KEEPING the appetites of the American soldiers appeased during the Revolutionary War, or perhaps I should say, the attempt to keep their appetites appeased, was an arduous and thankless task. From the firing of the first gun until the echoes of the last had died away, acrimony and vituperation were the lot of those who, in many cases, did their best to supply the army with its full ration of food.

At the outset of the war, nothing approaching a systematic securing and issuing of foodstuffs was attempted. With the first rush of the troops to answer the call of arms, food, in most cases, was hastily packed with little forethought as to the needs of the soldier over a long period of time. Several months were to slip by before it became apparent that, if an army was to be maintained in the field, something would have to be done to insure a regular and adequate supply.

A first step was taken in this direction when, on July 19, 1775, General Washington selected Joseph Trumbull of Connecticut to be the first commissary general of the army of the United Colonies. Trumbull had served as the commissary general of the Connecticut forces for several months, and his work had been of such outstanding character that Washington turned to him to bring order out of the chaotic conditions prevailing in the commissary department.

As it is not the purpose of this paper to discuss the administration of food supply throughout the war, but to survey briefly the activities of one of the outstanding characters in this field, only
a few words will be necessary to indicate the effectiveness of the system inaugurated in 1775 until it was reorganized with the appointment of a superintendent of finance in 1781.

In a word, confusion reigned in an ever increasing tempo. The system was subject to many changes; and the commissaries general came and went with alarming regularity, Joseph Trumbull being followed by William Buchanan, Jeremiah Wadsworth, and Ephraim Blaine in the order mentioned.

Congress, after having legislated for the greater part of the war in an attempt to set up a satisfactory organization to provide food for the army, finally decided to unload the burden upon the capable shoulders of the superintendent of finance. This step, however, was taken gradually. February 20, 1781, Robert Morris had been appointed superintendent of finance; but it was almost four months later before, by a resolution of Congress, June 4, 1781, he was authorized to secure and dispose of the specific supplies required from the several states in a manner best suited to the advancement of the public interest. The method of requisitioning specific supplies from the states in lieu of cash had been the last resource of a bankrupt Congress to obtain the provisions necessary to support the army. To extract these supplies from the reluctant states was now to be the task of one man.

When Robert Morris agreed to accept the appointment, it was not his purpose to take upon himself the responsibility of providing food for the army during the ensuing campaign. Not even when Congress adopted the resolution of June 4 did he feel called upon to assume that responsibility. Throughout the campaign that concluded with the surrender of the British at Yorktown, he maintained that the responsibility rested squarely upon the shoulders of the individual states according to the resolutions of Congress of February 25 and November 4, 1780.

Although Mr. Morris took this stand, we must not hastily assume that he, by so doing, delivered himself from all participation in this field of activity. On the contrary, he was individually

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responsible for a major portion of the success achieved in the gastronomic phase of the last campaign.

According to his own definition, the new office was created to serve two purposes: first, to increase the public revenue; second, to expend that revenue in the most frugal, fair, and honest manner possible. The latter purpose seemed to him to be the more essential of the two, and it was partly because of this attitude that he interested himself in the question of food supply even before he officially assumed office on June 27, 1781.

Some weeks before he took the oath of office, a committee of Congress called upon Mr. Morris with a letter from General Washington in which the latter took occasion to point out the distressed condition of the army for want of bread. Morris, not having much faith in the efficacy of the accompanying resolution of Congress which empowered General Washington to seize flour wherever he could find it, was incited to instant action by the plight of the soldiers. Not being prepared in an official character to secure the necessary funds, he determined to procure the needed supplies by pledging his private credit. Turning to two old friends, Thomas Lowrey of New Jersey and General Schuyler of New York, he requested each of them to procure one thousand barrels of flour as quickly as possible and at the lowest price obtainable. Because of the urgency of the need, he suggested that they send the flour to camp as soon as they could obtain it, and not await the assembling of the entire amount before forwarding any part of it. In order to make their credit doubly attractive, Morris pledged his own backed by his many known resources. As a note of warning, realizing the unofficial character of his action, he expressed the desire that the utmost secrecy be maintained regarding the source of the flour lest the states abate what little exertion they had been making to collect the specific supplies required of them.

