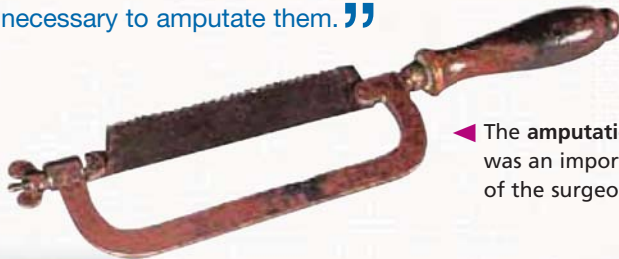


## A Deadly Winter

Due to poor planning, thievery, and muddy roads, supplies were lacking during the army's winter camp at Valley Forge. An estimated 2,500 to 3,000 men died from exposure, disease, or malnutrition. According to the Marquis de Lafayette,

“The unfortunate soldiers were in want of everything; they had neither coats nor hats, nor shirts, nor shoes. Their feet and their legs froze until they were black, and it was often necessary to amputate them.”

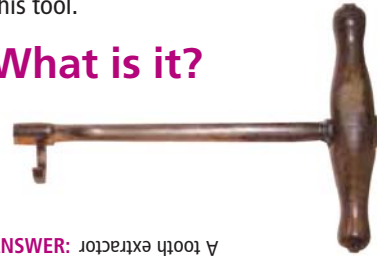


◀ The amputation saw was an important piece of the surgeon's kit.

## STRANGE BUT TRUE

A soldier in pain hated to see a surgeon approaching with this tool.

### What is it?



ANSWER: A tooth extractor

## Data File

**WHO** approx. 12,000 regulars, officers, and advisers

**WHERE** 25 miles NW of Philadelphia

**WHAT** 14' x 16' log huts housed 12 privates each; officers had more space, depending on rank

**WHEN** Dec. 19, 1777, to June 19, 1778

**WHY** near major crossroads, with plenty of wood and water

### HARDSHIPS AT VALLEY FORGE

- In February, almost 5,000 soldiers were too sick to fight; another 3,700 lacked either shoes or clothes.
- Shipments intended for troops were often stolen by government employees.
- Many local farmers were Loyalist and refused to sell food to the army. Others would not sell food because American currency was worthless.
- Common ailments included typhus and dysentery.
- Desertions exceeded 2,000. By February, 8–10 men were deserting each day.
- When frostbitten flesh dies, it turns black. The condition, called gangrene, can spread through the body and can be fatal. Amputations were performed without anesthetics or antiseptics, so amputees often died from infections anyway.

