Warrior

OSPREY PUBLISHING

Continental Infantryman of the American Revolution

John Milsop • Illustrated by Steve Noon

JOHN MILSOP works for the General Assembly of the State of New Jersey as Director, Program Evaluation. His primary areas of historic interest are the American War of Independence and the War of 1812. He has written articles for numerous magazines, including *Military History Quarterly* and *Military Illustrated*. This is his first book for Osprey.

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First published in Great Britain in 2004 by Osprey Publishing,
Midland House, West Way, Botley, Oxford OX2 0PH, UK
443 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016, USA
Email: info@ospreypublishing.com

CIP Data for this publication is available from the British Library.

ISBN 1 84176 586 4

Editor: Gerard Barker
Design: Ken Vail Graphic Design, Cambridge, UK
Index by David Worthington
Origination by The Electronic Page Company, Cwmbran, UK
Printed in China through World Print Ltd.

05 06 07 08 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

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Author's Acknowledgements

I would first of all like to acknowledge the editorial staff at Osprey for their patience and encouragement. I would also like to extend particular thanks to the US Army, the National Park Service, Don Troiani and all of the organizations that were kind enough to supply illustrations. Artifact images courtesy of Don Troiani & Painting by Don Troiani www.historicalartprints.com

Author's Dedication

This book is dedicated to Connie, Matt, Andrew, Katherine and Brian.

Publisher's Note

Front cover picture comes from a selection of images from the collection of Don Troiani, www.historicalartprints.com

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CONTINENTAL INFANTRYMAN OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

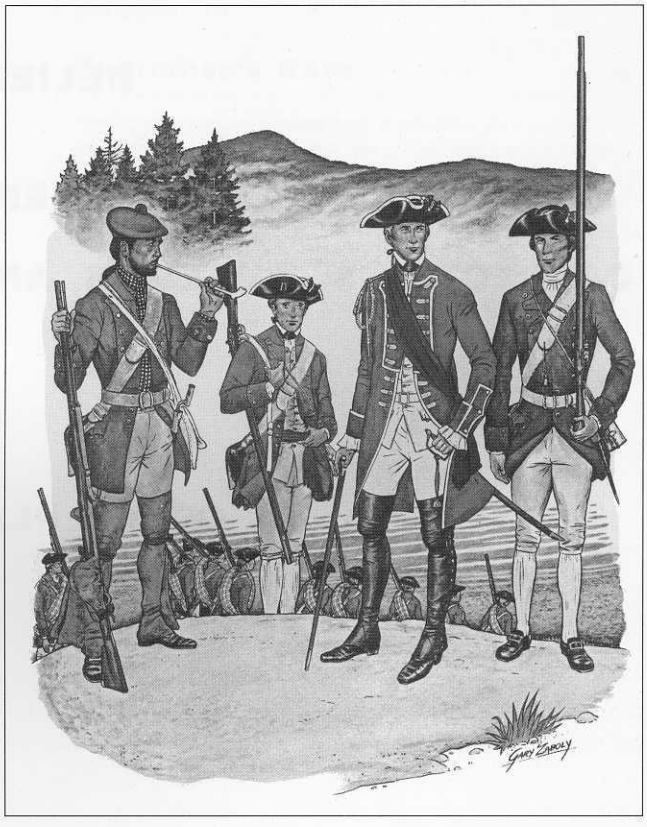
INTRODUCTION

The clashes at Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts, in April 1775 opened the American Revolution and reflected years of growing frustration in England and America. British troops had ended the French threat to the 13 colonies, but the colonials refused to pay the taxes required to keep Britain's postwar garrison. Moderate and radical Americans sought representation in England and freedom from restrictive trade practices. As growing intransigence on both sides touched off violent incidents, Committees of Safety formed to acquire arms, and Britain increased its Boston garrison, hoping to deter armed revolt. When a portion of that garrison went to seize hidden arms, local militia opposed them and harried their retreat back to Boston.

Lexington and Concord gave birth to the schoolboy myth of a revolution waged by hardy farmers sniping at stolid British regulars. The facts present a different picture. Militia comprised one of three distinct forces opposed to the British. (The other forces opposed to the British Army were the Continental Army and the state troops.) Militiamen might serve for as long as three months or as little as a day. As the war progressed, individual states raised short-term units for service within their own borders. Neither militia nor state troops could cope with British regulars. The infantry raised by the Second Continental Congress (1775) acquired the training, discipline, and skill required to defeat British regulars in battle.

The Continentals included infantry, cavalry, artillery, legionary corps, engineers, and artificers. The infantry formed the largest combat arm and was the soul of the Continental Army. The infantry included musket-armed conventional foot soldiers, and small numbers of riflemen, legionary infantry, and rangers. Men initially enlisted for one year; after 1776, they joined for three years or for the duration.

Those who first enlisted as Continentals shared Congress' expectation of a short war. Veterans of service in provincial regiments raised by the British during the French and



Uniformed in green, the 3rd New York served with the British in the French and Indian War. The men possessed field and full-dress uniforms with tan breeches for enlisted men and white for officers. (Gary Zaboly, courtesy of the Company of Military Historians)

Indian War expected bounties, minimal training, and short terms of enlistment. Those who had enlisted to fight the French acquired no experience in conventional European field tactics, but a few Continental officers gained experience in basic military practice. George Washington, a successful Virginia planter with extensive military experience in the French and Indian War, rose to the rank of colonel in the Virginia militia. He served in the Second Continental Congress, which selected him to be the Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army. Philip Schuyler, a patrician New York landowner of Dutch descent, mastered the intricacies of supply in the Champlain Valley. He was a key political supporter of efforts to resist the British.

Lack of sufficient weapons complicated problems resulting from inexperience. Many Americans possessed weapons for hunting or self-defense, but the new Continental infantry lacked a sufficient supply of standardized muskets. Supply would remain the Achilles heel of Congress throughout the entire conflict. Congress lacked the means to feed, pay, and equip its army, and it lacked the knowledge to create a supply system to assure the best use of what it could buy or borrow. The absence of the industries needed to manufacture weapons and supplies forced reliance upon foreign purchases, supplemented, from time to time, by captured material.

Militia generally fought in civilian clothes and often elected their officers. Lack of training limited their effectiveness against British regulars. They might also break off action or leave camp as the spirit moved them. (Illustrated by Clyde Risley for Imrie/Risley Miniatures)

Regional differences among the troops contributed further to problems created by poor supply. New Englanders resented southerners, and southerners resented New Yorkers. Joseph Plumb Martin revealed his New England prejudices when he joined a light infantry regiment:

> The regiment that I belonged to was made up of about one half New Englanders and the remainder chiefly Pennsylvanians – two sets of people as opposite in manners and customs as light and darkness. Consequently there was not much cordiality subsisting between us, for, to tell the sober truth, I had in those days as lief have been incorporated with a tribe of western Indians as with any of the southern troops especially of those which consisted mostly, as the Pennsylvanians did, of foreigners.

Foreigners meant Pennsylvania Germans, along with Irish and English immigrants.

Regional jealousies might periodically lead to brawls, but simply maintaining a sufficient number of Continental infantry under arms proved the greatest challenge. Some states paid more generous bounties and offered shorter terms of service, thus cutting into the flow of potential recruits. The Continentals dwindled in number as the war

progressed. Service in the Continental Army after the first two years of war increasingly attracted a mix of true believers and people with few alternative choices. The army enlisted some sturdy Caucasian farmers and tradesmen. It also recruited the unemployed, debtors, free and slave African Americans, Tories escaping the rope, British and German deserters, and at least two women.

The individual Continental infantryman identified most closely with those who marched beside him in his company. He might serve in any of the seven geographic departments designated by Congress. Continental infantry formed the core of three separate armies: the Main Army which served under Washington, and the separate Northern and Southern armies. On more than one occasion, the Main Army detached Continentals to serve with the other two armies.

All of the Continental infantrymen endured periods of privation wherever they served, and some chose not to suffer neglect silently. Regiments mutinied on occasion, protesting against enforced poverty, hunger, and involuntary retention past their discharge date. The late war mutinies threatened the new nation, because they raised the specter of bringing about the collapse of the army which the British had failed to destroy. Washington, the officer corps, and the commitment of individual enlisted men averted disaster.

Well organized and well led, but poorly fed and clothed, the Continental infantry evolved as the first American regulars. Consistent, effective training, begun at Valley Forge in 1777, imbued the infantry with the hallmark of the regular soldier: predictability on campaign and in battle. They fought for a Congress suspicious of standing armies and against regular troops as good as any available in Europe at the time. They struggled as hard to survive from day to day as they fought on the battlefield, and their dependants struggled along beside them.

CHRONOLOGY

The First Phase – Boston to Valley Forge

1775

Conflict erupts at Concord and Lexington (19 April 1775); a further clash at Bunker Hill (17 June 1775) reduces the chance for a peaceful settlement. Congress creates the Continental Army and appoints Washington to command it; Congress directs an attack upon Canada (27 June). General Richard Montgomery, leading a force down Lake Champlain, captures the forts at Chambly (18 October) and St John's (2 November) and the city of Montreal (13 November). Washington sends a separate attacking force under Benedict Arnold through the Maine wilderness to Quebec. Sir William Howe succeeds Lieutenant-General Thomas Gage as British Commander-in-Chief in North America.

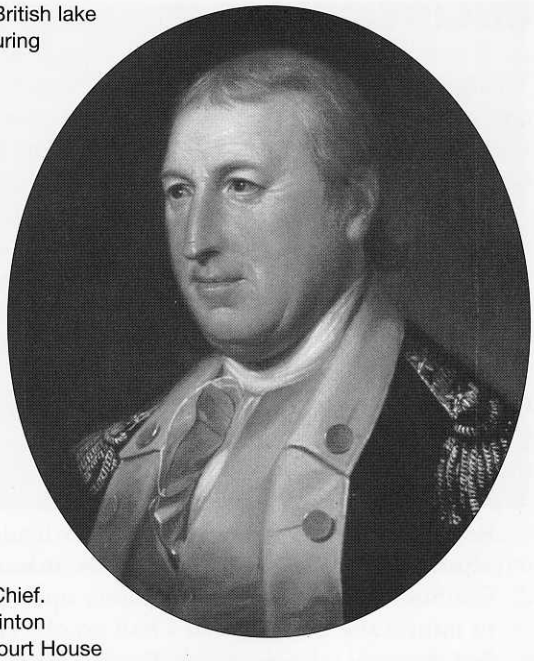
1776

A combined attack by Montgomery and Arnold (1 January) on Quebec fails. Washington compels British evacuation of Boston (17 March), and moves south to defend New York City. Howe outflanks and defeats Washington on Long Island (27 August). Washington withdraws to Manhattan the night after the battle. Howe lands on Manhattan (15 September), pushing Washington's army to the north end of the island. Howe again outflanks Washington with a landing behind his army in Westchester County (12 October), causing Washington to abandon New York (18 October). Washington retreats with his battered army west through New Jersey to Pennsylvania. He saves the Continental Army from collapse with victories at Trenton (26 December) and Princeton (3 January 1777). Continental forces, driven from Canada, delay the

invasion of New York by building a squadron on Lake Champlain. A British lake squadron under Sir Guy Carleton destroys the American squadron during the pursuit following the battle of Valcour Island (11–13 October). Sir Henry Clinton's attack against Charleston (28 June), South Carolina, fails.

1777

General Arthur St Clair retreats from Ticonderoga (5 July). Barry St Leger's force is defeated at Fort Stanwix (23 August). Horatio Gates succeeds Philip Schuyler as commander of the Northern Department. Gates achieves victory at Saratoga (17 October), ending major operations in the north. Washington loses battles at Brandywine Creek (11 September) and Germantown (4 October), and the American capital, Philadelphia. After repelling an attack on Fort Mercer (21 October) and abandoning a shattered Fort Mifflin (10–15 November), Washington enters winter camp at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania.



Horatio Gates possessed prior experience in the British Army and an excess of ambition over ability. Some in the Congress viewed him as a successor to Washington. He helped organize victory at Saratoga and assured defeat at Camden. (Independence National Historical Park)

The Second Phase – Valley Forge to the Siege of Savannah

1778

Von Steuben retrains the Main Army at Valley Forge in late winter. Sir Henry Clinton succeeds Sir William Howe as British Commander-in-Chief. France signs treaty of alliance with the United States (6 February). Clinton abandons Philadelphia and fights a rearguard action at Monmouth Court House (28 June). No further major actions occur in the Middle or Hudson Highlands departments. The first joint Franco-American operation against Newport, Rhode Island (5–29 August), fails. British seize Savannah (29 December), Georgia.

1779

Washington detaches a portion of the Main Army for a campaign against Indians in western New York while launching raids on Stony Point (16 July) and Paulus Hook (19 August). British retain New York, but fail to bring the American Main Army to battle. British hold Savannah, Georgia, against Franco-American attack (2 October 1779).

The Third Phase – The Siege of Charleston to the Siege of Yorktown

1780

Benedict Arnold flees to British (22 September) after his plot to hand over West Point fails. Lieutenant-General Henry Clinton expands campaign in the Southern Department with seizure of Charleston (12 May) where the Virginia and South Carolina Continental regiments surrender. Horatio Gates subsequently defeated at Camden (16 August). Lord Cornwallis advances through the Carolinas. Washington sends Nathaniel Greene south. Greene reforms army, initially splitting his troops with Daniel Morgan. A small force of Continentals and New Jersey militia turn back a probe by von Knyphausen in New Jersey (23 June).

1781

Daniel Morgan wins battle of Cowpens (17 January). Greene engages British forces at Guilford Court House (15 March), Hobkirk's Hill (25 April), Ninety-Six (22 May–19 June), and Eutaw Springs (8 September), compelling Cornwallis to abandon the Carolinas and British garrisons to withdraw to the seacoast. Mutiny of the Pennsylvania Line threatens collapse of Main Army (1 January). Clinton escalates raids, initiated during the preceding year, against Virginia. Washington, joined by a French army, shifts a portion of the Main Army to Virginia where he compels the surrender of Cornwallis (18 October).

1782

Minor actions continue on frontier and in the Southern Department as peace negotiators work out the details. Washington trains and maintains the Main Army, but Congress directs reduction of the army as probability of peace increases. Sir Guy Carleton succeeds Sir Henry Clinton.

1783

Peace achieved and Washington successfully discharges army. Congress retains a small force to guard military stores at West Point and at Fort Pitt.

ENLISTMENT

The militia army which coiled around Boston in the wake of Lexington and Concord resulted from co-operative planning among Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire. Congress implicitly adopted this force as its Continental Army on 14 June 1775. The resolution overtly authorized the enlistment of ten companies of riflemen for service at Boston, but the intent of the measure embraced the New England army and troops forming to meet an expected attack from Canada in the Champlain Valley.

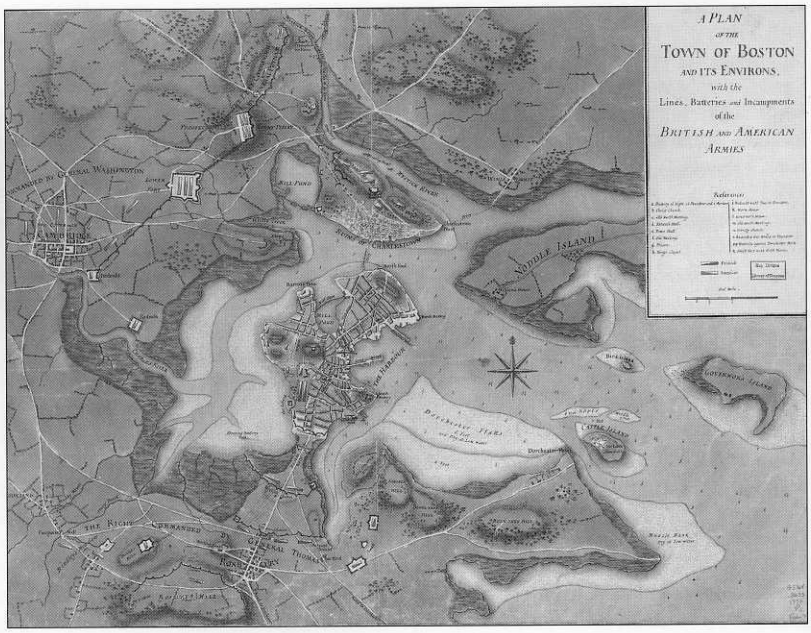
Congress's action did not result in uniform, immediate compliance. Colonel Benjamin Hinman wrote from Ticonderoga in October 1775, describing the reaction of his men to enlisting in the Continental Army:

> As to our refusing to be Mustered and come under Continental Regulations – the General [Brigadier-General Richard Montgomery] gave Out in Orders that we all subscribed the Continental Articles of War – where upon I Did take the freedom to inform the General that I had no objection to Subscribing my Self but was afraid of the Consequences with respect to the Soldiers, if the Matter was insisted on – as some might Imagine they were not holden except they did Subscribe – others that in Case they should subscribe they might be held beyond their Expectation when they Ingaged.

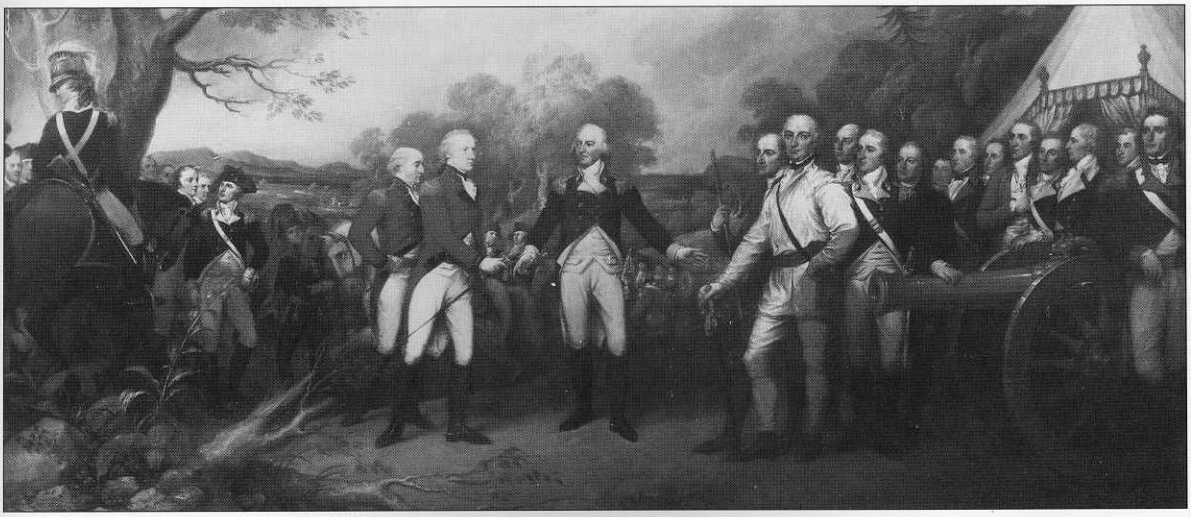
Congress appointed George Washington commander of the Continental troops on 16 June 1775, and he and his staff reorganized the troops. As 1775 drew to a close, the army faced its first crisis, the impending expiration of enlistments on 31 December. Maintaining the strength of the army remained a problem until the end of the war.

The Continental Army employed every conceivable means of enlistment during the eight years of its existence. Volunteers fought next to draftees, substitutes, and freed slaves. British, German, and Loyalist soldiers found their way into Continental regiments. Committed idealists served with boys lured by the illusion of glory.

Enlistment in 1775 and 1776 meant a requisition of regiments by the Continental Congress on the individual colonies. Congress based the number assigned to a colony on its estimated population. The requisition triggered



This contemporary map of Boston depicts the American siege lines around the city. Washington's victory reflected the acquisition of guns from Ticonderoga and the placement of infantry to protect the guns and deter British attack. (Library of Congress)



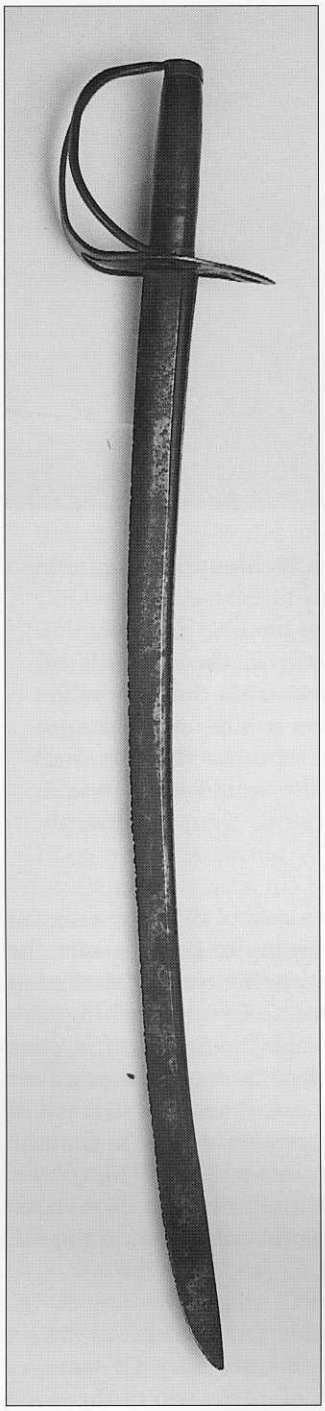
Paintings such as Trumbull's *Surrender of General Burgoyne* benefited from the painter's service as a Continental officer. Nevertheless, the stylized rendition of a key event helped shape an image of the Continental soldier different from reality. (Architect of the Capitol)

mobilization by counties and towns within each colony. In Cumberland County, New Jersey:

> We the Committee & Militia Officers of the County of Cumberland, expecting another requisition from the honorable the Continental Congress to our Congress, to raise more troops in the Continental service, give leave to recommend the following gentlemen as persons well qualified & who would soon raise a Company in the County of Cumberland, Namely Joseph Bloomfield as Capn ... .