Less than a month later, Thomas Lowrey informed the superintendent that he had been successful in securing the flour and

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5 Robert Morris to Thomas Burke, William Houston, Oliver Wolcott, undated, Robert Morris Letter Book A.
6 Robert Morris Diary (Library of Congress), I, May 18, 1781.
7 Robert Morris to General Washington, May 29, 1781; to Thomas Lowrey, May 29, 1781; to Major-General Schuyler, August 29, 1781, and May 29, 1781; to General Sullivan, Mr. Houston and Mr. Mathews, May 29, 1781, Robert Morris Letter Book A.
had forwarded it to camp. By that date, Morris had not as yet heard from General Schuyler; and, consequently, requested Lowrey to procure another thousand barrels, which the latter readily agreed to do.※

It was during the month of June, 1781, that an event occurred which enmeshed Morris so completely in the problem of food supplies for the army that, although continuing to maintain his former position, he soon found himself gradually assuming the responsibility of providing food for the coming campaign. The event referred to was an act of the Pennsylvania Assembly of June 25, by which the superintendent of finance was empowered to procure specific supplies for the United States on behalf of that state. As a fund to be used for performing the same, the entire emission of state paper according to the act of the Assembly of April 7, 1781, was assigned to his use.※ Morris lost no time in putting his newly granted power of attorney into practice. He was determined, however, not to draw upon the state funds unless it was absolutely necessary; and we shall see that by skillful maneuvering he was, in many cases, successful in avoiding this contingency. He immediately credited Pennsylvania with the flour bought by Lowrey and Schuyler, and informed George Washington that if he could procure flour in New York as part of Pennsylvania’s quota of supplies, an equal amount would be furnished by his order at Philadelphia or on the Chesapeake as he might direct.※ That Congress was fully in accord with these activities by Morris before he took the oath of office was indicated the following month when, by act of July 6, it officially validated everything he had done.※

Morris came into office with a definite desire to abolish the system of requisitioning supplies from the various states. He had had ample time to observe its weaknesses since its inception in December, 1779, and his remedy for it was the substitution of the use of the formal contract.※ Two days after he took the oath

※Robert Morris Diary, I, June 20, 1781.
※Robert Morris to the President of Pennsylvania, August 23, 1781, Robert Morris Letter Book A; Robert Morris Diary, I, July 5, 1781.
※Journals of the Continental Congress 1774-1789, XX, 723.
※Robert Morris to the Governors of the States, February 15, 1782, Robert Morris Letter Book C.
of office he agreed with the Board of War to launch his proposed system by advertising for contractors to supply the post at Philadelphia. Meanwhile, in order to facilitate the introduction of the system, he asked the Board to draw up a form to be used when final arrangements were made with successful bidders. That body, upon so doing, found that in the powers granted to the superintendent no authority had been given to conclude contracts. Upon communicating with Congress, the question was settled by a resolution of that body July 10, 1781, by which Morris was granted the power to contract for all necessary supplies for the army or armies of the United States. With this sweeping grant of authority, Morris became deeply involved in the question of supplies. While continually urging the states to bring forth their quotas of provisions to insure an adequate supply for the campaign, he began gradually to extend the contract system with the idea always in mind of lessening the financial waste he had found in the supply department. This activity immediately brought him face to face with a vexing problem which had its inception the preceding year, and which involved not only the American but also the French army.

In the fall of the year 1780, after the French troops had been blockaded at Newport, Rhode Island, for several months, Ephraim Blaine, the commissary general of purchases for the American army, wrote to Congress that the distress of Washington’s forces was due in a large measure to the activities of the French commissary agents. He pointed out that Congress was allowing them to purchase upon terms not granted to its own agents. He complained that Colonel Champion, upon whom he had depended for beef purchases in the four eastern states, had succumbed to the offers of the French authorities and had contracted with them to supply their army with beef. And for some time, he added, Champion’s agents had been purchasing supplies with hard money in all the New England states. He further complained that he had learned upon good authority that when the American army had been destitute of a single bullock the contractors for the army of France had had a surplus of from six to eight hundred head of cattle in Rhode Island as well as a considerable number of sheep.

33 Robert Morris Diary, I, June 29, 1781.
34 Ibid., July 9, 1781.
35 Journals of the Continental Congress 1774-1789, XX, 734.
He proposed that Congress take steps to remedy the situation by placing the state agents upon an equal footing with those of France regarding the means with which to purchase and the terms upon which purchases should be made.  

