resistance: The Delaware River Campaign, September-November 1777*](#)

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Name (s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

This program includes the services of your historian, a tour director, four lunches, maps, appropriate transportation for the registration, and light refreshments and snacks.

_____ Registration \$895

_____ Dues Paying BGES Member \$825

_____ Deposit only—per person \$300. Net due on or before June 19, 2023

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Pay by check: Make checks payable to BGES and mail to P.O. Box 1176, Chatham, VA 24541

Pay by credit card: You may also fax your registration with credit card details to BGES at 434-432-0596.

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