Some counties and towns resorted to the draft to fill their assigned quota. A draft notice provided minimum warning to better assure the draftee's compliance: "This is to inform you are this evening drafted as one of the Continental men to go to General Washington's headquarters, and you must go or find an able bodied man in your Room, or pay a fine of twenty pounds in law, money in twenty-four hours." After the battle of Guilford Court House, the Grand Council of North Carolina provided that "every man who abandoned his post in the last action could be enrolled in the Continental Army for twelve months." However, a drafted man might seek a substitute to serve in his place. Joseph Plumb Martin described his second enlistment in the 8th Connecticut regiment as a substitute:

> The inhabitants of the town were bout this time put into what were called squads, according to their ratable property. Of some of the most opulent, one formed a squad; of others two or three; and of the lower sort of the people, several formed a squad. Each of these squads were to furnish a man for the army, either by hiring or by sending one of their own number ... . One of the above-mentioned squads, wanting to procure a man the lieutenant thought that they might persuade me to go for them, and they accordingly attacked me front, rear and flank ... . The men gave me what they agreed to. I forget the sum, perhaps enough to keep the blood circulating during the short space of



The short sword superseded the halberd as an additional weapon for the non-commissioned officer. The flat side of the blade could encourage the slow and the timid. (Images from the collection of Don Troiani, www.historicalartprints.com)

time when I tarried at home after enlistment. They were now freed from any further trouble, at least for the present, and I had become the scapegoat for them.

Although soldiers who enlisted in 1775 and 1776 signed enlistment papers, they joined only until the end of the year. Short-term enlistments posed serious problems for Washington and for Brigadier-General Richard Montgomery, commanding the Canadian invasion. Faced by the prospect of his troops departing on 31 December 1775, Montgomery launched a desperate attack in a snowstorm against Quebec. He perished, and the attack failed. For the same reason, Washington hazarded a similar desperate enterprise against Trenton a year later, although with better results.

The Congress had sent a Commission, headed by Benjamin Franklin, to Canada to determine why their invasion had come apart. America's first statesman, Franklin achieved fame as a scientist, inventor, and a man of letters. He served in both the First and Second Continental Congresses, and was the chief American architect of the alliance with France. Franklin's Commission reported on 27 May 1776 that: "There is little or no discipline among your troops, nor can any be kept up while the practice of enlisting for twelve months is kept up." Congress, however, responded to this and other complaints with a new plan. The changes it enacted for those enlisting or re-enlisting for 1777 offered recruits a choice between a three-year term and the duration in exchange for a bounty. "Resolved unanimously that every non commissioned Officer and Soldier who hath enlisted or shall enlist into the service of these States for and during the war, and shall continue therein till the need thereof, shall be entitled to receive the further reward of eight dollars at the end of the war." Congress increased money bounties and added 100 acres (40ha) of land and an annual uniform allowance as the war progressed.

Congress employed bounties to motivate men to enlist. Bounties evolved from an inducement to a curse as the value of Continental money plummeted and states competed with Congress and among themselves. Colonel Walter Stewart, commanding the 2nd Pennsylvania in 1779, summarized the havoc wrought by bounties among his men. He wrote that they

> never wished to be placed superior to any other troops. But from their situation, and the length of time they have endured the fatigues of a camp ... . It is distressing to officers and hurtful to soldiers to see a man come into the same Army enlisted for nine months, eleven hundred dollars in his pocket and a new suit of clothes on his back. He will go to his State commissary to purchase his rum at 30 shillings per gallon, coffee 2/6 per pound, sugar 2/6, and every article in like proportions. This I assert to be the case in numberless instances among the Eastern troops. While the Pennsylvanian, who has been in the service since the commencement of the war and enlisted during the same, and has but twenty dollars' bounty, is obliged when he wants a little liquor to pay the exorbitant price of 4 dollars per quart; his coffee will cost him 15 shillings per pound, sugar 15 shillings.

Congress voted a bounty in January 1779 of $250 for anyone enlisted for a term who would re-enlist. That amount of Continental paper equaled only $25 in silver. Congress later added a $100 bounty for those enlisted for the term of the war prior to January 1779, but monthly pay remained fixed at six and two-thirds dollars. The money and land bounties attracted the less affluent, men and boys without other options.

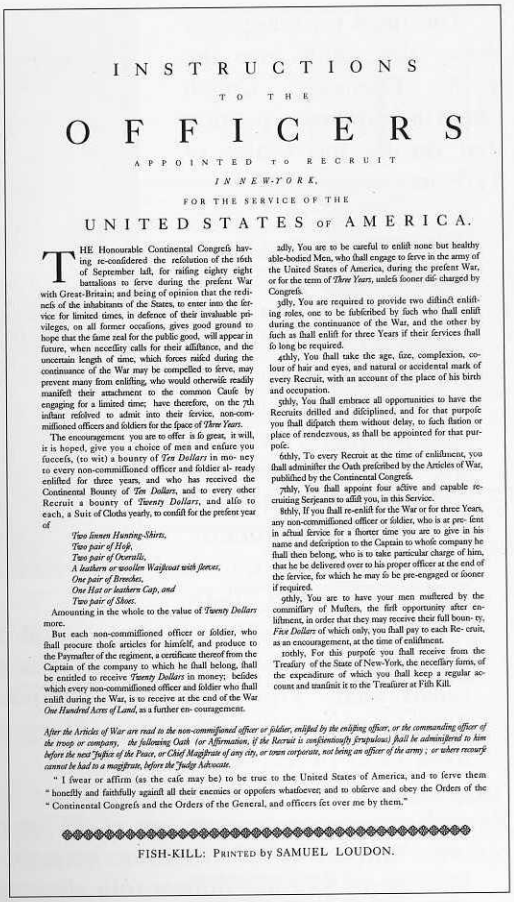
When bounties failed to fill the ranks, Congress and the officers of Continental regiments looked for other sources of manpower. Although free African Americans joined and served alongside Caucasians, other African Americans arrived in the army by purchase. The Rhode Island Legislature, at the suggestion of some of the state's officers, resorted to the purchase of slaves in 1778, offering freedom to the enlistees and payment to the owners:

> It is further Voted and Resolved, That there be allowed and paid by this State to the owners, for every slave so enlisting, a sum according to his worth, at a price not exceeding one hundred and twenty pounds for the most valuable slave, and in proportion for a slave of less value, provided the owner of said slave shall deliver up to the officer who shall enlist him the clothes of the said sum.

The enlistment of slaves produced fewer than 200 enlistees, who joined with Naragansett Indians and Caucasian commissioned and non-commissioned officers to form the Second Rhode Island Regiment.

Some owners freed a slave to serve as a substitute for themselves or to acquire the bounty. Since the law generally did not allow a bound man to bear arms, the owner freed the slave on enlistment. A return of African-American slaves from August 1778 included 755 out of 19,673, including militia, present and fit for duty in the Main Army. They served as infantry privates, servants to officers, or in supporting roles such as wagon drivers.

America's enemies provided recruits. British and German deserters found their way into the ranks of American units, sometimes with terrible consequences. Pulaski's Legion lost two foot troops at Egg Harbor in 1778 when a German deserter reconsidered his allegiance and revealed the location of the units to a British raiding force. Washington banned deserters and foreign-born soldiers from the Commander-in-Chief's Guard. Major-General Nathaniel Greene was a Rhode Island Quaker expelled from his church for his interest in military affairs. He rose rapidly after enlistment as a militia private and served as the Commissary-General of the Continental Army and as the commander of the Southern Department. He commented that, "At the close of the war, we fought the enemy with British soldiers; and they fought us with those of America." The army also included two regiments of Canadian refugees who had followed the retreating Continental Army south in 1776.



INSTRUCTIONS

TO THE

OFFICERS

APPOINTED TO RECRUIT

IN NEW-YORK,

FOR THE SERVICE OF THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

THE Honourable Continental Congrefs having re-confidered the refolution of the 16th of September laft, for raifing eighty eight battalions to ferve during the prefent War with Great-Britain; and being of opinion that the rediefs of the inhabitants of the States, to enter into the fervice for limited times, in defence of their invaluable privileges, on all former occafions, gives good ground to hope that the fame zeal for the public good, will appear in future, when neceffity calls for their affiftance, and the uncertain length of time, which forces raifed during the continuance of the War may be compelled to ferve, may prevent many from enlifting, who would otherwife readily manifeft their attachment to the common Caufe by engaging for a limited time; have therefore, on the 7th inftant refolved to admit into their fervice, non-commiffioned officers and foldiers for the fpace of *Three Years.*

The encouragement you are to offer is fo great, it will, it is hoped, give you a choice of men and enfure you fuccefs, (to wit) a bounty of *Ten Dollars* in money to every non-commiffioned officer and foldier already enlifted for three years, and who has received the Continental Bounty of *Ten Dollars*, and to every other Recruit a bounty of *Twenty Dollars*, and alfo to each, a Suit of Cloths yearly, to conlift for the prefent year of

Two linnen Hunting-Shirts,
Two pair of Hofe,
Two pair of Overalls,
A leathern or woollen Waiftcoat with fleeves,
One pair of Breeches,
One Hat or leathern Cap, and
Two pair of Shoes.

Amounting in the whole to the value of *Twenty Dollars* more.

But each non-commiffioned officer or foldier, who fhall procure thofe articles for himfelf, and produce to the Paymafter of the regiment, a certificate thereof from the Captain of the company to which he fhall belong, fhall be entitled to receive *Twenty Dollars* in money; befides which every non-commiffioned officer and foldier who fhall enlift during the War, is to receive at the end of the War *One Hundred Acres of Land*, as a further encouragement.

2dly, You are to be careful to enlift none but healthy able-bodied Men, who fhall engage to ferve in the army of the United States of America, during the prefent War, or for the term of *Three Years*, unlefs fooner dif- charged by Congrefs.

3dly, You are required to provide two diftinct enlifting roles, one to be fubfcribed by fuch who fhall enlift during the continuance of the War, and the other by fuch as fhall enlift for three Years if their fervices fhall fo long be required.

4thly, You fhall take the age, fize, complexion, colour of hair and eyes, and natural or accidental mark of every Recruit, with an account of the place of his birth and occupation.

5thly, You fhall embrace all opportunities to have the Recruits drilled and difciplined, and for that purpofe you fhall difpatch them without delay, to fuch ftation or place of rendezvous, as fhall be appointed for that purpofe.

6thly, To every Recruit at the time of enlifbment, you fhall adminifter the Oath prefcribed by the Articles of War, published by the Continental Congrefs.

7thly, You fhall appoint four active and capable recruiting Serjeants to aflift you, in this Service.

8thly, If you fhall re-enlift for the War or for three Years, any non-commiffioned officer or foldier, who is at prefent in actual fervice for a fhorter time you are to give in his name and defcription to the Captain to whofe company he fhall then belong, who is to take particular charge of him, that he be delivered over to his proper officer at the end of the fervice, for which he may fo be pre-engaged or fooner if required.

9thly, You are to have your men muftered by the commiffary of Muftets, the firft opportunity after enlifbment, in order that they may receive their full bounty. *Five Dollars* of which only, you fhall pay to each Recruit, as an encouragement, at the time of enlifbment.

10thly, For this purpofe you fhall receive from the Treafury of the State of New-York, the neceffary forms, of the expenditure of which you fhall keep a regular account and tranfmit it to the Treafurer at Fifh Kill.

After the Articles of War are read to the non-commiffioned officer or foldier, enlifted by the enlifting officer, or the commanding officer of the troop or company, the following Oath (or Affirmation, if the Recruit is conftentiously fcrupulous) fhall be adminifered to him before the next Juftice of the Peace, or Chief Magiftrate of any city, or town corporate, not being an officer of the army; or where recourfe cannot be had to a magiftrate, before the Judge Advocate.

" I fwear or affirm (as the cafe may be) to be true to the United States of America, and to ferve them " honeftly and faithfully againft all their enemies or oppofers whatfoever, and to obferve and obey the Orders of the " Continental Congrefs and the Orders of the General, and officers fet over me by them."

FISH-KILL: PRINTED by SAMUEL LOUDON.

The Continental Congress provided instructions to officers for enlisting troops. These detailed the cash, land, and clothing bounty, together with the form of oath required for enlistees. (Sullivan Press)

The need for manpower drew adolescents into the army. Ebenezer Couch noted in his pension petition that during the winter of 1778, in Connecticut:

> If I am not mistaken in my recollection, in the winter of 1778 or 1779, General Parsons Brigade was in winter quarters at Redding ... same time of that winter I was on the Camp ground and present at the roll call of Col. Meigs Regiment, when I discovered a number of boys, both musicians and soldiers, were not as old or athletick as I was when I first entered the service. There was one company which was called Meigs Pigs, which was composed of the boys of the Regiment excepting musicians, Many of whom was said to be from 12 to 16 years old.

The eroded ramparts of the Star Redoubt at Ninety-Six give no clue to the formidable earthwork which defeated every effort by Nathaniel Greene and his men to capture it. The National Park Service has preserved this work and recreated the stockade fort at Ninety-Six. (National Park Service, Eastern National)

Records suggest an average age of 22 for the Continental soldier, but bounties and the use of substitutes brought in the old and the young.

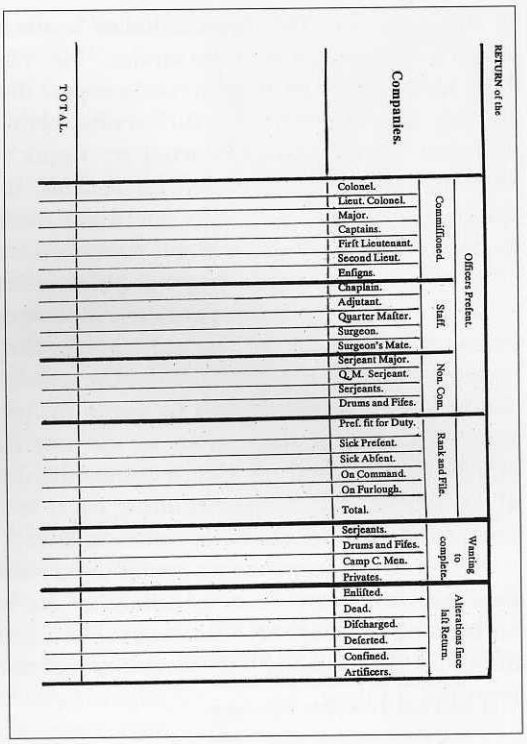
Main Army monthly muster rolls also confirm that officers and a few non-commissioned officers traveled back to their home states to recruit. The muster roll of Washington's army for April 1780 lists 100 officers out of approximately 1,200 as engaged in recruiting. Thirty-eight of the army's 1,900 non-commissioned officers were also away recruiting. Congress periodically complained about accounting for the expenses of personnel engaged in finding enlistees. Assuming that an officer could drum up recruits at a rendezvous or from a local Committee of Safety, he had to feed them, provide them with some basic equipment, and get them back to the main encampment. Captain John Paul Schott reported the progress of one of these recruiting trips from Philadelphia to Washington in March 1777:

> This is to inform your excellency that I applied here for Money, Armes and plankits but can't get it without your Excellency is pleased to send me a Warrant. I have twenty-five men. I am oblig'd to pay £ 1.1 pr: for Each man, which I think is too much, if I can get plankits, I shall put them in the barracks at Lancaster. I have promise of about twenty men at fort Lanton where I shall go as Soon as I receive your Excelences warrand to draw Money &c.

Recruiting parties had their work cut out for them. Captain Alexander Graydon set out for Frankford, Pennsylvania, in the spring of 1776 to enlist men for duty in the Third Pennsylvania Regiment. A lieutenant, a corporal, and a drummer boy accompanied him.

The drummer boy beat the drum to attract prospects; the captain made the pitch; the lieutenant filled out the paperwork; and the corporal had to make sure that the recruits made it back to the regiment. The party proceeded to a tavern, and the captain ordered refreshments:

> A number of fellows indicated a desire to enlist, but although they drank freely of our liquor, they still held off. I soon perceived that the object was to amuse themselves at our expense, and that if there might be one or two among them really disposed to engage, the others would prevent them. One fellow in particular, who had made the greater show of taking the bounty, presuming the weakness of our party ... began to grow insolent, and manifested an intention to begin a quarrel, in the issue of which he no doubt calculated on giving us a drubbing ... .
>
> At length, the arrogance of the principal ruffian rose to such a height that he squared himself for battle, and advanced towards me in an attitude of defiance. I put him by with an admonition to be quiet, though with secret determination that if he repeated the insult to begin the war, whatever the consequence. The occasion was soon presented; where taking excellent aim, I struck him with my utmost force between the eyes and sent him staggering to the end of the room. Then instantly drawing our hangers and receiving manful cooperation of the corporal and drummer, we were fortunate enough to put a stop to any farther hostilities ... .


RETURN of the

Companies.

TOTAL.

Officers Prefent.

Commiffioned.

Colonel.
Lieut. Colonel.
Major.
Captains.
Firft Lieutenant.
Second Lieut.
Enfigns.

Staff.

Chaplain.
Adjutant.
Quarter Maſter.
Surgeon.
Surgeon's Mate.

Non. Com.

Serjeant Major.
Q.M. Serjeant.
Serjeants.
Drums and Fifes.

Rank and File.

Pref. fit for Duty.
Sick Prefent.
Sick Abſent.
On Command.
On Furlough.
Total.

Wanting to complete.

Serjeants.
Drums and Fifes.
Camp C. Men.
Privates.

Alterations ſince laſt Return.

Enlifted.
Dead.
Diſcharged.
Deſerted.
Confined.
Artificers.

A printed muster roll superseded the handwritten version and proved an indispensable tool in managing the army. Compiled daily, it allowed brigade, army, and division commanders to verify the strength available to them. (Sullivan Press)

Graydon won the skirmish, but gained no recruits.

Officers such as Captain Graydon originally comprised militia officers elected by their neighbors, or men who had raised companies or battalions for service. Many, such as Joseph Bloomfield, a lawyer, possessed education and means. Anthony Wayne came from a well-off family of Pennsylvania landowners. Henry Dearborn practiced medicine. Others owned taverns or businesses and at least one captained a merchant ship before the war. As the war continued, some experienced enlisted men such as Jeremiah Greenman won promotion on re-enlistment or through meritorious service. Washington gradually gained greater latitude in promoting and assigning officers, but all appointments, except those in the additional Continental regiments of 1777, remained subject to the legislature of the state's regiment. The supply of officers, in any case, exceeded the demand. Washington periodically consolidated regiments to equalize their strength. Officers not absorbed in the consolidated formations went home to recruit or resigned.

No matter what means of enlistment were used, the Continental infantry declined in numbers when the three-year enlistments of 1777 expired. Evidence suggests that some officers may have involuntarily extended the term of some of the three-year enlistees. Joseph Reed, after meeting with representatives of mutinous Pennsylvania regiments

at Princeton in 1780, reported that "some undue methods have been taken to engage many in the service." He related that " rigorous severity" had been "frequently exercised, especially when they requested an inquiry into the terms of their enlistment, and corporal punishment inflicted without court martial or inquiry." On occasion, desperate officers, faced with depleted formations, doubtless took advantage of illiterate enlisted men who could not read their enlistment papers. Some misrepresented a $20 gift voted by Congress to veteran soldiers in 1779 as a bounty, employing it as a means to require re-enlistments.

Re-enlistment proved a greater challenge than winning new recruits. Many of those who had served early in the war simply could not face another campaign. Joseph Hodgkins, a voluntary enlistee, summarized the attitudes of many when he wrote in April 1778 that "when I think how I have spent three years in the war have Ben Exposed to Every Hardship. Ventered my Life & Limbs. Broke my Constitution wore out all my clothes and has got nothing for it & and now not to be thanked for it seams two much for any man to Bare."

None of the approaches employed to maintain the strength of the Continental Army ever resulted in its numbers matching those authorized by Congress. Enlisting soldiers represented only the first step in the process of using it to win independence. Once mustered, the men required training.