The situation had been further complicated by the action of Congress in its attempts to secure funds. As is well known, during the years 1779 and 1780, many bills had been drawn on our Ministers abroad without ascertaining beforehand whether they were in a position to honor them. A great many of these bills subsequently found their way into the hands of Benjamin Franklin at Paris, and it was up to him to use his ingenuity to have them redeemed. One way in which he was enabled to do this concerns us here. Being considerably embarrassed and vexed as to how to approach the French government to secure money with which to pay the bills, he was happily given an inspiration by the arrival in the fall of 1780 of Mr. Searle, an agent from the state of Pennsylvania, also seeking money.  

Mr. Searle informed Franklin that the harvest in America had been very large, and it was the expectation of everyone that the states would cheerfully comply with the requisitions of Congress. This, he felt, would give the latter the disposal of a plentiful supply of provisions. With this thought in mind, Franklin suggested to the director-general of finance that Congress would furnish the French army in America with provisions in return for funds to enable him to discharge the bills. An agreement was finally drafted whereby Franklin was to grant a letter of credit for supplies to the amount of four hundred thousand dollars in return for the payment of the bills. The letter of credit was to be sent to General Rochambeau to be used by him in the interest of the French army.  

No sooner had the French general received the letter of credit than he applied to General Washington for the stipulated amount in provisions. Washington was extremely embarrassed by the request because of the urgent need of his own forces for all

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available foodstuffs. He informed Rochambeau's messenger of the situation, and thereupon referred the entire matter to Congress.\textsuperscript{19}

In the meantime, La Luzerne, the French minister, had informed Congress of the engagement of their agent; and at the same time suggested that Congress take steps to furnish the fleet and army of His Majesty's forces in America with provisions and receive in payment bills drawn upon the treasury of France. After considerable debate Congress, fearing that it would be unable to secure sufficient supplies for both armies under the requisition system, decided against the latter suggestion. It was decided, however, to order the Board of War to see that Franklin's contract was carried out, inasmuch as it involved the good faith of the United States.\textsuperscript{20} Upon receipt of the order, the Board of War issued a circular to the states, May 30, 1781, in which it suggested that Congress was depending upon the arrears of specific supplies to make good its agreement with the court of France, and requested that the states be pleased to acquaint the Board with their expectations on this score.\textsuperscript{21} Within a few days Pennsylvania replied that it was unable to comply with the recommendations of Congress. This attitude seems to have been characteristic of the attention accorded the request by the remaining states.\textsuperscript{22} And when the distressed condition of the American army for want of provisions is considered, in addition to the antagonism that had been engendered by the activities of the agents of what appeared to be a well-fed and idle French army, it would have been surprising if the states had been stimulated to act by this mild injunction of the Board of War—and, it might be added, particularly when they were asked to draw upon the arrears of their quotas of specific supplies. Here, accordingly, matters rested until Robert Morris turned his attention to the questions that had been raised concerning the food supplies of the allied armies.


\textsuperscript{20}Journals of the Continental Congress 1774-1789, XIX, 370; XX, 527; Chevalier de la Luzerne to the President of Congress, March 24, 1781, \textit{The Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States}, Francis Wharton, ed. (Washington, 1889, 6 vols.), IV, 328.

\textsuperscript{21}Board of War to the States, May 30, 1781, \textit{Letters of the Members of the Continental Congress}, VI, 104.

\textsuperscript{22}President of Pennsylvania to the Board of War, June 2, 1781, \textit{Pennsylvania Archives} (Harrisburg and Philadelphia, 1852-1935, 119 vols.), 1st Series, IX, 187.
As mentioned, the superintendent of finance was determined to reduce the expenditure of money in the commissary department. Tales of the existing conditions had reached his ears, and he decided to do something about them.\textsuperscript{23} For some time he had been considering a trip to camp to consult with General Washington upon matters pertaining to the problem of subsistence for the army. Upon the urging of La Luzerne, who had lately visited General Washington, Morris determined to go as soon as business would permit.\textsuperscript{24} At last, August 7, in company with Richard Peters and James Wilson, he set out for Washington's headquarters near Dobbs' Ferry, New York.\textsuperscript{25} Upon his arrival on August 11, he immediately began conversations with Washington in order to perfect plans for the ensuing campaign.\textsuperscript{26} After reaching an agreement regarding the quantities of provisions needed and the location of magazines to be established, Morris conferred with General Rochambeau with the idea of bringing about a satisfactory solution of the inter-allied food supply question. In his discussions with the general, the question of the contract made by Benjamin Franklin seems to have been lost under the pressure of the more important subject of the supplies for both armies during the remainder of the war. Morris emphasized the fact that his only desire was to unite measures for supplying the two armies in such a manner as would benefit them both. As a remedy for the existing situation, he suggested that the supplies for both armies be obtained by contract. Rochambeau seemed favorably impressed, but was disinclined to alter his procedure as he was well satisfied with the efforts of Jeremiah Wadsworth and John Carter, two Americans, who had undertaken to keep the French forces supplied with provisions. Morris pointed out that Wadsworth and Carter could continue their activities as contractors in the system he proposed to establish, and he expressed the hope that they would do so. An agreement, however, was not reached at this meeting other than the decision to settle the question when Rochambeau arrived in Philadelphia with the allied forces.\textsuperscript{27}

