



# The Uncertain Revolution: Washington and the Continental Army at Morristown

*John T. Cunningham*

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Without New Jersey's Watchung Mountains and the towns around Morristown, would the American Revolution have succeeded? Would George Washington's army have survived? New Jersey's esteemed historian John T. Cunningham explores the harsh circumstances and geography of this region during the War of Independence. It is an account of American history that has been overlooked and overshadowed until now. But this "geological fortress" -- Washington and the Continental Army's winter quarters for four years -- may well be the place where America survived. In *The Uncertain Revolution*, John T. Cunningham tells the story of those forgotten winters in Middlebrook and Morristown and of their critical importance to the course of the war. Geographically, the mountains made an excellent defensive position, hiding from the British the disarray of the American army and the horrific conditions. Reports of the strength and numbers of American troops fluctuated wildly as Washington and his officers tried to stave off desertion and mutiny. Washington's army survived a small pox epidemic at Morristown, a season of short supplies at Middlebrook, the most brutal winter of the war in 1779-80, and the war's most dire mutiny on New Year's Day 1781. There's drama -- including the cat-and-mouse game played with the unpredictable British general, George Clinton, and treachery -- with one of his favorite officers, Benedict Arnold. There's also the fierce performance of the New Jersey militia in defense of their homes and farms. In *The Uncertain Revolution* John T. Cunningham makes the case for the importance of Morristown and the mountains to an understanding of the war itself. And just as the history of those harsh winters has long been neglected, so were the physical places over time. The soldiers huts in the mountains at Jockey Hollow disintegrated, and the houses that had served as Washington's headquarters were almost lost to neglect and development. The author's account of their reclamation and eventual incorporation into the America's first National Historical Park in 1933 is a fitting conclusion to his story of Washington in the Watchungs.

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