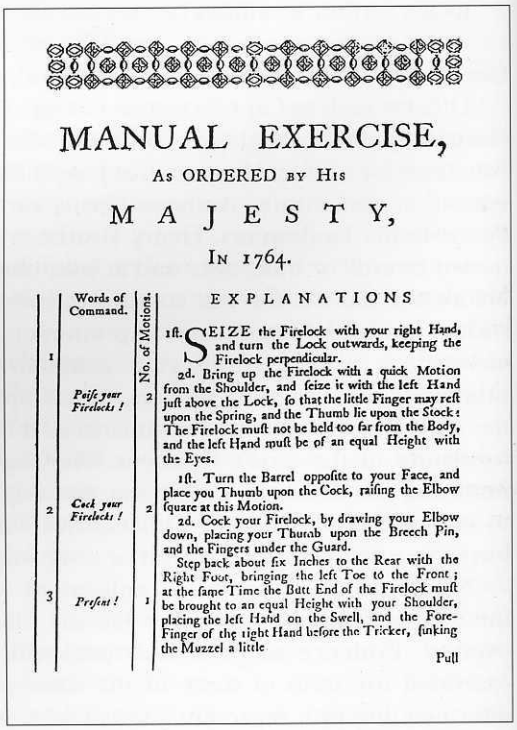
TRAINING

The Main and Northern armies fought from 1775 through 1777 without the benefit of consistent, formal training. Few Americans had faced French regulars during the French and Indian War, and fewer still had mastered 18th-century linear tactics, march discipline, camp sanitation, or logistics.

Most colonies possessed a militia that was composed by law of all the adult males within its borders, and this provided some background training for selected Continental infantrymen. Individual towns enrolled companies, aggregated into battalions or regiments by county. The opposition of Pennsylvania's Quakers to war compelled the creation of Associations in place of a militia, but all of the colonies had provided enlistees for the wars against the French.

Militia training might at best require one training day per week. Regiments might form for mock battle and a review once each year. The officers relied on their experience in the French and Indian War or on drill manuals such as *The Manual Exercise as Ordered by His Majesty in 1764, A Military Guide for Young Officers,* and the *Norfolk Discipline.* Joseph Plumb Martin recorded the training he received during his first enlistment when his regiment went to defend New York in 1776: "I was called out every morning at reveille beating, which was at daybreak, to go to our regimental parade in Broad Street, and there to practice the

Known colloquially as the "64," *The Manual Exercise* was one of several different drill manuals by American militia. Lack of standardization in drill and the absence of consistency in training impaired the ability of the militia to face British regulars. (Sullivan Press)



MANUAL EXERCISE,

As ORDERED by His

MAJESTY,

In 1764.

EXPLANATIONS

	Words of Command.	No. of Motions.	
1			1st. SEIZE the Firelock with your right Hand, and turn the Lock outwards, keeping the Firelock perpendicular.
	Poize your Firelocks!	2	2d. Bring up the Firelock with a quick Motion from the Shoulder, and seize it with the left Hand just above the Lock, so that the little Finger may rest upon the Spring, and the Thumb lie upon the Stock: The Firelock must not be held too far from the Body, and the left Hand must be of an equal Height with the Eyes.
2	*Cock your Firelocks!*	2	1st. Turn the Barrel opposite to your Face, and place you Thumb upon the Cock, raising the Elbow square at this Motion. 2d. Cock your Firelock, by drawing your Elbow down, placing your Thumb upon the Breech Pin, and the Fingers under the Guard.
3	*Present!*	1	Step back about six Inches to the Rear with the Right Foot, bringing the left Toe to the Front; at the same Time the Butt End of the Firelock must be brought to an equal Height with your Shoulder, placing the left Hand on the Swell, and the Fore-Finger of the right Hand before the Tricker, sinking the Muzzel a little
			Pull

manual exercise, which was the most that was known to our new levies, if they knew even that."

The details of the manual exercise could be intricate, as in the case of preparing two ranks to fire. Upon hearing the command "Make Ready,"

> the Men of the Front Rank ... kneel down on their right Knees, placing the Butt-end of their Firelocks on the Ground, keeping their Thumbs on their cocks, and their fingers on the Trickets. The Center and Rear-Ranks Close forward at the same time with recover'd Arms, the Men of the Center Rank placing their left foot on the Inside of the right Feet of their File-Leaders, bringing their right Feet to the Right, but not in line with their Left, only in the same position as when they rest.

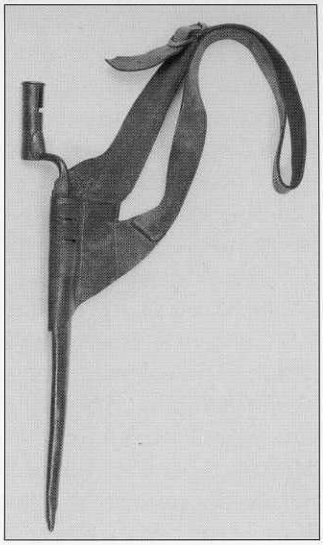
Loading and firing required officers and men to memorize 14 separate commands and 20 movements.

The manual exercise represented only a small portion of what a man needed to know before becoming an effective soldier. Colonial militia seldom, if ever, practiced bayonet drill. British and German regulars perfected the use of the bayonet. This asymmetry in training shaped the course of battles during the first three years of the war. When the Americans could hold their enemy at bay with musket fire, they might prevail. When ammunition ran low or fire flagged, the bayonet won battles.

Colonel William Prescott, a veteran of the French and Indian War, commanded the American left flank at the battle of Bunker Hill. He is best known for ordering his men not to fire until they could see "the whites of their eyes." Holding the redoubt on Breed's Hill, Prescott described a key moment during the second unsuccessful British attack: "After a considerable time, finding our ammunition was almost spent, I commanded a cessation till the enemy advanced within thirty yards [27m], when we gave them such a hot fire that they were obliged to retire one hundred and fifty yards [137m] before they could rally." The British carried Breed's Hill with the bayonet on their third attack when American ammunition ran out. General Artemas Ward, writing after the battle, stated that "a supply of spears, might have saved the entrenchment." Congress sent him 1,500.

Some units performed well despite limited training. A well-drilled Maryland regiment fighting under Lord Stirling on Long Island in 1776 charged superior British forces six times in succession with the bayonet, causing Washington to exclaim, "Good God! What brave fellows I must this day lose."

However, overall training and performance remained patchy. John Adams justified a 1776 Congressional Resolution requiring daily drills when he wrote: "This resolution was the effect of my late journey through the Jerseys to Staten Island. I had observed such dissipation and idleness, such confusion and distraction among officers and soldiers, in various parts of the country as disturbed and alarmed me." Lack of training also exacted a price off the battlefield. A 28 July 1776 headquarters order, issued on Long Island, addressed latrines. "The General is pained to observe inattention to the digging and filling of vaults for the Regts. &, the General directs camp colourmen of the



This bayonet scabbard and cross belt would have been relatively rare in the early days of the war, when few militia possessed bayonets and few knew how to use them. (Images from the collection of Don Troiani, www.historicalartprints.com)

several regiments to dig vaults and fill up the old ones every three days." The absence of field sanitation and basic cleanliness promoted sickness, weakening the fighting power of the army.

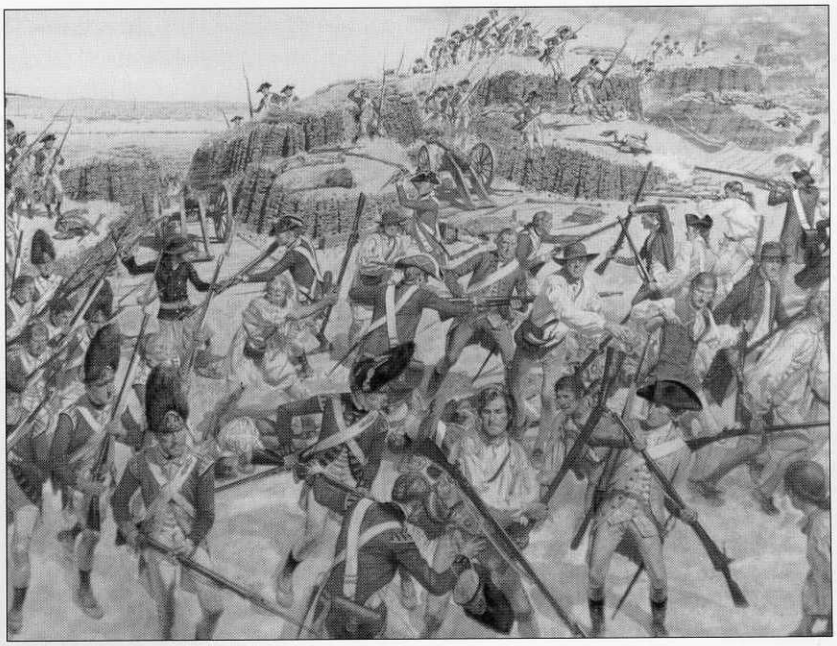
The armies gathered to besiege Boston, invade Canada, and defeat the British Army showed promise without power. Troops at Germantown in 1777 exhausted their ammunition and themselves too quickly. Continental units straggled on the line of march and formed too slowly for battle. The January 1777 victory at Princeton proved incomplete because portions of a trapped British force fought their way clear with the bayonet. General Grey's surprise night bayonet attack at Paoli in 1777 scattered Anthony Wayne's command, even though they had been formed and alerted for a possible attack.

Sir William Howe had succeeded General Gage as British Commander-in-Chief, North America, in 1775. He directed the campaigns in the Middle Department in 1776 and 1777 and, although personally brave and a good tactician, failed to destroy Washington's Main Army. After losing Philadelphia to Howe in the fall of 1777, Washington brought the Main Army to winter camp at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. A mixed bag of European officers had come to America seeking adventure, advancement, and the opportunity to command. Some proved to be mere freebooters; others, such as the Marquis de Lafayette, compiled remarkable records of service. One of the most valuable Europeans to enter Continental service did so with bogus qualifications, yet made significant contributions to raising the performance of the Continental infantryman.

Frederick William Augustus Henry Ferdinand Baron von Steuben met Washington at Valley Forge and presented letters of introduction from Benjamin Franklin and Silas Dean, American agents in Paris. Both men exaggerated the former Prussian captain's qualifications and rank to support his application for a commission as a major-general. His willingness to serve initially without compensation made him an attractive prospect. Washington agreed to have von Steuben join the army, unaware of Franklin and Dean's subterfuge, and von Steuben began training the Continental Army. He regarded the Continental infantry as excellent raw material, and began by forming and training a platoon as an adjunct to the Commander-in-Chief's Guard. After training the demonstration platoon, he proceeded to train the army, unit by unit, at Valley Forge. Since he spoke no English at the outset, he enlisted a New York captain, Benjamin Walker, as his translator.

Von Steuben described the disagreements among the officers concerning how he should train the infantry:

> My good republicans wanted everything in the English style; our great and our allies everything according to the French mode, and when I presented a plate of sauerkraut dressed in Prussian style, they all wanted to throw it out the window, Nevertheless, by the force of proving by "Goddams," that my cookery was the best, I overcame the prejudices of the former; but the latter liked me as little in the forests of America as they did on the plains of Rossbach. Do not therefore, be astonished if I am not painted in very bright colors in Parisian circles.



The final phase of the Battle of Bunker Hill demonstrated the inherent weakness of the militia. Once the British regulars overcame the fortifications, the bayonet broke colonial resistance. British generals avoided further daylight attacks on entrenched rebels. (Courtesy of Army Art Collection, U.S. Army Center of Military History)

Von Steuben's French secretary-aide described what actually transpired on the snow-covered fields of Valley Forge.

> When some movement or maneuver was not performed to his mind he began to swear in German, then in French, and then in both languages together. When he exhausted his artillery of foreign oaths, he would call to his aides, "My dear Walker and my dear Ponceau, come and swear for me in English. These fellows won't do what I bid them." A good natured smile then went through the ranks and at last the maneuver or movement was properly performed.

Each night, von Steuben dictated the lesson for the following day to his aides. They translated it into English and circulated it to the brigade headquarters. Officers at the brigade headquarters recopied it for the regimental officers. Regimental officers and literate non-commissioned officers read the lesson and then reread and explained it to those troops who could not read. When time permitted, von Steuben invited officers to his quarters in the evening to eat, and to receive informal instruction. Colonel Alexander Samuel recorded his impression of von Steuben's approach. "To see a gentleman dignified with a lieutenant general's commission from the great Prussian monarch condescend with a grace peculiar to himself to take under his direction a squad of ten or twelve men in the capacity of a drill sergeant, commands the admiration of both officers and men."

Captain George Ewing recorded his feelings about training at Valley Forge in his diary.

> This forenoon, the Brigade went through the maneuvers under the direction of Baron Steuben, The step is about halfway between slow and quick time, and easy and natural step, and I think much

better than the former. The manual is altered by his direction. There are but ten words of command which are as follows:

1. Poise firelock
2. Shoulder the Firelock
3. Present arms
4. Fix bayonet
5. Unfix bayonet
6. Load firelock
7. Make ready
8. Present
9. Fire
10. Order Firelock

When von Steuben presented his new manual to a group of officers for a critique, the only change recommended and adopted was the substitution of the command "Take Sight" for "Present."

Von Steuben's hastily written lessons evolved into a manual which went well beyond the commands for delivering a volley. Reading the manual provokes little excitement two centuries after its creation. Its style resembles that of other manuals written before or since. Its power arose from the fact that those who read it conformed their actions to its directions. The key to an army's power lies in its predictability. Consistent training, properly administered, made the Continental infantry of the Main Army reliable on the march and on the battlefield. Indeed simplification of firing commands may appear pithy, but the simplified orders worked better on a battlefield covered in powder smoke and wracked by noise and confusion. The soldier had less to remember and a company or regiment could deliver volleys at a steady rate.

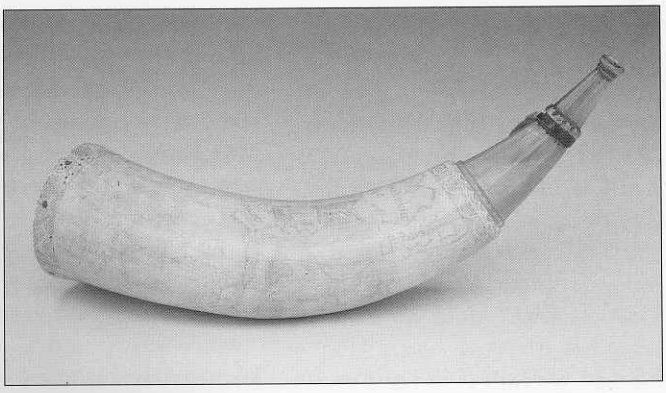
The manual covered activity on and off the battlefield. Von Steuben standardized the digging of latrines, the placement of tents and cabins in camp, and the location of the reserve ammunition wagon. Most important, he fixed the responsibility for training and he outlined the process for continued training: "The commanding officer of each company is charged with the instruction of his recruits; and as that is a service that requires not only experience, but patience and temper not met with in every officer, he is to make a choice of an officer, sergeant and one or two corporals of his company, who, being approved by the colonel, are to attend particularly to that business."

Von Steuben assured that those trained at Valley Forge would deliver consistent instruction to future recruits. This process proved vital for armies whose composition changed when enlistments expired or men chose to desert. New recruits could be trained, and co-operative militia might be given a few lessons prior to battle. His program also emphasized infantry as groups arrayed in line or advancing together with the bayonet. The weapons and tactics of the time de-emphasized the individual while demanding consistent performance from the group. Some topics were omitted. It did not include instructions for meeting cavalry because Continental infantry seldom met large bodies of cavalry until the southern campaign.

Training, however, did not always guarantee victory. Inexperienced Continentals fled the field at Guilford Court House. Cornwallis – an aggressive campaigner and competent field commander who led the

pursuit of Washington across New Jersey in 1777, but was trapped at Yorktown in 1781 – overwhelmed experienced Continentals at Camden, but they regrouped afterwards. Yet in the main, training improved overall performance so that, given leadership, the Continental infantry could meet and defeat British, German, or Loyalist formations.

Some histories represent von Steuben's contribution as a magical transformation. This might be an exaggeration, but von Steuben certainly made a critical contribution to the performance of the Continental Army and to the morale of its officers and men. Washington led a collection of promising amateurs into Valley Forge, and he emerged with trained infantry. The Main Army's graduation exercise, the battle of Monmouth Court House, pitted the Continental infantry against the cream of the British Army in North America, and the Continental infantry held its own. Main Army regiments detached for the southern campaign also fought well. Consistent training complemented individual recruitment. Regiments and brigades became cohesive organizations guided by common doctrine and practices. A British bayonet charge no longer assured a British commander a vista of fleeing Americans.



Some soldiers passed the time by carving maps on their powder horns. This one show the American defenses at Fort Ticonderoga and Mount Independence in 1776. (Fort Ticonderoga)

Congress and Washington might have chosen a strategy which did not require a trained conventional army. The guerrilla war which raged in the south between the fall of Charleston in 1780 to its reoccupation in 1782 might have been the model throughout America. However, this was not the case. Training helped to ensure that the Continental infantryman fought in a cohesive fashion. The decision to train an army also led, indirectly, to a strange incident during the siege of Yorktown. After arriving in the trenches encircling the British position, Colonel Alexander Hamilton ordered his light infantry out of the trenches in full view of the British lines. Captain James Duncan explained what followed:

Cornwallis's surrender at Yorktown resulted from the availability of a French field army and a French fleet. Washington could gamble on a race to Virginia because he had reliable complements to his Continentals. (Architect of Capitol)

> Our next maneuver was rather extraordinary. We were ordered to mount the bank, front the enemy, and there by word of command go through all the ceremony of the soldiery, ordering and grounding our arms ... although the enemy had been firing a little before, they did not now fire us a single shot. I suppose their astonishment at their conduct must have prevented them, for I can assign no other reason. Colonel Hamilton gave these orders, and although I esteem him one of the first officers in the American army must beg leave in this instance to think he wantonly exposed the lives of his men.

Fortunately, American officers did not make a habit of exhibiting the manual exercise in the presence of the enemy. However, Hamilton's actions pointedly demonstrated that training had transformed the Continental infantry from talented amateurs to a confident, professional force.

APPEARANCE AND EQUIPMENT

> We lay at Bedford till the close of the season. Late in the autumn, the Main Army lay at New Milford, in the southwestern part of Connecticut; while there, the Connecticut troops drew some winter clothing. The men belonging to that state, who were in the Light Infantry, had none sent them; they therefore thought themselves hardly dealt by. Many of them fearing they should lose their share of the clothing (of which they stood in great need) absconded from the camp at Bedford and went to New Milford.

Joseph Martin's tale of men going absent without leave in 1778 for the sake of clothing suggests how difficult it proved for the Continental infantryman to stay uniformed and equipped.

A captured German officer described the American army at Saratoga in 1777: "Not one of them was properly uniformed, but each man had on the clothes in which he goes to the field, to church or to the tavern. But they stood like soldiers erect, with a military bearing which was subject to little criticism." The captive may have seen only militia, since Continentals uniformed in brown fought at the battles of Freeman's Farm and Bemis Heights. He would not have recognized the hunting shirts worn by Daniel Morgan's riflemen as uniforms. However, this incident reflects the recurring theme of this period – the difficulties in equipping the infantryman.

Writing in December 1780, shortly before the mutiny of the Pennsylvania Continentals, Anthony Wayne included uniforms as a problem for his Pennsylvanians. "Our soldiers are not devoid of reasoning faculties nor are they callous to the first feelings of nature. They have now served their country for near five years, poorly clothed, badly fed and worse paid." Two years later, after Wayne's protest, at the end of his epic southern campaign, General Nathaniel Greene complained from South Carolina that: "For more than two months more than one-third of our men were nearly naked

with only a breechcloth about them ... and the rest were as ragged as wolves."

The Continental infantryman knew that he was owed a uniform and he sometimes received his due, but very often he did not. Congress undertook to supply its army with good intentions, but the colonies' agrarian economy could not produce uniforms and equipment for a regular army. Procurement proved only a portion of the problem. Quartermasters needed wagon teams and drivers to move supplies from their place of production or import to the troops. A Congressional Committee reported from Valley Forge in 1777 that: "Almost every species of camp transportation is now performed by men, who ... patiently yoke themselves to little carriages of their own making or load their wood and provisions on their backs." When General von Steuben called on the Virginia State Quartermaster in 1781 for sufficient equipment for 500 men along with the teams to move it, the Quartermaster wrote in reply: "To hire [horses] is impossible as no one will take the price to which we are limited, when they can get three times as much from private individuals ... . In short, sir, I have no money, no materials, no credit, and beg, while this is my situation, you will place no dependence on anything to come from the department."

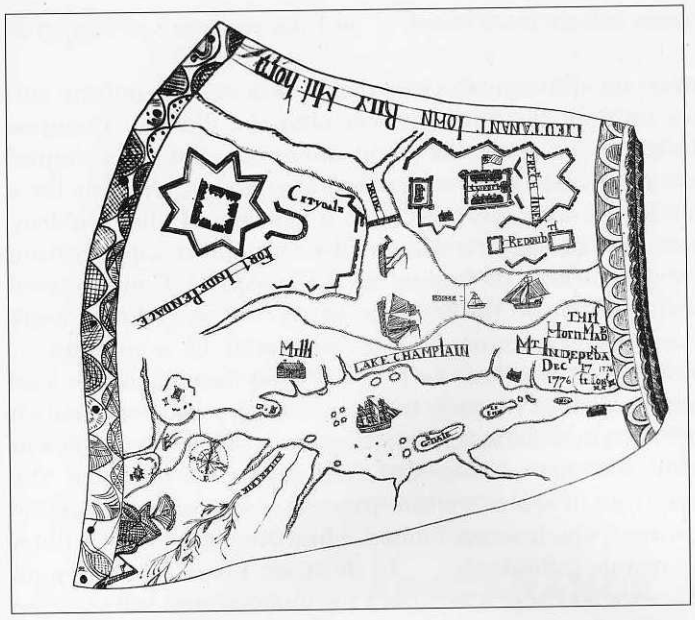
Congress made its first effort to mandate uniform military dress when it designated brown as the coat color on 4 November 1775. Congress specified a uniform allowance in a 6 September 1777 Resolution as:

1 coat	2 shirts
1 vest	1 hunting shirt
1 pr. buckskin &	2 pr. Overalls
2 pr. Linen breeches	2 pr. Shoes
1 hat or leather cap	1 blanket

Congress intended that soldiers pay one and two-thirds dollars out of their monthly pay of six and two-thirds dollars for their uniforms. The uniform, described as "a suit of clothes," became part of the Congressional or state bounty paid to enlistees, and the issue changed throughout the war as supply problems continued. Lafayette, still new to America, described the army in August of 1777, after the brown coats of 1776 had worn out. "Eleven thousand men but tolerable armed and still worse clad, presented a singular spectacle. In their parti-colored, and often naked state, the best dressed wore hunting shirts of brown linen."