\textsuperscript{23} Robert Morris to the Minister of France, August 2, 1781, Robert Morris Letter Book A.
\textsuperscript{24} Robert Morris Diary, I, July 16, 1781.
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid., August 21, 1781.
\textsuperscript{26} Diaries of George Washington, 1748-1799, John C. Fitzpatrick, ed. (New York, 1925, 4 vols.), II, 253.
\textsuperscript{27} Robert Morris Diary, I, August 21, 1781.
While Morris was at camp, news arrived from the West Indies that the French fleet under Count de Grasse would set sail August 13 for the Chesapeake Bay. Instantly Washington decided to move the army to Virginia in order to concert efforts against the British in that area. The entire allied army, with the exception of twelve small battalions under Major General Heath which were left behind to defend the northern frontiers, soon began the long trek southward.  

Before hurrying home to institute measures to feed the soldiers during the coming campaign, Morris took steps to provide for that part of the army left behind. Thomas Lowrey, who had fortunately come to camp during Morris's stay, was again called upon to purchase flour on the credit of Pennsylvania and to deliver it to General Heath. Colonel Udney Hay, the agent for the state of New York, was ordered to furnish supplies in proportion to the amount demanded. Upon the complaint of Hay that he had no barrels in which to pack his purchases, Morris requested Charles Stewart, the commissary general of issues, to deliver to Hay all the old flour barrels he could collect at the various posts along the North River. In addition to these preparations, Morris arranged with General Rochambeau to deliver an amount of flour to the French forces when they reached their destination equal to any excess supply which they might see fit to turn over to General Heath upon breaking camp.

Having completed these arrangements, Morris started for Philadelphia. Upon his arrival Monday, August 20, he was faced with the problem of quickly providing for the oncoming troops. General Washington had requested him to establish a magazine of provisions at the Head of Elk to be used by the passing troops. To carry out this plan, Morris called on Levi Hollingsworth, a Philadelphia merchant, who agreed to undertake the task. To insure an adequate supply, Colonel Blaine was directed to supplement Hollingsworth's efforts by the collection of specific supplies

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29 Robert Morris Diary, I, August 21, 1781; Robert Morris to General Heath, September 17, 1781, Robert Morris Letter Book A.

30 Robert Morris Diary, I, August 21, 1781.
from the states of Delaware and Maryland. On August 30, the day the troops reached Philadelphia, Blaine informed Morris that the magazine had been established at the Head of Elk agreeable to the desire of the commander-in-chief.

In the meantime, a letter had arrived from General Washington re-emphasizing the necessity of collecting a large quantity of provisions to be used by the troops while stationed in Virginia. Morris immediately dispatched letters to the governors of Maryland, Delaware, and Virginia urging upon them the absolute necessity of delivering to the order of Colonel Blaine the supplies they were collecting in compliance with earlier requests issued from the superintendent's office. In order to awaken the state of Delaware, which had been particularly negligent in forwarding specific supplies, he wrote as follows:

> It is needless to say that a Body of Soldiers will not starve in the midst of a plentiful country. I hope . . . your timely Endeavors will have spared the Necessity of military Collection. If not I still hope that the military Force will be exerted with all possible Mildness. But at any Rate the public Service must not suffer.