During the spring of 1778, a shipment of blue and brown coats with red facings arrived from France. Washington distributed these among the regiments by lottery. He specified blue as the coat color in a general order dated 2 October 1779. The order also specified facing colors for groups of states: New England – white; New York and New Jersey – buff; Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia – red; North and South Carolina and Georgia – blue with thin white tape edging the button holes. Washington ordered red facings for all regiments in 1782. Musicians wore a coat with the regimental facing and coat colors reversed.

Some uniforms differed from those specified. Light infantrymen, the army's elite, modified the coat, adding cloth wings on the shoulders and



A map prepared from that on the powder horn can help historians and archaeologists locate artifacts and learn more about the life of the Continental infantryman. (Fort Ticonderoga)

shortening the tails. They wore a cap with a horsehair plume, bearskin crest, or feathers if they could get them. Alan McLane was a Marylander who raised a partisan company of scouts, and performed reconnaissance for the successful raids on Stony Point and Paulus Hook in 1779. When his light infantry company joined Lee's Legion in September of 1779, it received "Uniform light linen Jackets dyed a Purple & all their Overalls the same." The Commander-in-Chief's Guard, the best-uniformed company in the army, wore blue and buff coats, with red waistcoats and buff britches. Riflemen wore their civilian clothes and, most frequently, the rifle shirt, also known as the hunting shirt.

Colonels with more political clout or greater initiative might evade the prescribed uniform. Colonel Henry Livingston, member of a powerful New York political family, dressed the 4th New York in white coats faced red. Colonel Samuel Webb, a former member of Washington's staff, persuaded the General to authorize him to fit out his new regiment with red British coats captured by John Paul Jones. Shortly thereafter, he acquired hunting shirts for each of his men. They could wear the latter for fatigue duty and conserve the former. Webb's initiative earned a rocket from Washington: "... What is the meaning of all this? ... Can you conceive it necessary that your Regiment is to have one Suit for parade and another to march to New Haven?" Many soldiers did exactly what Webb had done for his regiment. A rifle shirt, worn for fatigue duties, spared the uniform coat and made it last longer. Indeed Washington wrote in 1775 that, "If I were left to my own inclination, I should not only adopt the Indian dress [the hunting shirt], but cause the officers to do it also, and be the first to set the example myself." Congress lacked the money to produce the 10,000 rifle shirts.

Soldiers received uniforms from three principal sources. Their state might provide material to make up uniforms or it might provide ready-made articles such as shirts. Congress imported uniforms, mainly from France, and it also sent uniforms and textiles captured by Continental ships to the troops. These might be issued as received, or dyed. A public subscription might, on occasion, result in the provision of a few items, such as shoes or shirts.

A fourth method of getting supplies was to take someone else's. Colonel Robert Gaskin, assigned the task of raising a Continental regiment in Virginia in May 1781, despaired when his repeated requests for supplies yielded none. He raided supplies assembled by the State of Virginia for his troops and acquired 172 pairs of shoes, 11 pairs of boots and 20 pieces of Osnaberg cloth. Continental regiments might waylay supplies directed to other Continental units, and commanders of state troops might raid Continental stores when they could not meet their needs from other sources.

Congress initially made the states responsible for clothing the regiments they provided to the army. Some states, such as Virginia, made efforts throughout the war to provide clothing for their troops. Neither the states nor Congress ever achieved systematic supply of uniforms, although some succeeded at times. When Nathaniel Greene called upon North Carolina to supply clothing and shoes for his army in 1780, it provided rifle shirts and stripped overalls for his Continentals and seized a tannery to produce shoes. With the irregular supply of materials, men might produce shoes or moccasins if they could get a bit of hide from the butcher and had the time and the skill. The lack of both in the New Jersey campaign of 1776–77 led to the scene depicted by one of the soldiers marching toward Princeton: "Our men, too, were without shoes or comfortable clothing; and as traces of march towards Princeton, the ground was literally marked with the blood of the soldiers' feet."

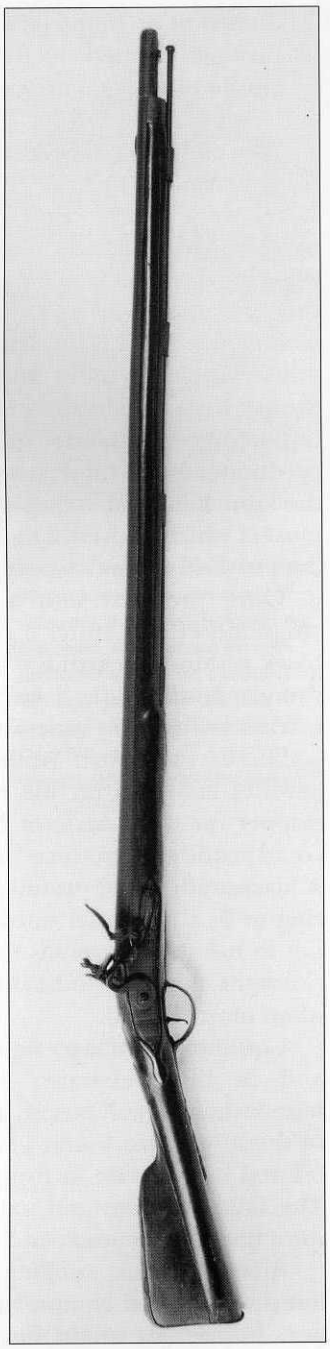
Equipment

Poverty and mismanagement affected equipment as well as the uniforms of Continental infantrymen. Equipment comprised what the individual soldier needed to fight and to live, together with equipment allotted to his regiment. He faired best, perhaps, with the tools of his trade, weapons. The availability of other equipment varied for the same reasons that the supply of uniforms varied.

Firearms initially ran the gamut from fowling pieces to the British Long Land pattern musket, standard issue for British infantry. The Committees of Safety in each of the colonies had begun importing muskets and component parts from Holland and France before the outbreak of war. They also placed orders with American gunsmiths, though in some cases, the contractor assembled muskets from parts imported by the Committees. Captured weapons, such as 1,000 German muskets taken at Trenton, also found their way into the hands of the Continentals. Supply barely kept pace with losses. Untrained, retreating soldiers discarded or lost 8,000 muskets in 1776.

The situation with riflemen was slightly different. They carried unique pieces and cast their own bullets as well as solving their own supply problems. Riflemen from Pennsylvania and Northern Virginia generally carried the Pennsylvania rifle, finished in brass. Southerners carried the more austere Southern or "poor boy" rifle. Made in small batches or crafted individually, American rifles and riflemen enjoyed a reputation for accuracy and range. A musket-armed infantryman might hit something at 100 yards [90m]. Riflemen could hit predictably at 200 yards [180m], and they might score at 400 yards [370m]. However, the rifleman loaded loose powder from a horn and a bullet wrapped in a greased patch each time he fired. A rifleman therefore fired at a slower rate than an infantryman firing a musket, with the end result being that a rifleman's weapon exposed him to special risks. A British officer explained for a local newspaper how to deal with riflemen:

> About twilight is found the best season for hunting the rebels in the woods, at which time their rifles are of very little use; and they are not found so serviceable in a body as musketry, a rest being requisite at all times, and before they are able to make a second



German muskets found their way into American hands through prewar purchase or capture during the war. Victories at Saratoga and Trenton netted large numbers of these weapons which served until replaced by the lighter Charleville. (Images from the collection of Don Troiani, www.historicalartprints.com)

discharge, it frequently happens that they find themselves run through the body by the push of a bayonet, as a rifleman is not entitled to any quarter.

Von Steuben's regulations, derived from the training of the Main Army at Valley Forge in 1778, set the basis for standardizing weapons: "The arms and accouterments of the officers, noncommissioned officers, and soldiers, should be uniform throughout ... . The officers who exercise their functions on horseback, are to be armed with swords, the platoons officers with swords and espontoons, the non commissioned officers with swords, firelocks and bayonets, and the soldiers with firelocks and bayonets." French imports provided the means for standardizing muskets. American agents in Paris began importing thousands of French muskets in 1776, and these predominated as time passed. Informally referred to as the Charleville, the French musket included at least six different versions of a caliber .69 musket which proved handier, lighter, and less prone to user mistakes than its British counterpart.

Once provided with a stand of arms, the infantryman needed ammunition and either a cartridge box or a tin to hold it. A wooden block within the cartridge box would be drilled to hold from 26 to 40 rounds. Some soldiers, wary of running out of ammunition in battle, carried both. Each man also needed a bayonet and scabbard. When scabbards ran short, Washington ordered the infantry to keep the bayonet mounted on the musket. Finally, the infantryman needed a stopper for the muzzle of his musket to keep out the rain. The army could acquire or produce leather and fabric cartridge and bayonet belts. A blacksmith could produce bayonets, but he would need to forge the ring to fit a particular musket. Officers constantly had to remind men not to use their bayonets for prizing things or as screwdrivers or spits. Constant exposure to heat made the metal brittle and prone to break when most needed.

Continental infantry fighting afloat off Boston, on Lake Champlain, and in the Delaware might use different weapons, including blunderbusses, wall pieces, grenades, boarding pikes, or cutlasses. None of these weapons found general use among the infantry because they offered no increase in firepower superior to a line of aimed muskets. The blunderbusses and wall pieces, no more than oversized muskets, were heavy, inaccurate, and slow to load.

After weapons, cooking utensils represented the most important items of personal equipment. Six or more men would share a cooking pot. Individuals might have broilers and knives, forks, and spoons. When these were in short supply, a larger number of troops might share the available utensils. They might augment their equipment from captured enemy sources or from involuntary requisitions upon civilians.

A soldier also needed a pack, haversack, and blankets. The haversack could hold up to three days' supply of bread and cooked meat. Were these not available, the haversack held anything eatable which its owner could find. The pack held any spare clothing, a blanket and personal equipment or belongings such as a tinder box, book, or dice. An infantryman might receive a haversack and pack upon enlistment. Replacement came from the various states. For example, the Selectmen

of Union Connecticut contracted and paid for blankets for members of the Connecticut line. In addition, the British also unwillingly provided packs, as a sergeant reported after the Battle at Princeton: "In this battle, my pack, which was made fast by leather strings, was shot from my back and with it what little clothing I had, It was, however, soon replaced by one which had belonged to a British officer and was well furnished. It was not mine long, for it was stolen shortly thereafter."

Each regiment also needed equipment. Lieutenant-Colonel Gaskin included his regimental requirements along with his soldiers' equipment: "tents, Camp kettles, Axes, Hatchets, 10 wagons with four horses each and drivers, 1,000 wooden canteens, Knapsacks, Haversacks, Bags and Portmanteaus." The regimental surgeon required a set of surgical instruments and a medicine chest. Many surgeons brought their own instruments, although Congress supplied the medicine chests and their contents as best it could. A regiment also needed drums. The regimental drums served to transmit basic commands, including Assembly, March, Reveille, Tattoo, To Arms, Parley, and the General. The regimental colors served as both a symbol of the regiment and a reference point for the regiment's location on the battlefield. In addition, regimental wagons were needed to haul tents, the officers' baggage, the sick and, if available, a small stock of construction tools employed by the sappers to improve roads or to prepare fortifications during a siege.

Recruits needed equipment such as canteens. Though many received the wooden model on the right, other made do with captured British tin canteens of the type shown on the left. (Images from the collection of Don Troiani, www.historicalartprints.com)

The uniform and equipment of a Continental infantryman depended heavily upon chance. His coat might be the same as the man next to him in line, but his pants might differ. Both might have a cocked hat, but each might drink from different canteens. His waistcoat might have come from France, Virginia, or England. He might have received a pack when he enlisted, or he might have picked one up from the battlefield. His British, German, and Loyalist counterparts all went through periodic shortages, but few endured the vagaries of a chaotic supply system as often as he did.

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

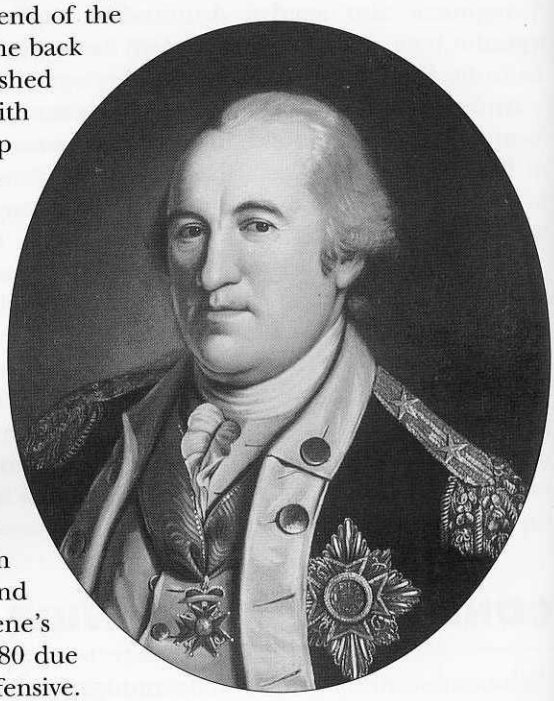
Eighteenth-century armies went into winter quarters because weather rendered them immobile. Orders to go into winter camp converted the Continental infantry to builders. Soldiers constructed cities of small cabins where they lived during the winter and spring. They also built field fortifications to protect the camp, and as fatigue duty to keep them busy.

The men employed their regimental tools or tools bought, borrowed, or stolen from nearby farmers. Washington determined the location, and quartermasters marked the sites. Washington awarded prizes to those who completed their huts first. The sooner the men got

out of their tents, the less likely the danger of their freezing to death. Joseph Plumb Martin described the cabins built by the Continentals:

> The next thing is the erecting of the huts. They were generally twelve by fifteen or sixteen feet [3.7 by 4.6 or 4.9m] square, all uniformly of the same dimensions. The building of them was thus: after procuring the most suitable timber for the business, it was laid up by notching them in at the four corners. When arrived at the proper height, about seven feet [2.1m], the two end sticks which held those that served for plates were made to jut out about a foot [30cm] from the sides, and a straight pole made to rest on them, parallel to the plates; the gable ends were then formed by laying on pieces with straight poles on each, which served for ribs to hold the covering, drawing in gradually to the ridgepole. Now for the covering: this was done by sawing some of the larger trees into cuts about four feet [1.2m] in length, splitting them into bolts, and riving them into shingles, or rather staves. The covering then commenced by laying on those staves, resting the lower ends on the poles by the plates; they were laid on in two thicknesses, carefully breaking joints. They were then bound on by a straight pole with withes, then another double tier with the buts resting on this pole, and bound on as before, and so on the end of the chapter. A chimney was then built at the center of the back side composed of stone as high as the eaves, and finished with sticks and clay, if clay was to be had, if not, with mud. The last thing was to hew stuff and build us up cabins or berths to sleep in, and then the buildings were fitted for the reception of gentlemen soldiers, with all their rich and gay furniture.

Each cabin housed 12 men. Officers' cabins housed four, two, or in the case of a regimental commander, one. The men built additional cabins for soldiers with dependants. The Valley Forge camp of 1777 became the model and von Steuben's regulations standardized the details. The Continental Army built similar camps in New Jersey, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York, where Washington sent regiments to make subsistence easier. The Southern Army built huts and a few two-story barracks around Ticonderoga in the winter of 1776. Nathaniel Greene's Southern Army campaigned through the winter of 1780 due to moderate weather and his desire to maintain the offensive.



Von Steuben summarized the difference between teaching drill to European and American troops: "You say to your soldier 'Do this' and he doeth it; but I am obliged to say, 'This is the reason why you ought to do that' and then he does it." (National Park Service)

Some routines remained the same in winter as in summer. Troops mounted guard, drilled, and sent detachments out to forage. Soldiers granted furloughs made their way home, hopefully to return. Officers and men organized entertainment to break up the monotony of daily duty. A soldier reported on camp theatricals in New Jersey in the winter of 1778: "We spend our time very sociably here; are never disturbed by the enemy, have plenty of provisions, and no want of whiskey grog, We sometimes get good spirits, punch, etc. and have madeira sometimes. We have a variety of amusements. Last evening the tragedy of Cato was

performed at Brunswick by officers of the army. Will the Congress be displeased?"

The arrival of the news of victory at Yorktown in 1781 provoked a unique celebration in winter camp at Tarrytown. "The company collected had determined to burn General Arnold in effigy ... just as they were going to commit the effigy to the flames, one of the company observed that one of Arnold's legs was wounded when he was fighting bravely for America, that this leg ought not to be burnt, but amputated; which the whole company agreed, and this leg was taken off and safely laid by."

Food and pay

Work, drill, and entertainment provided distraction, but these activities did not correct an underlying problem. The infantry could shelter themselves, but they could not feed themselves. Winter weather halted wagons and delayed delivery of supplies and clothing. Congress's efforts to create a commissary system produced erratic results. More importantly, the lack of money, the key determinant of the Continental infantryman's condition, limited what supplies might be purchased.

Congress and the individual states printed money. None had specie (coin) reserves to back up the paper. A Massachusetts infantryman who had received his bounty in 1777 from his home state quickly learned that $3.10 of Massachusetts money equaled $1.33 in Continental currency or one Spanish milled dollar. By January 1780, the Spanish milled dollar equaled $29.30 Massachusetts or $29.40 Continental. The infantry private's annual pay of $76 Continental before stoppages equaled less than $3 in specie.

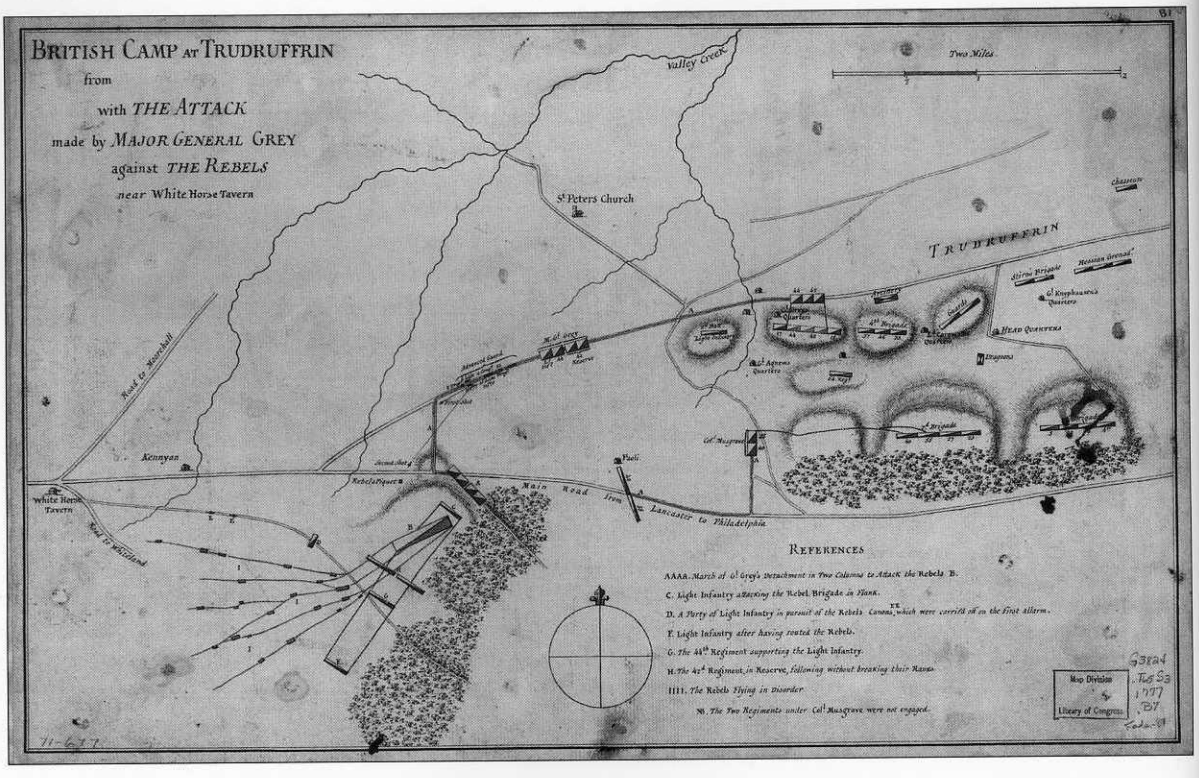
Claude Blanchard was a Commissary in the army of Rochambeau, who commanded the French army which had landed in Rhode Island to co-operate with Washington. Blanchard eulogized Congress's currency during the winter of 1780: "They [the Americans] love money and hard money; it is thus they designate specie to distinguish it from paper money." After making some disbursements in American paper money, Blanchard wrote: "We were unable to make use of this paper money long, because it fell completely, and no human power could have been able to raise it again." The currency collapse paralleled conditions in the Main Army's winter camps. The Marquis de Lafayette described the army at Valley Forge: "The unfortunate soldiers were in want of everything; they had neither coats nor hats, nor shirts nor shoes. Their feet and legs froze until they were black and it was often necessary to amputate them."

Improvement of the weather and the replacement of Thomas Mifflin by Nathaniel Greene as Quartermaster at Valley Forge brought improvements. More food reached the camp in February. The troops caught thousands of shad in the Schuylkill River in March. Washington had staved off a possible smallpox epidemic by requiring the inoculation of 3,000 to 4,000 troops. However, scurvy, starvation, and other diseases required the army's doctors to use 50 barns, dwellings, meeting houses, or churches in the vicinity of the camp as hospitals. An estimated 2,500 men perished from disease or complications resulting from starvation and exposure.

Many soldiers knew that the Continental Congress set a basic ration for the army in 1775 which was recorded as:

1 lb. [500g] Of beef, or 3/4 lb. [340g] Pork, or 1 lb. Salt fish per day.
1 lb. Of bread or flour per day.
3 pints [1.4l] of pease, or beans per week, or vegetables equivalent, at one dollar per bushel for pease or beans.
1 pint [500ml] of milk per man per day, or at the rate of 1/72 of a dollar.
1 half pint [240ml] of Rice, or 1 pint of indian meal per man per week.
1 quart [1l] of spruce beer or cyder per man per day, or nine gallons [34l] of Molasses per company of 100 men per week.
3 lb. [1.4kg] Candles to 100 men per week for guards.

Few soldiers ever received the prescribed ration at Valley Forge. Soldiers coped as best they could. Sergeant Smith of the Rhode Islanders recorded how his regiment dealt with hunger on 19 and 20 December 1777 on the way to Valley Forge: "We found a Corn field where was Corn which we took and Eat after we Roasted it in the fire some ... towards Night we drew Some Poor Beef & one Days flower – this December 20th 1777." The army enjoyed a milder winter in New Jersey in 1778, but food still reached the camp irregularly, prompting Major Ebenezer Huntington to write: "We have been without bread or rice more than five days out of seven, for these three weeks past, and the prospect remains as fair as it has been." The harsh situation led to discontent and desertion.



Laxity in proximity to the enemy invited disaster. This map depicts General Charles Grey's 1777 night bayonet attack on Wayne's Brigade, an action inaccurately dubbed the Paoli Massacre by the Americans. (Library of Congress)

Indeed Washington sought permission from Congress to increase the maximum sentence for serious offenses from 50 to 100 lashes, yet at the same time he chastised Major Henry Lee for summarily executing a deserter and bringing his head back to camp as an example.

The Main Army ended the campaign of 1779 in New Jersey. Dr James Thatcher recorded that: "For the last ten days we have received but two pounds [0.9kg] of meat a man, and we are frequently for six or eight days entirely destitute of meat, and then as long without bread." Food deliveries again improved towards the end of winter but consistent food provision was to remain a problem.

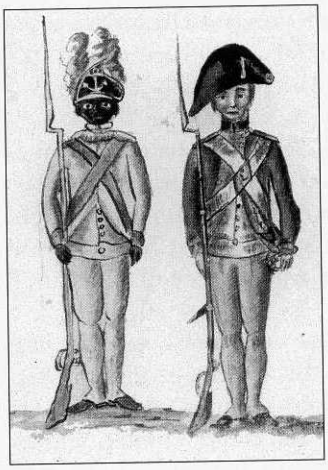
The winter of 1779 proved a disaster. The army encamped around Morristown, New Jersey. Dr Thatcher noted the severity of the weather: "No man could endure its violence many minutes without danger of his life." A shortage of food made conditions intolerable. Joseph Plumb Martin recorded that: "We were absolutely literally starved ... I saw men roast their old shoes and eat them, and I was afterwards informed by one of the officers' waiters that some of the officers killed and ate a favorite little dog that belonged to one of them." Washington saved the army by dividing New Jersey into districts and by assigning an officer to each. Forced requisition got the army through the worst of the winter. Nevertheless, the Connecticut troops mutinied. Washington employed the Pennsylvania Line to quell the mutiny, but the situation was to worsen.

Washington again divided the army for winter quarters in 1780. The New York Continentals went to the Highlands Department around West Point; New Jersey's Continentals wintered at Pompton. The Pennsylvania Line returned to Morristown. By December, its commander, Anthony Wayne, was pleading for stores, alcohol, and money. Citizens in Philadelphia answered his last request with a public subscription. On 27 December, Wayne received 484 pounds 2 shillings, composed of 80 and one-half English guineas, three French louis d'or, five and a quarter moidores, five Spanish pistoles, four ducats, one half-caroline, 99 and five-eighths half johaneses, 43 and one-half Spanish dollars, and three English shillings. The money proved too little, too late. The Pennsylvania Line mutinied on 1 January and marched under its sergeants toward Philadelphia. When the troops stopped at Princeton, frantic negotiations began in order to end the mutiny.

Mutinies were not new to the Continental Army. On 23 December 1777, Washington wrote to Congress from Valley Forge that the shortage of food caused "a dangerous mutiny." Joseph Plumb Martin, a participant, described the 25 May 1780 mutiny of the Connecticut troops:

> Accordingly, one evening after dark, we all turned out again without arms, appointed a commander and were determined that time ... to march to center of the state ... . By this time the Colonel had come ... and the old mode of flattery and promising was resorted to and produced the usual effect. We all once more returned to our huts and there spent the remainder of the night, muttering over our forlorn condition.

The Pennsylvannian mutiny saw 1,000 men marching, under their sergeants, in good order. They turned over two spies sent to entice their



Jean Baptiste de Verger, a French army officer, painted a watercolor depicting (from the left): a Rhode Island private; a Pennsylvania infantryman in a brown coat; a rifleman in a white hunting shirt; and a Continental artilleryman. (Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection, Brown Universtiy Library)

defection to the British and declined a reward for their action. When they entered negotiations at Princeton with representatives of the army and the Congress their chief demand was "That all and every such men as was enlisted in the years 1778 and 1777 and received the bounty of twenty dollars, shall be without any delay discharged and all arrears of pay and clothing to be paid them immediately when discharged; with respect to the depreciation of pay the State to give them sufficient certificates and security for such sums as they shall become due." The sergeants alleged that many soldiers had been re-enlisted "by military severity" or by officers misrepresenting a $20 gratuity voted by Congress in 1779 as a bounty requiring more service. Congress and Washington had employed bounties to enlist or re-enlist troops since 1775. Washington had promised a $10 bounty to keep enough troops in the field to fight at Princeton. Bounties had not been consistently paid and arrears had mounted. Fluctuating amounts and terms caused confusion. Some soldiers had received payments in specie; most had not. Some troops, having served the time required in exchange for a promised bounty, were deceived into re-enlisting by officers desperate to maintain the strength of their company or regiment.

Negotiations ended the mutiny on 10 January 1781. No personnel were punished. Approximately 1,250 men were discharged or furloughed with 50 shillings and certificates for back pay. Washington consolidated the remaining 1,150 Pennsylvanians from 11 into six regiments. The mutiny cost the Main Army more infantry than it had ever lost in a single battle and highlighted how discontent over conditions of service could reach levels that were beyond endurance.

Yet conditions did not improve. Dr John Cochran, Medical Director of the Army, described the condition in the Morristown hospital in a letter dated 25 May: "I am sorry to inform you that I found that hospital entirely destitute of stores, except for a little vinegar, which was good for nothing – and frequently without beef or bread for many days – so that the doctor, under these circumstances was obliged to permit such of the patients as could walk into town to beg provisions among the inhabitants." Rochambeau made loans directly from his military chest which sustained the Main Army in the summer and autumn of 1781. Joseph Plumb Martin received one month's pay on the march to Yorktown. He could not recollect having been paid in hard money before or after for his services. The declining size of the army and modest improvements in transportation and supply made conditions in the Main Army's last two winter encampments more tolerable, especially since the Congress managed to borrow enough money to further ensure a basic level of acceptable conditions.

When Congress compelled Washington to begin discharging the Continentals in 1782 and finally in 1783, it borrowed a tactic from the Pennsylvania mutiny settlement. Soldiers were furloughed with certificates for their back pay and land bounties rather than hard cash. Many officers and men had an experience similar to that related by a Marylander, Captain George Handy, in a postwar letter to Alan McLane: "When the revolutionary war closed I was in Charleston without a shilling, and when I returned home, being obliged to purchase goods on credit. Consequently, I became involved in debt, and a few years ago was compelled to sell my certificates at 2/6 in the pound." Many soldiers

sold their certificates for a suit of clothes and sufficient food to travel home. Even at the end of the war former infantryman therefore found their living conditions were not of the highest quality.

The unacceptable conditions which the Continental infantryman endured nearly brought about the end of the army. No single culprit stood responsible for the failure to consistently feed, pay, and supply the troops, but no single individual could correct the situation. Winter subjected the Continental infantryman to more stress than campaigning. On balance, the willingness of the Continental infantry to endure privation may have contributed as much to final victory as did their skill on the battlefield.

ON CAMPAIGN

The Main, Northern, and Southern armies each waged different campaigns under different conditions and leaders. The infantryman's experience therefore depended upon where, when, and under whom he served. Campaigns generally began in the spring and ended in the fall, but exceptions occurred. Common experience evolved around basic practices which each army learned or adopted.

Departure from winter camp meant the shift from log cabins to tents or borrowed housing. The firing of a gun in the morning alerted the regiments to drop tents, pack their gear, eat breakfast, and prepare to fall in for the day's march. Captain Robert Kirkwood maintained a meticulous record of his activity from 7 April 1780, when the Maryland and Delaware troops departed the Main Army for the south, to 13 April 1782, when he arrived home. He averaged 7 miles (11km) per day during two years of active campaigning, an approximate total of 5,000 miles (8,000km).

Infantry might cover 10 miles (16km) on an easy day's march. When marching to contact or retreating, troops could average 20 miles (32km). When compelled to respond to threats, as at Brandywine, they could achieve prodigies such as 5 miles (8km) in 45 minutes. Officers needed to plan carefully, however. The approach march of 14 miles (22km) before the battle of Germantown exhausted the troops before they had engaged their opponents.

Troops on campaign needed food, but the Continental infantryman could not always count on a square meal. The 1,300 men who marched into the Maine wilderness with Benedict Arnold, in 1775, faced the worst campaign of any colonial force in the Revolution. They needed to carry 400lb (180kg) bateaux for a

Trumbull's painting of Washington's resignation of his command matters less as art and more as reminder. Washington set the tradition of subordination of the military to civilian control. (Architect of the Capitol)

series of portages together with their food and ammunition. They did not know that the maps of their route were wrong. They departed Fort Western, Maine, at the beginning of October and within a few days Dr Isaac Senter recorded that:

> By this time, many of our bateaux were nothing but wrecks, some stove to pieces, etc. The carpenters were employed In repairing them, while the rest of the army was busy carrying over the provision, etc. A quantity of dry cod fish was by this time received, as likewise, a number of barrels of dry bread. The fish lying loose in the bateaux and being continually washed with the fresh water running into the bateaux was spoiled. The bread casks not being waterproof admitted the water in plenty, swelled the bread, burst the casks, as well as soured the whole bread. The same fate attended a number of fine casks of peas.

Jeremiah Greenman, who was on this expedition, would describe his only meal on 1 November as "In a very misrabel situation Nothing to eat but dogs. Here we killed a other and cooked I got Sum of that by good [luck] with the head of a Squirrel with a parsol of Candill wicks boyled up to gether wich made very fine Supe without Salt."

The expectation of action meant that soldiers loaded up to three days' supply of cooked pork and baked bread in their knapsacks, as Joseph Plumb Martin did when he prepared to go to Long Island in 1776:

> At the lower end of the street were placed several casks of sea bread, I believe of canel and peas-meal, nearly hard enough to make for musket flints; the casks were unheaded and each man was allowed to take as much as he could as he marched by … . We quickly embarked on board the boats. As each boat started, three cheers were given by those on board, which was returned by the numerous spectators who thronged the warves; they all wished us good luck, apparently; although it was with most of them perhaps nothing more than ceremony.

Although Martin departed for Long Island with sufficient food for the brief campaign there, Sergeant William Seymour of the Delawares went hungry as he marched under Horatio Gates to Camden in August 1780:

> At this time we were so much depressed for want of provisions that we were fourteen days and drew but one half pound of flour. Sometimes we drew a half a pound of beef per man and that so miserably poor that scarce any mortal can make use of it – living on green apples and peaches which rendered our situation truly miserable, being in a weak and sickly condition, and surrounded on all sides by our enemies the Tories.

Whether or not he marched hungry, the infantryman rarely fought alone. General Henry Knox created an artillery arm designed to support the infantry in battle. The light dragoons and legionary cavalry carried

Private from the Commander-in-Chief's Guard, 1778, with equipment and weapons

Von Steuben delivers instruction at the Main Army camp at Valley Forge, mid-winter 1778

The night attack at Stony Point, 1779

New Windsor Cantonment, husband, wife and child attend to routine duties in camp, spring 1782

A stark depiction of threadbare Continentals, near starvation, preparing food

The charge of the Delaware-Maryland Battalion at Cowpens, January 1781

Aftermath of the batttle at Trenton, Christmas Day 1776

Continental Infantryman with equipment and clothing, 1781

messages in the north and came into their own as a shock weapon in the southern campaign. Engineers, initially self-trained and later supplemented by trained French engineers, constructed fortifications and siege works which contributed to infantry victories on some occasions. Similarly, the militia, which accompanied the Continentals on most of their campaigns, sometimes performed well, as at Eutaw Springs, and on other occasions, such as Camden, exposed the Continentals to death and capture.

Infantrymen on campaign could count on being on guard duty once every three days. The army camped in the midst of a concentric ring of guards who deterred desertion while attempting to prevent a surprise attack. Piquet guards secured the roads leading to camp. The camp guard comprised detachments each drawn from two battalions of a subaltern, sergeant, corporal, drummer, and 27 privates. The camp guards were deployed at least 300 paces from the camp perimeter to form a continuous sentry chain. The separate quarter guard, a sergeant and nine privates, were deployed to protect their battalion's baggage. Senior officers also received specified guard detachments according to their rank; a brigadier-general, for example, was assigned a sergeant's guard – a sergeant, a corporal, and 12 privates.

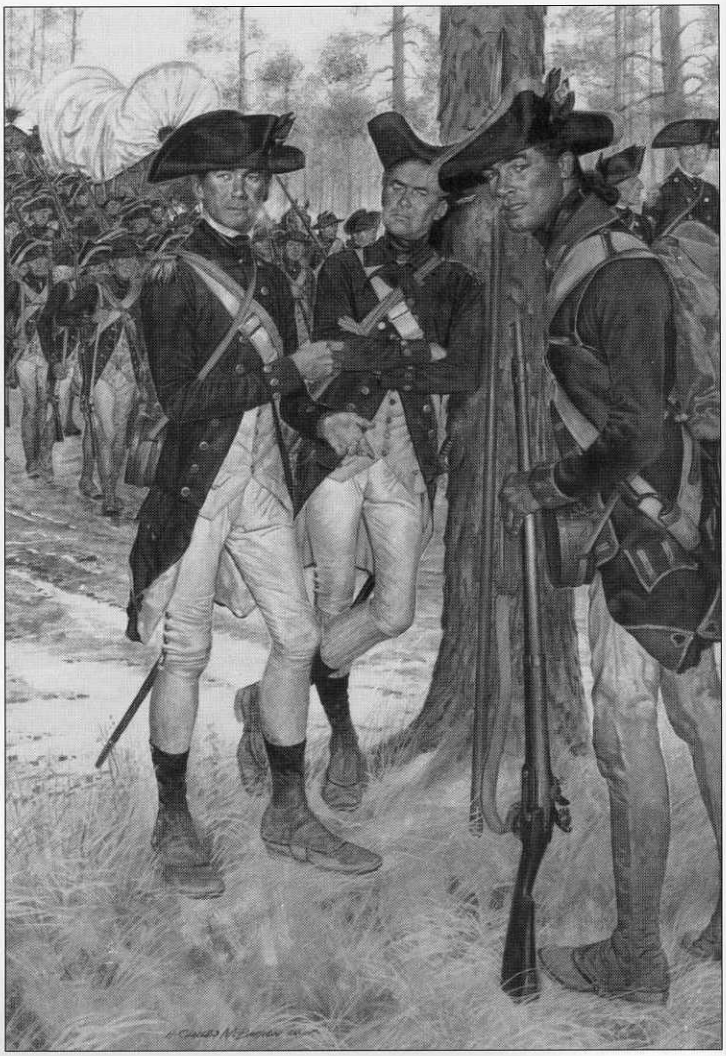
Failure to post sufficient sentinels could have deadly consequences, as Count Pulaski discovered when he took his Legion to Egg Harbor, New Jersey, in October 1778 to deter a possible raid. He billeted his cavalry and infantry separately from one another and posted a single sentry on the road leading to the infantry's billets. Captain Patrick Fergurson's 200-man raiding party captured the sentry posted to protect the infantry. Fergurson reported that:

> According at eleven last night, two hundred and fifty men were embarked, and after rowing ten miles [16km] landed at four this morning within a mile [1.6km] of the defile, which we happily secured and leaving fifty men for its defense, pushed forward upon the infantry cantoned in three different houses, who are almost cut to pieces. We numbered among their dead about fifty. It being a night attack little quarter, could, of course, be given.

Some infantrymen temporarily escaped the routine of marching and guard duty for service afloat. On more than one occasion, infantrymen in the Northern and Main armies found themselves pressed into service as sailors. Washington detached men to crew a small schooner squadron active in snatching supply ships bound for Boston. He called upon John Glover's Marblehead Regiment to rescue his army from Long Island and to ferry it into battle at Trenton and Princeton. Washington drafted infantrymen to reinforce the Pennsylvania Navy in his efforts to deny Howe the Delaware in 1777. Generals Schuyler, Gates, and Arnold built a squadron of small warships on Lake Champlain in 1776 to stem Guy Carleton's advance down the Champlain Valley. Continental infantrymen, dubbed by Arnold "the refuse of every regiment," served as marines at the battle of Valcour Island. They also worked as ship carpenters, riggers, sailors, and gunners.

Infantry regiments assigned to the Main Army had a more varied experience than those in the other armies. Since the Main Army

transferred regiments and brigades to the Northern and Southern armies, some regiments compiled impressive campaign records. No regiment saw more action than that provided by Delaware. The state sent only one regiment to the Continental Army. It numbered 550 men when it went into action on Long Island in 1776 and mustered less than 100 when it fought its last battle at Eutaw Springs, South Carolina, in 1781. Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee observed that "The State of Delaware furnished one regiment only and no regiment in the army surpassed it in soldiership." The Delawares' enlistments ended shortly before the battle of Princeton. Only its colonel and four men fought there. Before Princeton, the Regiment fought at Long Island, White Plains, Mamroneck, and Trenton. Once reformed after Princeton, the Delawares fought at Brandywine, Germantown, Monmouth, Camden, Cowpens, Guilford Court House, Ninety-Six, Eutaw Springs, and Yorktown. Detachments of the Regiment served at Paulus Hook and Stony Point and in numerous skirmishes. Maryland's regiments approached the Delawares' record, but none surpassed it.



Washington's 1779 uniform regulations put Carolina's and Georgia's Continentals into blue coats faced blue. Disruption of supplies meant that relatively few troops received these uniforms. (Courtesy of Army Art Collection, U.S. Army Center of Military History)

The Delaware Regiment, until sent south, served with Washington's Main Army, but the Main Army waged no major campaigns in the middle states between the Battle of Monmouth in July 1778 and its departure for Yorktown in 1781. Washington lacked the strength to storm New York, and he chose not to hazard a major battle except on his own terms. He shifted his brigades between New Jersey and the Hudson Highlands to deter a drive into New Jersey or any attempt to seize control of West Point on the Hudson. The absence of major battles did not, however, equate to an absence of action.

Washington detached 4,000 men under John Sullivan in 1779 to campaign against the Indians of western New York State. This campaign featured long marches, skirmishing, and the destruction of Indian towns and crops. Nathan Davis described one of the skirmishes which punctuated the campaign. Indians, covered by trees, had opened fire on the Americans:

> We were expressly ordered not to fire until we had obtained permission ... but to form a line of battle as soon as possible and

march forward. This we did, and at the same time the Indians kept up an incessant fire upon us from behind the trees, firing and retreating back to another tree, loading and firing again, still keeping up the war woop. They continued this mode of warfare till we had driven them halfway up the hill, when we were ordered to charge bayonets and rush on. No sooner said than done .... We then in turn gave our war woop in the American style, which completely silenced the unearthly voice of their stentorian throats. We drove them to the opposite side of the hill, when we were ordered to halt, as the Indians were out of sight and hearing.