Knowing that he could not depend upon the southern states for an adequate supply of fresh meat, Morris ordered General Health to forward one hundred head of cattle a week from among those he secured from the eastern states. Responsibility for the safe delivery of the cattle was placed in the hands of Ephraim Blaine. Unable to supply Blaine with the funds necessary to hire drovers, Morris entreated the governor of New York to advance the re-

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32 Robert Morris Diary, I, August 30, 1781; Robert Morris to George Washington, August 28, 1781, Robert Morris Letter Book A.
33 Robert Morris to the Governor of Virginia, August 23, 1781; to the Governor of Maryland, August 21, 1781; to the Governors of New Jersey and Delaware, August 22, 1781; to the Governors of Maryland and Delaware, August 26, 1781; to General Washington, August 28, 1781, Robert Morris Letter Book A; Robert Morris Diary, I, August 28, 1781; Robert Morris to the Governor of Virginia, August 23, 1781, Calendar of Virginia State Papers and other Manuscripts, 1652-1869, William P. Palmer, ed. (Richmond, 1875-1893, 11 vols.), II, 351.
34 Robert Morris to the Governor of Delaware, September 1, 1781, Robert Morris Letter Book A.
35 Robert Morris to General Heath, September 5, 1781, Ibid.
quired amount.\textsuperscript{38} Unfortunately, this was not always forthcoming, with the result that appeals had to be made to the governor of New Jersey to grant warrants to the drovers to impress pasturage.\textsuperscript{37} In other instances sections of the herds had to be sold to obtain sufficient money to conduct the rest to the army.\textsuperscript{38}

Morris’s worries in connection with the supply of foodstuffs did not end with the preparations made for provisioning the American army. During his absence from Philadelphia, Gouverneur Morris, his secretary, whom he had left in charge of his office, contracted with John Holker, the French consul in Philadelphia, to deliver three thousand barrels of flour for the use of the French fleet. It was agreed that Matthew Ridley, a Baltimore merchant, would secure the flour and hold it for Mr. Holker’s order. The filling of this contract was to plague Morris for many weeks before it was finally accomplished.\textsuperscript{39}

As if his problems were not already sufficient for one mortal to bear, the arrival of the French forces brought with them a demand for the flour to fulfil the engagement he had made with Rochambeau while at camp.\textsuperscript{40} Orders were immediately given to Blaine to procure the necessary amount from the specific supplies of Maryland and Virginia, and to deposit it in the city of Baltimore. As a safeguard, in the event that Blaine should meet with difficulties in his efforts to secure the flour, Morris instructed him to place the order in the hands of Matthew Ridley, whose influence, it was felt, would be sufficient to complete successfully the task.\textsuperscript{41}

By that period, Morris’s responsibilities had become so heavy that he decided not to undertake the added burden of contracting for the supplies of the French army, at least not during the campaign. He suggested to the French authorities that as long as

\textsuperscript{38} Robert Morris to the Governor of New York, September 6, 1781, \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{37} Robert Morris to the Governor of New Jersey, September 6, 1781, \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{38} Robert Morris to the President of New Hampshire, September 24, 1781, \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{39} Robert Morris Diary, I, August 8, 1781; Robert Morris to Matthew Ridley, August 27, 1781, and September 6, 1781; to John Holker, August 29, 1781; to Ridley and Pringle, October 9, 1781, Robert Morris Letter Book A.
\textsuperscript{40} Extract of letter from Monsieur Daure, September 6, 1781, Robert Morris Letter Book A.
\textsuperscript{41} Robert Morris to Monsieur Daure, September 19, 1781; to Ephraim Blaine, September 20, 1781; to Matthew Ridley, September 20, 1781, Robert Morris Letter Book A.
their agents were giving satisfaction that they continue to use them for the duration of the campaign, after which it was his expectation to substitute the contract system.\textsuperscript{42}

In spite of the precautions that, as we have seen, Robert Morris took to provide for the section of the army left behind by General Washington, forces were at work to upset his plans. Thomas Lowrey wrote that he was no longer able to purchase flour in New Jersey because of the high prices offered by agents of the French army. Colonel Hay had not been supplied with sufficient casks for his purchases; and, as a result, applied to Morris for cash to secure more. And to climax it all, General Heath complained that the issues at camp had been considerably larger than anticipated. All in all, Morris was confronted with a situation that demanded instant attention.\textsuperscript{43}

The superintendent met this emergency with his usual promptness of action. After conferring with William Duer regarding the possibility of purchasing flour in the state of New York to relieve General Heath’s forces, Morris decided to employ him to secure two thousand barrels of flour. He instructed Duer to deliver five hundred barrels as soon as he could obtain them and to hold the remainder on deposit at West Point subject to Heath’s orders. General Heath, however, was ordered not to use the remaining fifteen hundred barrels until he had exhausted every means at hand to obtain the necessary supplies due from the state of New York.\textsuperscript{44}