This map illustrates the route of Sullivan's 1779 campaign against the Indians of western New York. Their march resulted in few skirmishes but considerable destruction of towns and crops, a standard white tactic. (Library of Congress)

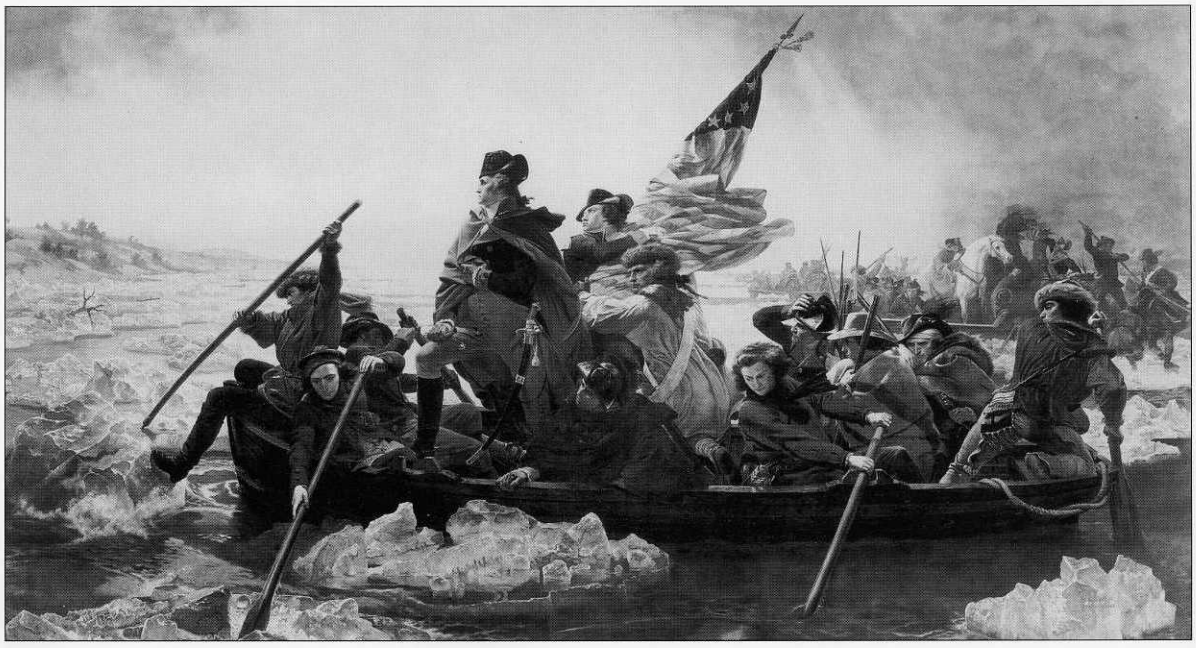
However, this initial success masked the harsh realities of conflict. Lieutenant William Barton of the First New Jersey recalled a party sent to find the Indians killed in the skirmish to acquire material for leggings. He reported that they, "skinned two of them from their hips down for both legs, one pair for the major and one pair for myself." Another party of 22 riflemen, sent to scout ahead, was ambushed, killed, scalped, and mutilated.

The Corps of Light Infantry did not accompany General Sullivan on his campaign against the Indians. Washington had begun grouping the best soldiers in the Main Army into a light infantry battalion during the 1777 campaign. He formed three small regiments in 1778 and a brigade of four small regiments numbering 1,300 for the 1779 campaign. The light infantry comprised chosen men, the elite infantry of the Main Army. Joseph Plumb Martin, drafted to the light infantry, described them succinctly:

> The duty of the Light Infantry is the hardest, while in the field, of any troops in the army, if there is any hardest about it. During the time the army keeps the field they are always on the lines near the enemy, and consequently always on the alert, constantly on the watch. Marching and guardkeeping with all the other duties of troops in the field fall plentifully to their share. There is never any great danger of Light Infantrymen dying of the scurvy.

The light infantry, commanded by Anthony Wayne, interrupted the stalemate of 1779 with a perfectly executed night bayonet attack on Stony Point, a miniature Gibraltar on the Hudson. They executed other raids, but this action remains their best known.

One element common to all three armies was that women and children marched with the troops on campaign. British observers



Criticized by purists as inaccurate, Leutze's version of Washington crossing the Delaware captures the essence of the Continental infantryman better than any other painting. Washington stands amid his Continentals in an ice-choked river sailing toward an unknown fate. (All rights reserved, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of John Stewart Kennedy, 1897. (97.34))

described the burial of 40 soldiers after the battle of Bemis Heights "after being stripped of their clothing by the women of the American camp." Washington wrote on 4 August 1777:

> In the present marching state of the army, every incumbrance proves greatly prejudicial to the service; the multitude of women in particular, especially those who are pregnant, or have children, are a clog upon every movement. The Commander in Chief therefore earnestly recommends it to the officers commanding brigades and corps, to use every reasonable method in their power to get rid of all such as are not absolutely necessary.

He went on to write more than 25 General Orders concerning women. Many enjoined the officers against permitting them to ride in supply wagons. One required that they stay out of sight when the army marched through Philadelphia in 1777 on its way to Brandywine. After staying out of sight until the soldiers passed them, they simply joined in at their accustomed place at the rear of the army.

Women undertook a variety of roles, including laundresses and nurses. Some got water for their men under fire at the battle of Brandywine. They produced soap, oil, and leather in the camp slaughterhouse. They received rations, and those with assigned jobs received pay. Doctors recruited women for the hospitals. An order of 31 May 1778 read: "Commanding Officers of Regiments will assist the Regimental surgeons in procuring as many women of the army as can be prevailed on to serve as nurses to them, for which they will be paid the usual price." There is only one documented case of a woman, Debra Samson, masquerading as a man to join the army. Details of her story remain sketchy, but she may have been wounded in a skirmish, leading to her discovery. Other women may have stood by their husbands in battle and shared the fate of the army. When the British Legion pursued

the remnants of Horatio Gates' army after Camden, it scattered the women and children. Records do not report how many rejoined the army once it halted.

The numbers of camp followers rose and fell. At Valley Forge they may have numbered as few as 400. At Newburgh in 1781, they had grown in number to 700. They faced a difficult life under the same discipline as that governing their men. A few were tried, punished, and expelled from the camp for theft. The camp followers seldom included prostitutes in their ranks, but prostitutes nonetheless ministered to the needs of the men. When apprehended in camp, they might be flogged and expelled. Operating near a camp proved safer if less convenient.

The presence of women moderated some of the hardships of a campaign, but they could do nothing to mitigate its worst outcome – capture. Capture could prove disastrous. Sir Guy Carleton returned his prisoners to the Northern Army in hopes that tales of his kindness would weaken rebel commitment. Other British generals did not employ this tactic, and the conditions of confinement for prisoners were extremely basic. The British converted public buildings and warehouses in New York City to prisoner-of-war camps. Overcrowding, disease, and starvation quickly thinned the ranks. Once the British began using prison hulks in New York and Charleston, the death rate climbed. The Medical Director of the Southern Department described the situation in Charleston: "Confined in large numbers on board these vessels, and fed on salt provisions, they naturally generated a putrid fever from the human miasma. This soon became highly contagious. The sick brought into the general hospital from the prison ships generally died in the course of two or three days, with all the marks of a septic state." On a few occasions, individuals escaped, or groups were liberated before they could be sent to the ships. Capture when campaigning against Indians meant death by torture. The horrors inflicted were widely known, reflected by the Continental units in the Western Department having lower desertion rates.

The problems encountered by the Continental infantry on campaign were the result of both the enemy's activity and his conditions of service. The conditions of service became most apparent when the army ceased campaign to retire to winter quarters, and it was in winter quarters that the Continental infantryman faced the most serious threat to his existence.

BELIEF AND BELONGING

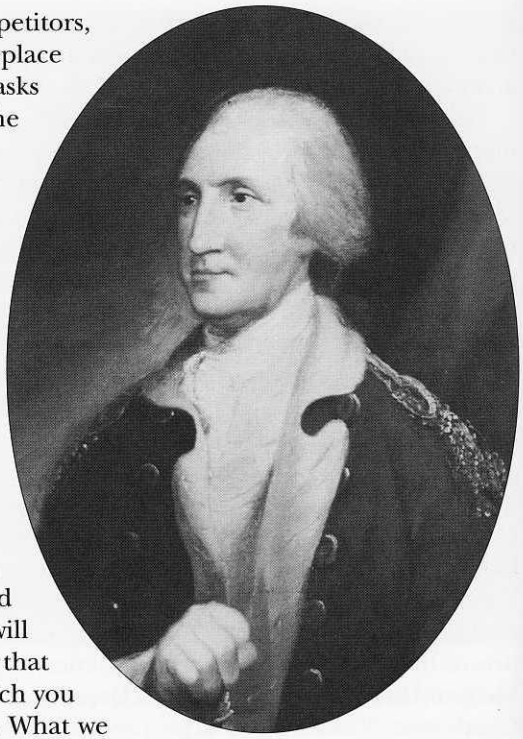
The Continental Army fought America's first and its second-longest war. The Continental infantry remained in the field for nearly eight years despite Congressional neglect and long, enforced periods of inactivity. The men's endurance still appears remarkable more than two centuries later.

The Continental soldier persisted in the face of adversity because of its Commander-in-Chief, its officer corps, and pride in its own accomplishments. Washington's virtuosity in the Revolution lay in his ability to fight on three fronts simultaneously. He waged war against Britain, and his tactical and strategic sense improved with experience. He struggled against a Congress fearful of standing armies and bereft of

a finance policy. He had also to deal with potential competitors, such as Charles Lee and Horatio Gates, who desired to replace him. Washington divided his attention among these tasks while setting a powerful example for an army from which he separated only when necessary.

Washington directly exposed himself to fire at Trenton in 1776 and at Monmouth in 1778. He wintered with his army. He maintained a distance between himself and the troops, but he made a point of being visible and present. He had no interest in an egalitarian army. He did not consider himself a good speech maker. Yet, when he needed to persuade Continental troops to extend their service after the battle of Trenton, he proved eloquent:

> You have done all I asked you to do, and more than could be reasonably expected; but your country is at stake, your wives, your houses, and all you hold dear. You have worn yourselves out with fatigues and hardships, but we know not to spare you. If you will consent to stay only one month longer, you will render that service in the cause of liberty, and to your country, which you probably never can do under any other circumstance. What we are facing today, is the crisis to decide our destiny.



Washington wore the same style uniform throughout the war, promoting the consistent image which sustained the army. His weakness for personal comfort did not blind him to the necessity of providing for his officers and men. (Independence National Historical Park)

Washington did have failings, however. He might have anticipated a flanking movement by Howe at Brandywine, given that Howe had outflanked him on Long Island in 1776. The attack plan at Germantown, an attempt to copy his success at Trenton, relied on three separate columns, each too distant from the other for mutual support. But the genius of Washington lay in his ability to learn as the war progressed and to balance the continually conflicting pressures exerted upon him by the enemy, the Congress, and the needs of the army. Indeed it is possible to argue that his record remains unique among that of American generals.

Officers

Washington could not have kept the Continental infantry in the field without a competent officer corps. The officers included some questionable characters, as court-martial records and battlefield performance attests. Nevertheless, they possessed as a group three characteristics essential to success: a commitment to their craft; the ability to deal with and lead their men; and individuals who set or exceeded standards. They were, of course, also molded by Washington's plans and character.

Indeed Captain Johann Ewald, a Jaeger officer, paid tribute to the Continental officer shortly after the attack at Stony Point: "Do not these men deserve to be admired?" he wrote,

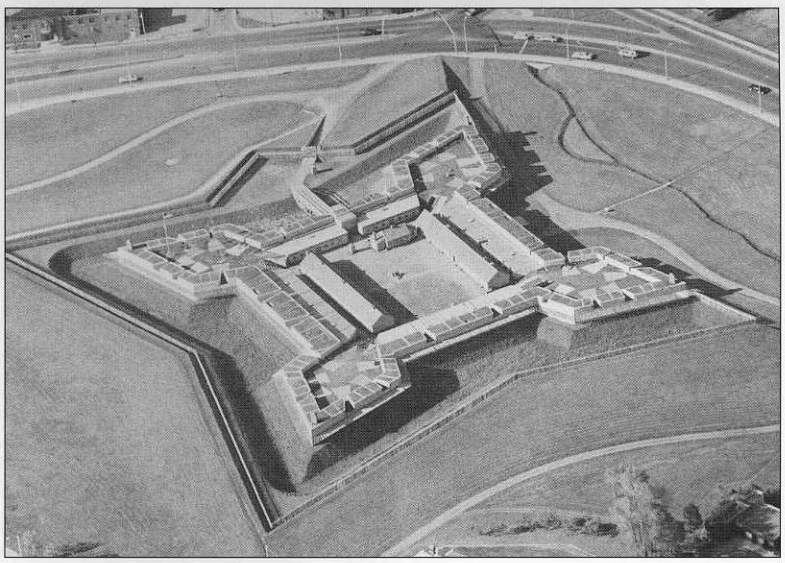
> who but a few years before, had been lawyers, doctors, ministers, or farmers, and who, in so short a time, made themselves excellent officers, putting to shame so many of our profession who have

> grown gray under arms, but who would have been in a frightful state of mind if they had been commissioned to carry out such a plan. I shall perhaps be told that these men are endowed by nature with a great talent for war. This may be the case with one or another of them, but, on the whole, nature is not so extravagant with her favors ... they chose this profession with the firm resolution of being zealous in every way, of serving their country usefully, and of pushing themselves forward by their merits.

Anthony Wayne highlighted another characteristic of Continental officers when he described constructing huts at Morristown in the winter of 1780:

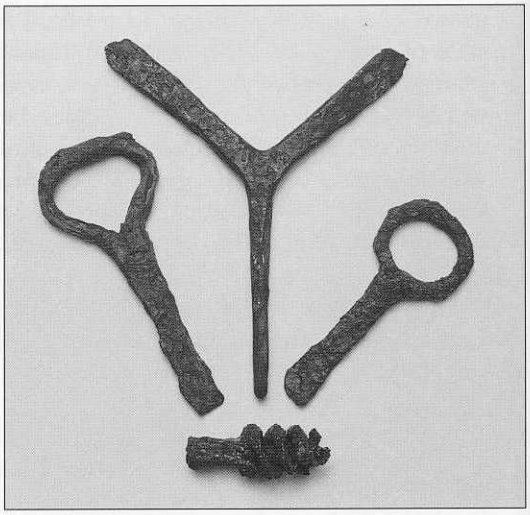
> The officers in general, as well as myself, find it necessary to stand for hours every day, exposed to wind and weather, among the poor naked fellows while they are working at their huts and redoubts, often assisting with our own hands in order to produce a conviction in their minds that we share and more than share every vicissitude in common with them, sometime asking to participate in their bread and water.

The officer corps possessed talent at all grades. Benedict Arnold was a Connecticut merchant and apothecary who displayed remarkable talent for battlefield leadership. His military career began with the seizure of Fort Ticonderoga and his legend grew thanks to his performance in the attack on Quebec, the battle of Valcour Island, the relief of Fort Stanwix, and the battle of Saratoga. A tender ego made him prone to feelings of injustice, eventually leading to his defection to the British forces in 1780. His subsequent activities in British service made him as hated as he was once respected. Before his defection, Arnold demonstrated a unique ability to motivate men on the battlefield and a knack for striking the right point at the right time. Nathaniel Greene lacked prior military or militia experience. He never won a battle, but he won a campaign by continually draining his opponents' resources through combat. Daniel Morgan stood out at Saratoga as a vital complement to Arnold and at the battle of Cowpens as a master tactician with the common touch. "I don't believe he slept a wink," wrote cavalryman Thomas Young, describing the night before Cowpens. "He went among the volunteers, helped them to fix their swords [bayonets], joked with them about their sweethearts, told them to keep in good spirits, and the day would be ours." The company



Barry St Leger's advance down the Mohawk Valley ended at Fort Stanwix. His decision to attack a relieving force of American militia allowed the garrison to sortie and destroy his camp. The advance of another relief under Arnold ended the siege. (National Park Service, Fort Stanwix National Park)

commander par excellence, Robert Kirkwood of the Delawares, excelled in and survived more battles than any of his contemporaries. Denied promotion because Delaware fielded only one regiment, he won the admiration of many of his compatriots. He perished, ironically, still a captain in St Clair's defeat at the hand of Indians in 1791. One of his fellow officers provides a last view of the ideal Continental infantry officer: "There, resting beneath a tree lay old Kirkwood scalped, his head smoking like a chimney." "Old Kirkwood" was 35 years old when he fell.



Infantrymen needed to learn the use of tools such as these, required to repair the musket and mold bullets. Standardization of weapons simplified training and the supply of parts. (Images from the collection of Don Troiani, www.historicalartprints.com)

Shared beliefs

Washington and the officers led infantry whose awareness of their difference from militia and their role in sustaining the cause grew as the war continued. Individual recruitment, training, and discipline opened a gap between the Continentals and the militia and state troops. However, propaganda also played a role in creating a sense of mission among Continental infantrymen. Thomas Paine wrote the well-known *Common Sense*, justifying America's political grievances. Officers carried copies of his *Crisis* into battle and read it to their men. Paine's words, written after the disastrous defense of New York, retain the power to stir: "These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now; deserves the thanks of his country. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us; that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph." The British, Loyalist, and German troops facing Washington's army had nothing to compare with the rhetoric of Paine and others who urged the Americans to continue in the face of hardship. Regimental chaplains, assigned one to every two regiments, reinforced the basic message of resistance with appeals to pride: "To draw back, even before the cannon's mouth, would fix both awful guilt and indelible disgrace upon you."

Indeed even when they mutinied, Continental infantrymen maintained order. They marched under their sergeants and they maintained unit cohesion. The Continentals came to recognize themselves as men bound to a cause. They suffered for their commitment, and they rightly resented those who promised much but delivered little.

Joseph Plumb Martin demonstrated the attitude which shaped the Continental infantry when he described the attendance of his regiment at a militia demonstration:

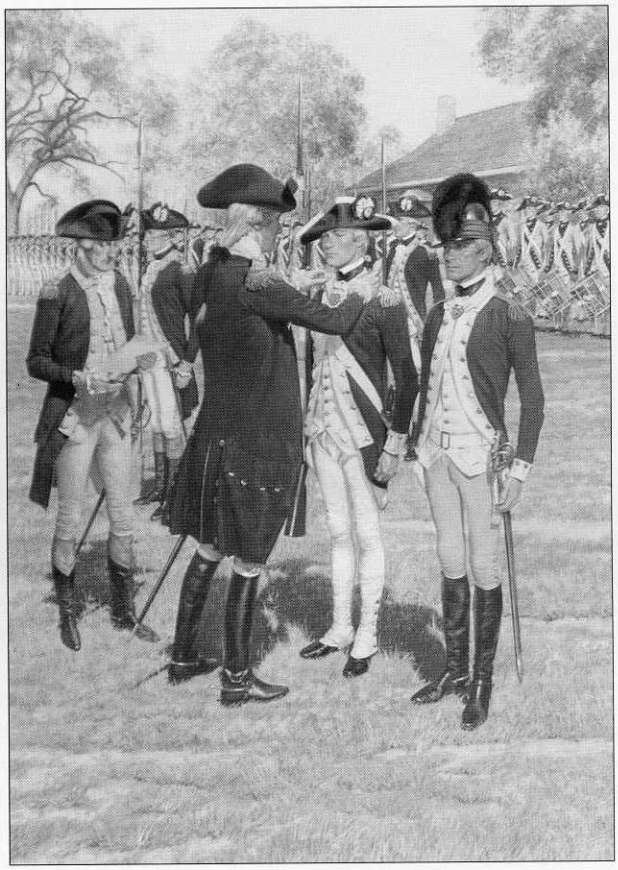
> We went to New Haven, where we arrived upon a Sabbath eve, and stayed until Wednesday. On the Tuesday following, there was to be a muster of militia. On Monday we washed our clothes and, as we understood we were to remain there during the next day, we put ourselves into as decent a condition as we possibly could to witness the militia exhibition the next day. Early next morning, there was a general stir in the town, a regiment of foot and a troop

of horse were paraded on the green, and they made a very good appearance (considering the times), to speak the truth; but they seemed rather shy of displaying their knowledge of military tactics before regular troops.

The Continental infantry were therefore becoming disciplined fighting men in terms of conduct, performance, and attitude.

Morale improved and professionalism matured even as many in the new nation turned their back on the war. General Heath's memoirs illuminate the problem:

> Accounts were received from the southward that the American Army in that quarter was in a most miserable condition, on account of clothing and provisions, and that their sufferings were greater than those experienced by the main army. These sufferings of the army were rendered the keener, by the return of the officers and soldiers from furlough, who had been in the great seaport towns, where every necessary and luxury of life were enjoyed in the greatest abundance … . Such reports to men, standing sentinel as it were, in the jaws of death, ill clad, cold and hungry, with nothing but water oftentimes to drink, were trials almost too great for human nature to bear.



Soldiers might wear a single white chevron on their uniform for each three years of service, but Washington awarded the only decorations for valor at Newburgh in 1782 to an infantry sergeant and a cavalryman. (Courtesy of the Army Art Collection, U.S Army Center of Military History)

Belief in themselves sustained the Continental infantry in the face of poor supplies, threadbare uniforms and war weariness after 1780. Washington's leadership helped to motivate a competent officer corps which shared hazards and privation with those whom they commanded.

THE EXPERIENCE OF BATTLE

If deprivation tested the belief of the Continental infantryman, battle took commitment to its limits. Weather, the skill of their commanders, and the tenacity of the enemy determined the odds of survival and success.

The combined invasion forces of Benedict Arnold and Richard Montgomery assaulted the walled city of Quebec on 30 December 1775. Jeremiah Greenman recounted the harsh conditions that the infantryman fought under:

> At 2 oClock at night we turned out it snowing and blowing very hard got all in readiness with our laders Spears and So forth with hearts undanted to scale the wals marcht down Saint rox a town

near the City or jest under ye walls ware we sent off an advance goard of 50 men wich soon alarmed the town at which all the bels rang thay soon turn out ware thay formed them Selves along the rampers keep a continual fire on us but we got up to thair two gun battery after loosing a great number of men we soon got into thair battery wich was two Nine pounders we got in took 70 prisoners then our men arms being wet we could not do much howsumeyer we tryed to force the gate to git into the uper town but all in vain Gen; Montgomery being killed all the men retreated and left us to fight for our Selves. Then thay sent a flag for us to give us our Colo A [Arnold] wounded Colo Green took Command the officers held a Counsel agreed to give thay marched us into a French Jessewit Collage after taking away our arms. Hear we very much crowded No room for us to stur and very cold.

Greenman survived capture to be paroled for exchange in August of 1776. Quebec ended Congress's Canadian adventure, but it was not the last battle fought by the Continentals in the dead of winter.

Washington's defeat on Long Island precipitated a long, disastrous retreat from Manhattan and through New Jersey. The rebels halted on the west bank of the Delaware in December 1776 and the Revolution appeared over. Once he realized that the British would not pursue him into Pennsylvania, Washington planned an attack on a German brigade quartered in Trenton, New Jersey. Washington crossed the ice-choked Delaware on Christmas night, and struck Trenton the following morning. John Greenwood described the character of the fighting:

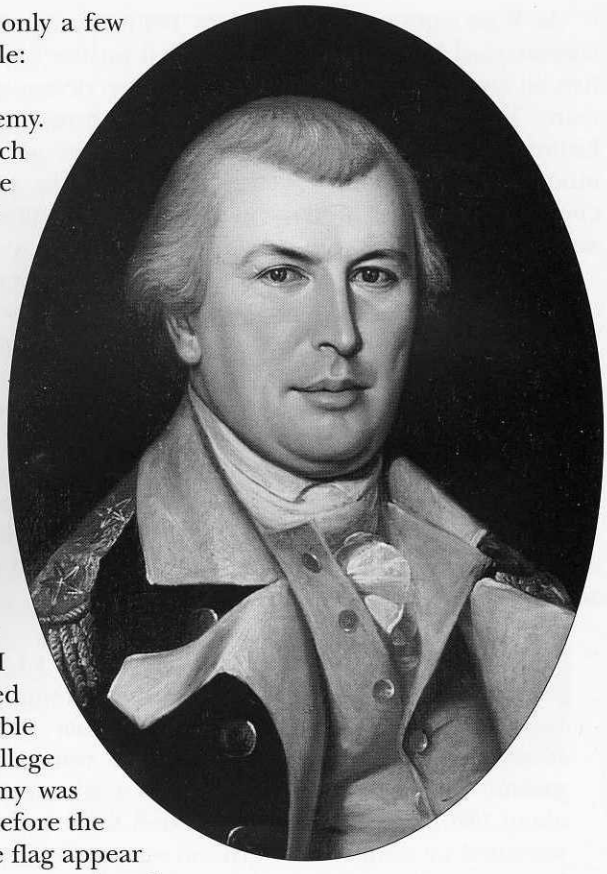
The engraved figure created by Johann Martin Will of Augsburg a German officer serving in America, depicts an American soldier. He wears a rifle shirt and holds a musket, but he carries no other equipment. (Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University Library)

As we advanced, it being dark and stormy so that we could not see very far ahead, we got within 200 yards [180m] of about 300 or 400 Hessians who were paraded, two deep in a straight line, with Colonel Rall their commander on horseback, to the right of them. They made a full fire at us, but I did not see that they killed anyone ... As we had been in the storm all night we were not only wet through and through ourselves, but our guns and powder were wet also, so I do not believe that one would go off, and I saw none fired by our party ... . When we were all ready we advanced, and although there was not more than one bayonet to five men, orders were given to charge bayonets and rush on we did ... . Within pistol shot they again fired point blank at us. We dodged and they did not hit a man ... . Before they had time to reload we were within three feet [1m] of them, when they broke in an instant and ran like so many frightened devils into the town, which was at a short distance, we after them pell-mell.

Washington withdrew to Pennsylvania after the victory at Trenton, only to return to New Jersey a few days latter. After avoiding entrapment by Cornwallis at Trenton, he struck at Princeton on 3 January, colliding with a brigade of British

infantry. A sergeant who had chosen to re-enlist only a few days before, described the key moment in the battle:

> We formed, advanced and fired upon the enemy. They retreated eight rods to their packs, which were laid in a line. I advanced to a fence on the opposite side of the ditch which the enemy had just left, fell on one knee and loaded my musket with ball and buckshot. Their ranks grew thin and the victory seemed complete, when the British were reinforced. Many of our brave men had fallen, and we were unable to withstand such superior numbers of fresh troops. I soon heard General Mercer command in a tone of distress, "Retreat!" ... At this moment, General Washington appeared in front of the American army, riding towards those of us who were retreating and exclaimed: "Parade with us, my brave fellows, there is but a handful of the enemy, and we will have them directly." I immediately joined the main body and marched over the ground again .... The British were unable to resist this attack and retreated into the College where they thought themselves safe. Our army was there in an instant, and cannon were planted before the door, and after two or three discharges, a white flag appear at the window and the British surrendered. They were a haughty, crabbed set of men, as they fully exhibited while prisoners on their march in the country.



A Quaker without prior military training, Nathaniel Greene demonstrated skill as a quartermaster and as a battlefield commander. His aggressive campaign and calculated battlefield decisions drove Cornwallis from the Carolinas and confined the British south of Virginia to the seacoast. (Independence National Historical Park)

Washington resurrected the Revolution and regained New Jersey in the winter of 1777, only to lose the colonial capital in the fall of the same year. Outflanked by Howe at Brandywine, Washington withdrew, leaving Philadelphia to Howe. Private Elisha Stevens provided a succinct description of the sights and sounds of Brandywine: "Cannons Roaring muskets Cracking Drums Beating Bumbs flying all Round. Men a dying woundeds Horred Grones which should Greave the Heardies of Hearts to See Such a dollful Sight as this to See Fellow Creators Slain in Such a manner."

Washington's next attempt to drive the British from Philadelphia came with a surprise attack on the British Army at Germantown. Private Joseph Martin, marching in one of the four widely space columns hurled against the British, provided one explanation for the attack's failure:

> The enemy were retreating before us until the first division that was engaged had expended their ammunition. Some of the men, unadvisedly calling out that their ammunition was spent, the enemy was so near that they overheard them, when they first made a stand, and then returned upon our people, who, for want of ammunition and reinforcements, were obliged to retreat, which ultimately resulted in the rout of the whole army.

As Washington faced defeat in Pennsylvania, the Northern Army, commanded by Horatio Gates, but led on the battlefield by Benedict Arnold and Daniel Morgan, won a decisive victory at Saratoga. Though many historians consider Saratoga the turning point of the war, historical judgments mean little to the soldier on the battlefield. The infantryman perceived a world bounded by the range of his and his enemy's weapons. Different men experienced different things on the same battlefield.

On 24 June 1778, Washington caught up with General Henry Clinton near Monmouth Court House as Clinton withdrew from Philadelphia. Washington hoped to smash Clinton's 12-mile (19km) long wagon train before it could reach the safety of New York. Washington ordered the vanguard of his army under Major-General Charles Lee to close on Clinton's rear. Lee recoiled from Clinton's rearguard. Clinton reinforced, driving Lee back in disorder. Washington relieved Lee in a fury, and personally reformed the troops. After deploying much of the army, Washington maintained the action through the balance of a steaming afternoon. Two soldiers in the vanguard each described the action. Jeremiah Greenman recounted that

> our Division under the Command of Gel Lee advanced towards to enemy than for's in a Solid Coelom the fired a volley at us than being so much Superior to our Number we retreated ... a Number of our men died with heat a retreating ... . Left the ground with about a thousand killed and wounded, on our Side about two hundred Kil's & wounded & died with heat after We retreated we went back to ground ware we left in the morning ... here received a ball in my left thy.

Greenman had apparently been hit by a spent ball since he could march the next day. Joseph Plumb Martin also served in Lee's vanguard. He witnessed Lee's encounter with Washington, after which his regiment fell into line along a fence to stop the British advance cold. Later, while advancing in pursuit of the retreating British, Martin wrote:

> We overtook the enemy just as they were emerging upon the meadow which was rather bushy. They were retreating in line though in some disorder. I singled out a man and took my aim directly between his shoulders. (They were divested of their packs.) He was a good mark being a broad shouldered fellow. What became of him I know not; the fire and smoke hid him from my sight. One thing I know, that is, I took as deliberate aim at him as ever I did at any game in my life. But after all, I hope I did not kill him, although I intended to at the time.

Stalemate between the Main Army and the British Army in New York gave way to a major British effort to reconquer the southern colonies. Captain Robert Kirkwood of the Delawares recorded what happened at the battle of Camden, South Carolina, 16 August 1780:

> About one in the morning met with the British Army at Black Swamp and drove in their Advance Guards we then Halted and

formed the line of battle the 2nd Brig. On the Right the first in the Center, and the Militia on the left, and Lay on our arms until break of day, when the British advanced and attacked our Left Flank where the Militia Lay, who gave way which gave the enemy's horse an opportunity to gain out rear, their Infantry at the same time gaining our Flank, and their Line advancing in our front which Caused the Action to become very desperate; which continued for the space of half an hour. In this Action Lt. Col Vaughan, Major Patten, six officers and Seventy Rank and file of our Regt. Were taken Prisoners, with all the Cannon and Baggage of the Army – I can give no Account of our Marches on the Retreat until we came to Salisbury which we arrived at on the 21st.

Following various key battles, including Cowpens and Guilford Court House, Washington next seized an opportunity created by the presence of Cornwallis in Virginia and the availability of a French army under Rochambeau. Gambling that Sir Henry Clinton would not leave New York uncovered, Washington marched a combined Franco-American army to Virginia. Cornwallis withdrew to Yorktown and fortified it, awaiting rescue or reinforcement. Washington and Rochambeau closed in to lay siege while a French fleet prevented relief from the sea.

This Daniel Chodowiecki image, published in 1784, depicts a rifleman (left) and a Pennsylvania infantryman (right). There are very few contemporary illustrations of Continental infantrymen and those which exist, such as this one, relied upon secondhand descriptions. (Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University Library)

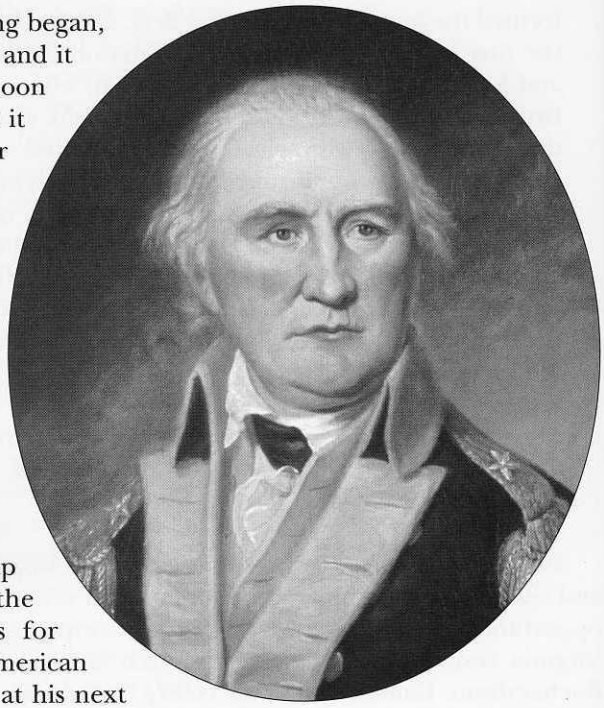
The siege proceeded according to formal plan with the infantry digging batteries and parallels. Two British redoubts, numbers 9 and 10, blocked extension of the siege parallels to the shore of the York River. The allies planned a night bayonet assault to capture them. The American light infantry would seize Redoubt number 10 while the French stormed number 9. Joseph Plumb Martin had transferred from the infantry to the Corps of Sappers and Miners, but he had a role to play in the attack:

> We arrived at the trenches a little before sunset. I saw several officers fixing bayonets on long staves ... . The sappers and miners were furnished with axes and were to proceed in front and cut a passage for the troops through the abatis ... at dark the detachment ... advanced beyond the trenches and lay down on the ground to await the signal for the attack ... . We had not laid there long before the ... signal was given for us and the French ... . The word, 'up, up' was then reiterated through the detachment. We ... moved toward the redoubt we were to attack with unloaded muskets ... . Just as we arrived at the abatis, the enemy discovered us and opened a sharp fire upon us. We were now at a place where our large shells had burst in the ground, making holes sufficient to bury an ox in. The men, having their eyes fixed upon what was transacting before them, were every now and then falling into these holes. I thought the British were

killing us at a great rate … . As soon as the firing began, our people began to cry, "The fort's our own!" and it was "Rush on boys!". The sappers and miners soon cleared a passage for the infantry, who entered it rapidly. Our miners were ordered not to enter the fort, but there was no stopping them… . I could not pass the entrance we had made, it was so crowded. I therefore, forced a passage at a place where I saw our shot had cut away some of the abatis. Several others entered at the same time. While passing, a man at my side received a ball in his head and fell under my feet, crying out bitterly… . The fort was taken and all was quiet in a very short time.

Martin did not know it at the time, but Yorktown proved to be the last major battle of the war.

After a battle, both armies sought to gather up their stragglers while the doctors attended the wounded. Jacob Miller described preparations for handling the wounded after the unsuccessful American attack at Germantown. He "observed a gathering at his next door neighbor's, the Mechilin's house on the Germantown Road, and entering, there found a British hospital had been improvised in the large stable in the yard. The Surgeons were beginning to arrange long tables made of doors, on which to lay the wounded, friends and foes alike, for amputation."



Daniel Morgan epitomized the self-made man. A wagoner during the French and Indian War, he ran afoul of a British officer and was lashed as a result. He showed the scars to his men on the night before Cowpens. (Independence National Historical Park)

A young Quaker, Joseph Townsend, helped to gather the wounded after Brandywine at the meeting house:

> I was disposed to see an operation performed by one of the surgeons who was preparing to amputate a limb by having a brass clamp or screw fitted thereon above the knee point. He had his knife in his hand, the blade of which was … circular … and was about to make the incision, when he recollected that it might be necessary for the wounded man to take something to support him during the operation. He mentioned to some of his attendants to give him a little wine or brandy to which he replied, "No doctor it is not necessary, my spirits are up enough without it."

The winner inherited the responsibility for clearing the battlefield and burying the dead, more often that not in mass graves. Sergeant Samuel, a Rhode Islander, went out from Fort Mercer after Colonel von Donop's 22 October 1777 frontal attack:

> The night following the battle, we were all on duty, either in scouting parties or on trails, It fell to my lot to go with a party on trail, and in going about half a gun shot from the fort we found Count Donop wounded and concealed behind a pine, attended by two waiters. We took him and carried him into the fort. He lived but a short time and died of his wounds after having been shot through both knees with small grape shot. The next day the

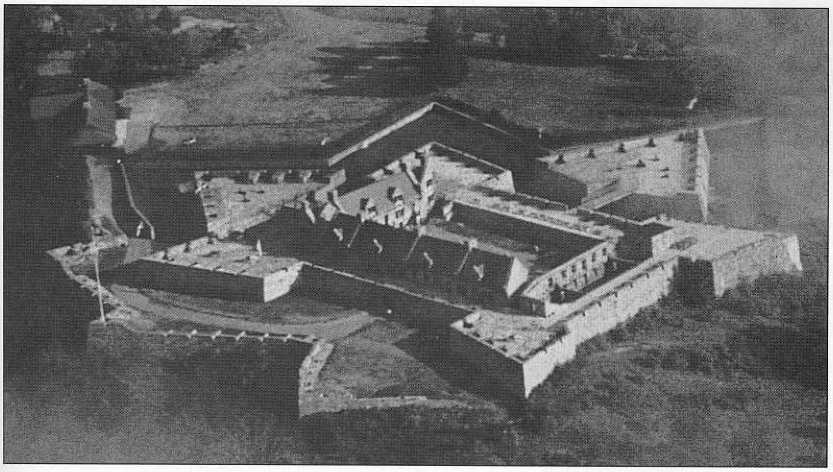
whole regiment was employed, except those on guard and on scouting parties in digging a trench and burying the dead. Here we buried between four and five hundred, so many Hessians having fallen in the engagement.

The Continental infantry and their commanders learned their trade on the job. They lost as many major battles as they won, but they performed well enough to survive as an army. They fought using tactics which accented the cohesion of the company, regiment, and brigade, making the decisions made by their commanders crucial to the outcome of battle. Their greatest defeat, the fall of Charleston, resulted not from misconduct on the battlefield, but rather from General Benjamin Lincoln's decision to stand a siege in Charleston. Their greatest success came under commanders – Washington, Wayne, Morgan, and Greene – whom they learned to trust and who proved deserving of that trust. Despite the feeling that they were fighting for a worthy cause, Continental infantrymen still faced the noise, confusion, and threat of injury as they fought on the battlefield under their commander's instructions.

COLLECTIONS, MUSEUMS, AND RE-ENACTMENT

The end of the Revolution did not bring with it memorials to the fallen. Many of the dead found rest where they fell. Some, such as those in Philadelphia, ended up in mass graves, as the Reverend James Morris – a lieutenant who served in the Continental Army and was captured at Germantown – reflected: "The Potter's field of Philadelphia bears melancholy testimony to the fatal effects of cold weather on the military hospitals in the fall of 1776 and succeeding winter. Instead of single graves, the dead were buried in large square pits, in which the coffins were placed in ranges, cross and pile, until near full and then covered over."

Abandoned forts at Ticonderoga or Crown Point became quarries for settlers. Earthworks melted into the landscape. The Federal government acquired or retained ownership of some sites with ongoing



This old French fort anchored a complex of redoubts, barracks, and outworks on both shores of Lake Champlain. Failure to fortify nearby Mount Defiance compelled American abandonment of the works. Withdrawal impaired morale and led to the replacement of Philip Schuyler by Horatio Gates. (Fort Ticonderoga Museum)

military value such as West Point, Fort Mifflin, and Fort Moultrie. A number of former officers, but few enlisted men, committed their recollections to paper before passing on. Abbreviated or fragmentary accounts of enlisted service subsequently appeared in the pension applications of aging veterans such as Jeremiah Greenman's, which distilled eight years of service into 315 words:

> That he the said Jeremiah Greenman entered the service about the 20th of May 1775. Joined the troops before Boston and on the 13th of September following joined the troops commanded by Colonel Arnold in Captain Samuel Ward's Company / proceeded with said detachment through the wilderness to Quebec and on the 31st of December following was made a prisoner at the storming of said City under the command of General Montgomery and remained a prisoner nine months after which he on the 23rd day of February 1777 entered again into the service of his Country as a sergeant in Captain Sylvanus Shaw's Company, who was killed at the assault of the Hessians at the Red Banks on the Delaware after which he was raised to the rank of Sergeant Major in Colonel Angells Regiment and on the first of May 1779 was promoted to the rank of Ensign and on the 14th of May 1781 in the Rhode Island Regiment commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Olney was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant and was on that day made prisoner of war at the Massacre of Colonel Green and Major Flagg, After being exchanged joined his Regiment at Philadelphia and continued with said regiment until they were discharged at Saratoga on furlough, which was to operate as a final discharge on the ratification of the definitive treaty, but was retained with the men enlisted for three years being previously appointed by the commander in chief as Adjutant, Here he tarried making out returns regularly of the Rigiment, permitted to return to their respective homes on furlough as above stated until the 25th of December 1783 all of which services were on the Continental establishment and that he is at the advanced age of 61 years the 7th day of May ensuing and from his reduced circumstances he stands in need of the assistance of his country for support.

The military tradition of the Continentals passed with the death of Anthony Wayne in 1796. Wayne reorganized the army as a legion after the St Clair disaster in 1791. He trained the men on von Steuben's principles. Von Steuben's manual remained in use through the early portion of the War of 1812, but a new generation of officers had to recreate an army in the midst of defeat.