Let us return once more to the army pushing its way to Virginia. Colonel Blaine, who had more than once threatened to resign his position as commissary general of purchases, was now doing his utmost to see that the wishes of Robert Morris were carried out. Unable to accompany the army as it left Philadelphia, he ordered his deputy, George Morton, to go with it and whenever necessary to call upon the state agents for a plentiful supply of provisions. Morton was further instructed that in the event that Blaine did not catch up with the army before it left the Head of Elk to keep

\textsuperscript{42}Robert Morris Diary, I, September 1-5.
\textsuperscript{43}Ibid., August 29, 1781; September 7, 1781; Robert Morris to General Heath, October 9, 1781, Robert Morris Letter Book B.
\textsuperscript{44}Robert Morris Diary, I, October 13, 1781; Robert Morris to General Heath, October 16, 1781, Robert Morris Letter Book B.
ahead of the forces to see that proper supplies were placed in the magazines along the line of march.\textsuperscript{45}

With Virginia and Maryland straining every nerve to comply with Morris's exhortations, the paths of Blaine and his assistants were made comparatively easy. The agents of both states had received orders directly from their respective governors to increase their exertions in order to procure the needed supplies. In Maryland the Head of Elk, Baltimore, and Georgetown were designated as depositories for receipt of the provisions to be obtained by the commissaries, while cattle were to be pastured on the various rivers near the bay in order to facilitate their transportation to areas occupied by the troops. In Virginia, by an executive proclamation, an embargo was laid upon the exportation of beef, pork, bacon, wheat, Indian corn, peas, and flour to aid the state agents in making purchases. These agents were prodded into increased activity by the county lieutenants who in turn had received their instructions from the governor.\textsuperscript{46}

Although at the time some complaints were made that this activity did not bring about a full realization of the end in view, nevertheless, if we are to believe the statements made by officials in departments concerned with this question, a goodly measure of success was achieved. In speaking of the siege of Yorktown some months later, Ephraim Blaine pointed out that the army had been plentifully supplied with provisions as a result of the cooperation of the abovementioned states; and Robert Morris, writing to General Rochambeau, added that the commissaries of the American army had informed him that they had been able to execute his orders by delivering to the French army on the Chesapeake a larger

\textsuperscript{45} Ephraim Blaine to George Morton, September 6, 1781, Ephraim Blaine Letter Book, 1780-1783.\textsuperscript{46} Council to His Excellency General George Washington, August 30, 1781, \textit{Archives of Maryland. Journal and Correspondence of the State Council of Maryland}, William H. Browne, Clayton C. Hall, Bernard C. Steiner and J. Hall Pleasants, eds. (Baltimore, 1883- \textit{52 vols.}), XLV, 588; Governor Lee to George Washington, August 30, 1781, \textit{Correspondence of the American Revolution}, Jared Sparks, ed. (Boston, 1853, 4 vols.), III, 397; Robert Morris to the Governor of Maryland, September 5, 1781; to the Governor of Virginia, September 7, 1781, Robert Morris Letter Book A; Governor Nelson to John Brown, commissary general, September 2, 1781; A proclamation by Governor Nelson of Virginia, September 5, 1781, \textit{Calendar of Virginia State Papers}, II, 379, 395.
quantity of flour than had been received from them on the
North River the preceding August.  

Although it is an uncertain undertaking at best to attempt to
evaluate accurately the services rendered by any one individual in
a major crisis such as that at Yorktown, yet it is meet, in conclu-
sion, that such an attempt be made with respect to the superinten-
tendent of finance. The support given the American cause by the
play of the keen, penetrating intellect of Robert Morris upon the
food-supply problems which faced the struggling patriots, can
hardly be overestimated. Whoever gives to a cause, and par-
ticularly to a cause in its embryonic stage, guidance according to
sound principles, deserves the commendation of posterity. Such
a reward should be that of Robert Morris.

47 Governor Lee to George Washington, August 30, 1781, Correspondence
of the American Revolution, II, 397. Ephraim Blaine to Robert Morris,
November 27, 1781, Ephraim Blaine Letter Book, 1780-1783. Robert Morris
to General Rochambeau, January 18, 1782, Robert Morris Letter Book B.
Council to the President of the Special Council, August 30, 1781, Archives
of Maryland, XLV, 648.