The creation of Civil War cemeteries and early efforts to preserve Civil War battlefields sparked similar preservation efforts for American Revolutionary sites. Individuals began recovering the history of the Continental infantryman by purchasing portions of Revolutionary battlefields. When the National Park Service came into existence, it organized the process of protection and interpretation of Revolutionary sites early in the 20th century. Today, the Service owns and administers such major landmarks as Saratoga, Yorktown, Ninety-Six, Cowpens,

Greene employed Morgan's tactical dispositions at Guilford Court House in February 1781. He fought and lost a bitter battle, but Cornwallis's losses compelled him to depart the Carolinas, starting him on the road to Yorktown. (Courtesy Army Art Collection, U.S. Army Center of Military History)

Guilford Court House, and the winter camp sites at Valley Forge and Morristown.

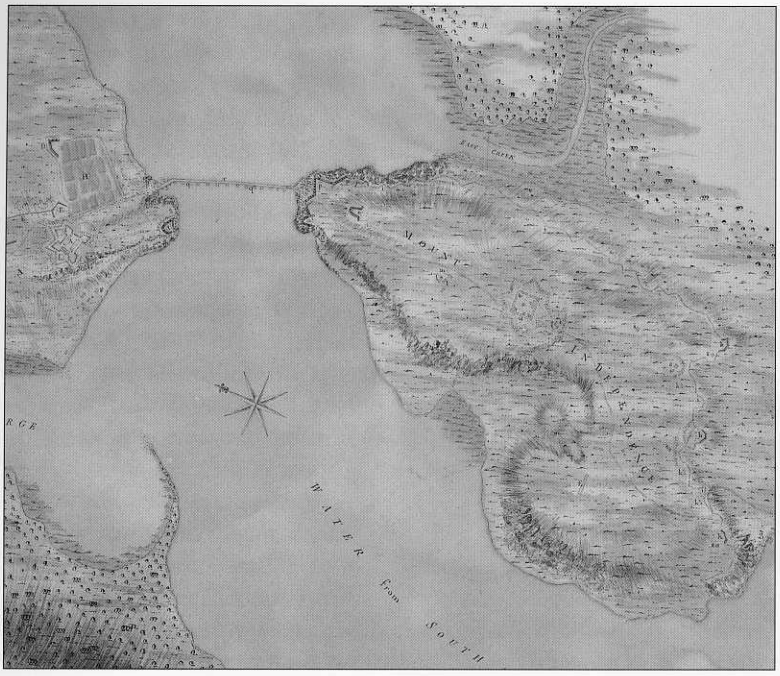
The Park Service has done valuable restorative and archaeological work. It reconstructed Fort Stanwix with great care for the materials and the carefully researched details needed to show this post as it appeared in 1777. The park staff at Guilford Court House have been replanting trees to return the site to its 1781 appearance.

Each major Revolutionary site includes a visitor center, and many have interpreters who dress in period costume and demonstrate the use of weapons and equipment. Most of the parks have artefacts recovered at the site or documented as having a connection to the site. All have websites providing valuable information concerning the site and how to reach it as detailed below. Several state and public authority park systems also preserve such sites as the Monmouth battlefield, the New Windsor Cantonment, Stony Point, and the remains of Fort Mercer.

Brandywine Battlefield:
http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/ppet/brandywinepark/page1
Bunker Hill: http://www.nps.gov/bost/
Cowpens National Historic Park: http://www.nps.gov/cowp/
Fort Stanwix National Monument: http://www.nps.gov/fost/
Fort Ticonderoga: http://www.fort-ticonderoga.org/
Morristown National Historic Park: http://www.nps.gov/morr/
Ninety-Six National Historic Park: http://www.nps.gov/nisi/
Saratoga National Historic Park: http://www.nps.gov/sara/
Stony Point Historic Park:
http://nysparks.state.ny.us/cgi-bin/cgiwrap/nysparks/historic
Valley Forge National Historic Park:
http://www.nps.gov/vafo/index.htm
Washington's Crossing State Park:
http://www.state.nj.us/travel/virtual/tendays/intro.html
Yorktown: http://www.nps.gov/colo/

Private preservation efforts have also made key contributions to the Continental heritage. The Pell family made a unique, long-term commitment to the restoration of Fort Ticonderoga. Preserved sites have helped to maintain and encourage the interest of successive generations in the Revolution.

The National Park Service, the Smithsonian Institution, and the United States Army have taken the lead in recovering and preserving the material culture of the Continental infantryman. Visitors to the



This contemporary map of the 1776 Ticonderoga defenses provides tangible evidence of the Continental infantryman's reliance on the shovel as well as the musket. The old French bastioned fort at the left is the only work not built by the Americans. The rest include batteries, barracks, redoubts, a floating bridge, earthworks and a separate fort on Mt Independence on the right. (Fort Ticonderoga)

Smithsonian in Washington, D.C., can see the American gundelo *Philadelphia*, sunk on Lake Champlain in 1776. The Smithsonian and West Point Museum collections include weapons and equipment.

Continuing efforts to expand our knowledge of the Continental soldier include the efforts of the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum to find and document Arnold's fleet. A team located another of Arnold's gunboats intact in 2001 where it sank in 1776. A volunteer team at Valley Forge recently unearthed a small trove of buttons and personal belongings.

Civic pageants, commencing in the 1820s, and antique firearms collectors laid the basis for re-enactment in the United States. The desire of a small group of Revolutionary War re-enactors to set themselves apart from more numerous Civil War re-enactors led to the founding of the Brigade of the American Revolution in 1962. The Brigade originally formed around a core of black powder enthusiasts employing Revolutionary War era weapons. The early involvement of professional historians in the Brigade produced a shift in interest to history and public service.

Today, the Brigade numbers approximately 3,200 members organized in more than 50 units. Continental infantries comprise the majority. The Brigade provides organizing services for 30 or more events annually. It operates training classes which include von Stueben's manual and weapons safety. Two additional umbrella organizations, the British Brigade and the Continental Line, serve re-enactor units. The British Brigade includes British, Loyalist, and German units. Total participation in Revolutionary War re-enactment now exceeds 6,000 in the United States. More information can be found at http://www.brigade.org/.

A good starting point for those desiring to learn more about the Continental infantryman is the U.S. Army's Military History Institute at Carlyle, Pennsylvania (see http://carlisle-www.army.mil/ usamhi/). The Institute makes available books and illustrations online. It has also developed excellent bibliographies of Revolutionary War material. The more serious student should contact the Library of Congress and the National Archives and Record Administration (NARA). Both are important points of departure for primary source research.

The Continental infantryman laid the cornerstone of the American military tradition. He learned his trade on the job, just as most of his officers did. Those who served with him proved a far more varied group of individuals than popular history chooses to remember. Like most American soldiers, he willingly gave up the profession of arms when his war ended.

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GLOSSARY

Battalion A unit of foot soldiers divided into companies; Continental infantry regiments comprised eight companies in 1776; they expanded to nine with the addition of a light company.

Bounty An inducement offered by the Congress and by individual states to attract recruits for service. The bounty comprised money or a grant of land or both. Owners enlisting slaves collected whatever bounty might result from the enlistment.

Commander-in-Chief's Guard A unit of 50 men created by Washington to guard himself and his baggage. Personnel recruited were "to be from five feet eight inches to five feet ten inches [173–8cm], handsomely and well made," and, "clean and spruce." Von Steuben temporarily expanded the Guard at Valley Forge to create a demonstration company for training.

Committees of Safety These were appointed in each state by the legislature to assure continuity of government when the legislature was not in session. The committees organized recruitment, procured weapons and supplies, collected assessments, and directed the militia.

Facing The lapels of the uniform coat.

Hanger Sword.

Partisan Corps Also referred to as legions; mixed formations of cavalry comprising three foot and three mounted companies; Congress authorized three such corps: Lee's, Pulaski's, and Armand's. The four Continental Light Dragoon regiments adopted legionary organization late in the war due to the expense of maintaining mounted formations.

Regiment A group of soldiers subdivided into two battalions; since most Continental regiments comprised one battalion, regiment and battalion were employed interchangeably; Continental infantry battalions averaged approximately 250 men, commanded by a colonel.

Ranger A soldier recruited primarily for frontier warfare and scouting. Congress raised only two ranger companies during the war. More ranger units appear among state troops.

Stand of Arms A musket, bayonet, and ramrod.

Tories The popular, and pejorative, name applied to the approximately one-third of the population in the colonies which supported the King. Britain's failure to effectively mobilize the Tories was a contributing factor to its loss of the war. Tories referred to themselves and the units which they formed as Loyalists.

Waiter Officer's servant.

COLOR PLATE COMMENTARY

A: PRIVATE FROM THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF'S GUARD, 1778, WITH EQUIPMENT AND WEAPONS

1. British Long Land Pattern Musket 2. Committee of Safety Musket 3. French Charleville M1763 Musket 4. Pennsylvania Rifle 5. Southern Rifle 6. Bayonet for the Long Land Pattern Musket 7. Bayonet for the Committee of Safety Musket 8. Bayonet for the Charleville M1763 Musket 9. American non-commissioned officer's sword 10. Tomahawk 11. Hunting knife 12. Detail of the flintlock: the workhorse of the musket 13. Leather Boot (to protect the gun).

Washington directed the creation of a Guard for his Headquarters in an order dated 11 March 1776. The initial platoon of 50 men expanded to 150 when von Steuben employed the Guard as a demonstration company in his training program. Available correspondence suggests that they wore the blue and buff coat with red vest and buff breeches. The leather helmets, captured while in transit for delivery to the 17th Light Dragoons, featured a blue turban rather than the red originally present. A white plume tipped in blue and fixed on the left side of the cap gave the Guard a distinctive appearance. They may have worn hunting shirts for fatigue duty to save their uniforms. Detachments of the Guard took part in skirmishes and larger actions. During June 1778, a detachment of the Guard with Morgan's riflemen captured 39 British grenadiers near Squaw Creek. They subsequently escaped pursuit by British light infantry. An observer noted that "the elegant Life

Massachusetts provided 2,000 uniforms, including buff breeches, to its ten regiments, commencing in April 1782. The Continental infantry achieved greater uniformity at the end of the war than at any time previously. (Alan H. Archambault, courtesy of the Company of Military Historians)

Guards had been splattered with mud as they dashed through the swamps and then Morgan indulged himself in a stentorian laugh that made the woodlands ring ...". The Guard again distinguished itself at Connecticut Farms on 7 June 1780 while fighting alongside New Jersey militia against a superior German force. Records of wounded personnel suggest that personnel from the Guard also participated in the seizure of Redoubt number 10 at Yorktown on 14 October 1781. The Life guard was furloughed on 6 June 1783, and temporary

detachments from the remaining infantry regiments fulfilled their role until Washington resigned his command on 23 December 1783.

B: VON STEUBEN DELIVERS INSTRUCTION AT THE MAIN ARMY CAMP AT VALLEY FORGE, MID-WINTER 1778

Von Steuben trained by example. He picked up a musket and showed the troops what he expected them to do. Equally important, he explained, through a translator, why he wanted them to do it. He simplified drill for movement and firing so that it could be easily taught and memorized. He formed a demonstration platoon in Washington's Life Guards. He relied on bilingual officers to translate his commands, but his colorful language soon won the admiration of his trainees.

George Washington had selected Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, as the Main Army's winter cantonment because it was close enough to Philadelphia to pose a threat to the city, but far enough away to prevent a quick surprise attack by its British occupiers.

Von Steuben told Washington that the Continentals appeared to be excellent raw material after his initial inspection. Washington's decision to entrust the training of the army to the former German captain proved correct.

Von Steuben constantly petitioned Washington for a field command, but his only opportunity proved frustrating. Sent to Virginia early in 1781, he assembled and trained 500 Virginians as a partial replacement for the Virginia Line lost at Charleston. While he prepared his command, Sir Henry Clinton unleashed a raiding force on Virginia under Benedict Arnold, and Cornwallis entered Virginia after a bruising battle with Nathaniel Greene at Guilford Court House.

Von Steuben had to maneuver partially trained infantry against Britain's foremost cavalry commanders, Banastre Tarleton and John Graves Simcoe. He managed to guide his command safely to a juncture with Lafayette's Light Infantry Division. Though deprived of a chance for glory in the field, von Steuben's training made the Continental infantryman equal to his opponents.

C: THE NIGHT ATTACK AT STONY POINT, 1779

Two American light infantrymen, lit by the flash of a cannon, break through the second line of abatis at Stony Point. Washington personally planned this large-scale raid which took place on the night of 19 August 1779. Anthony Wayne refined Washington's plan and led his 1200-man Brigade of Light Infantry in a night bayonet attack against a heavily fortified peninsula on the Hudson River.

Two assault columns approached, hugging the shoreline, while a third force demonstrated in front of the British center. Meticulous planning allowed the attackers to avoid more than 80 British troops in outposts, penetrate two lines of abatis, and seize the central redoubt. Their advance avoided the line of fire of 14 entrenched cannon. A forlorn hope, armed with axes, lead each column. The light infantrymen wore pieces of white paper in their hats so that they could distinguish each other in the dark. Wayne led one of the columns and received a wound. His men charged on nevertheless. Planning, speed, shock, and surprise assured victory.

Wayne desired a distinctive uniform for his Brigade, but Washington would not authorize one. The light infantry represented the elite of the continental infantry. Formed at the start of the campaign season, the corps drew its companies from every regiment in the Main Army. The two light infantrymen wear the uniforms of their parent regiment along with distinctive light infantry caps. Trained as an elite, the Brigade suffered less from the regional friction common elsewhere in the army.

D: NEW WINDSOR CANTONMENT: HUSBAND, WIFE, AND CHILD ATTEND TO ROUTINE DUTIES IN CAMP, SPRING 1782

Seven hundred camp followers accompanied the Continentals into their winter camp at New Windsor during winter 1781 through to spring 1782. Largely overlooked in military histories of the war, the women and children of the army followed the troops on campaign and shared their hunger, deprivation, and risks.

When the Continentals entered winter quarters, they constructed a small city of log cabins to a pattern. Von Steuben's manual standardized the layout of the camp and fixed the location of the enlisted men, officers, kitchens, and latrines. Each hut for 12 men had to be 14ft (4.3m) long by 16ft (4.9m) wide. Roofs might be finished in boards, straw, or crude shingles.

Twelve men occupied a single hut. Wooden bunks, elevated off the floor, lined the walls and pegs or racks held weapons, packs, and clothing. The fireplace served as the kitchen and heating system. Waiting for warmer weather before cutting the windows into the walls traded off warmth for stale air.

E: A STARK DEPICTION OF THREADBARE CONTINENTALS, NEAR STARVATION, PREPARING FOOD

Popular histories and school texts simply do not convey the deprivations experienced by the Continental Army. It remains impossible to understand how men would willingly accept such conditions month after month and still risk death on the battlefield. The mutiny of the Pennsylvania Line appears a polite response to unacceptable conditions.

Supplies did get through, sometimes in impressive amounts. General Heath helped to supply General Sullivan in his siege of Newport. Heath noted in his journal on one occasion, "Sent for Providence 43,000 flints, five tons hard bread, a quantity of dry fish." Hard bread, fried fish or, more frequently, boiled meat comprised battle rations. An order to muster troops would usually be accompanied by the directive to prepare one to three days' cooked rations.

Incompetence and inexperience acted in different ways to deny the Continentals food, equipment, and clothing. Failure to properly reconnoiter the route in advance caused Benedict Arnold's Canadian attack force to exceed the limits of privation on its march to Quebec. One thousand and fifty men began the March; 650 crossed the St Lawrence. The others had turned back or died along the way.

F: THE CHARGE OF THE DELAWARE–MARYLAND BATTALION AT COWPENS, JANUARY 1781

The battle at the Cowpens, 17 January 1781, gave the Americans a sorely needed victory and provided General Greene, Commander of the Southern Department, with a model for using Continental, state, and militia troops on the same battlefield. Greene had relieved General Horatio Gates

of command after the latter's defeat at the Battle of Camden (16 August 1780).

British and Loyalist forces proceeded to consolidate their hold in the Carolinas following Camden. They encountered their first setback when the militia of the back country destroyed a large Loyalist force at the battle of Kings Mountain (7 October 1780). The temporary setback imposed on the British by this defeat allowed Greene to reorganize the Southern Army and divide it between himself and Brigadier-General Daniel Morgan. Morgan took his force south to occupy British attention while Greene sought supplies and more reinforcements.

Morgan succeeded to the point of enticing Lieutenant-Colonel Banastre Tarleton to pursue him with his British Legion and a force of British regulars. Morgan made a calculated decision to turn on his pursuers at grazing land known as the Cowpens. He deployed militia and regulars in three lines. He ordered the militia to fire two volleys and retire behind the 237 Delaware–Maryland Continentals and 200 veteran Virginia militia in the third line. This line would hold its ground while Morgan reorganized the militia and, with his cavalry, hit Tarleton's flanks. Morgan counted on Tarleton's reputation for mounting crushing, headlong attacks, and Tarleton did not disappoint.

Tarleton arrived at the Cowpens on the morning of 17 January and immediately attacked. Encouraged by the withdrawal of the first two lines, the British Legion charged the third. Although the Continentals wavered momentarily while withdrawing to straighten their line, they turned to deliver a volley fired from the hip and charged home with the bayonet. The American cavalry struck from the flanks and the militia joined in. Morgan shattered Tarleton's command and achieved a complete victory. The reverses at Kings Mountain and the Cowpens caused Cornwallis to pursue Morgan and Greene, setting in motion a chain of events which ended at Yorktown in October 1781.

Cowpens stands out as a Continental victory largely because of the regulars' reliance upon the bayonet to win the battle. Many of the Virginian militia in the third line had prior Continental service and training. Morgan's insight into the best way to commingle different types of troops on the battlefield avoided the confusion present in such previous battles as Camden. Greene employed variations of the same placement of troops at the subsequent battles of Guilford Court House and Eutaw Springs.

G: AFTERMATH OF THE BATTLE AT TRENTON, CHRISTMAS DAY 1776

American troops commenced their withdrawal from Trenton shortly after the success of their Christmas morning attack. Only one of the three divisions, Washington's, made the perilous crossing of the Delaware the night before. The speed and shock of the morning attack had brought victory with a minimum of casualties. More importantly, the army had captured 1,000 muskets, six German battalion guns, 948 prisoners, wagons, and supplies.

The Continental infantry, some shoeless or with feet wrapped in rags, managed the approach march through a combination of snow, sleet, and freezing rain. The army had fled defeat in New York and retreated across New Jersey, shedding men and equipment. Washington did not halt until he could place the Delaware River between the British and himself. When the river began to freeze, he feared that his pursuers might resume the chase with a quick advance across the ice.

The plate depicts the withdrawal from Trenton under gray skies. Washington moved quickly lest British troops in nearby Princeton counterattacked and engaged his retreating force. He would return a few days later to attack Princeton and to compel a general British withdrawal from much of New Jersey. The Trenton and Princeton attacks helped convince Europeans that the Revolution would continue. The plate depicts the Americans wearing the remainder of uniforms issued during the preceding spring and summer, a typical problem for an army dogged by poor supply of essential equipment and resources. Few would have had overcoats or warm caps. Many looked forward to discharge from the service at the end of the year, while some had been persuaded to remain in the army by the heroic efforts of their officers.

H: CONTINENTAL INFANTRYMAN WITH EQUIPMENT AND CLOTHING, 1781

1. Water-proof cartridge box 2. Tin cartridge canister
3. Powder horn 4. Wooden canteen 5. Haversack
6. Knapsack 7. Former 8. Measure 9. Cartridge 10. Plate
11. Fork, knife, and spoon 12. Shot mold

The hunting shirt, also know as the rifle shirt, represented a simple adaptation of civilian frontier clothing to military use. Anyone with basic sewing skills could easily manufacture the shirt from linen, cotton, or calico. Simplicity of construction meant that American seamstresses could produce them and dye them in any color required, and different colors were used to distinguish particular regiments. Styles ranged from those that extended to the knee or to below the waist. Facing colors could be added by sewing material of the desired color on to the cuffs or collar. Some designs included an integral cape on the shoulder, for additional weather protection. The shirtsleeves and cape might also feature a fringe or it might be plain. The shirt served as the only uniform for some and as a fatigue uniform for others, and Washington made it known that he would have preferred to dress his army in the hunting shirt alone.

The infantry used laced or buckled shoes. Both would fit either foot. Riflemen from the frontier may have worn moccasins, but other soldiers made them when they had no shoes to wear. The shoeless would improvise shoes out of cowhide.

Regulations required infantry officers to turn out in regulation dress when the occasion demanded. Woe to the officer who forgot. "At the same Court, Lt. Webb of the 7th Virg Reg was tried for 'disobedience of orders, for going on duty in a hunting shirt after confessing he had a coat.'"

The most important items of an infantryman's equipment were those required for operation of his musket. Waterproof cartridge boxes assured a supply of ammunition. Those who could acquire a canister did so. The former, a wooden dowel, and the measure, made of wood or horn, allowed the manufacture of cartridges. Similarly, molds permitted the user to make ball and buckshot. These might be standard if an entire company or regiment carried the same musket, but rifle companies might need several to supply different caliber weapons.

The backpack, when available, held a blanket and clothing. The haversack carried food. Canteens of wood and tin came in many styles.

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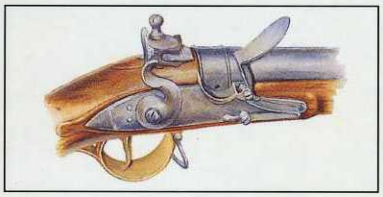

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