4-1-1961

The American revolutionary soldier, 1775-1781

Robert Edward Hanie

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THE AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIER

1775-1781

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of History
University of Richmond

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Robert Edward Hanle
May, 1961
PREFACE

The object of this paper is to present a survey of soldier life in the American Revolutionary Army. Although the study might be labeled "social history," the researcher believes that history is the product of all the kaleidoscopic events of the past, and that no phenomena exerts an influence of undue proportions.

History is alive. History provides the continuing link between the vast "eons" of the past and the remarkable shortness of the "present." Time cannot be divided into eons, eras, periods, and epochs, man's arbitrary divisions. History defies time, categorization, segmentation, and man's clumsy efforts to recapture the past or present. The historian or would-be-historian is the product of his time and reflects the world about him. These life-influences distort truth so that the history of the past can at the best contain only part of the truth.

Therefore, I have tried to find an answer to these questions: What really happened in the daily lives of the Revolutionary soldiers? What kind of men were they? What kind of life did they live?
What did they think? What really mattered to these men?

Chief relevance has been placed upon the letters, journals, diaries, and archives written contemporaneously with the events described, in the hope that a measure of truth might be eked from the shrouds of antiquity. The too often gilded reminiscences, memoirs, recollections, and narratives of the participants, have been disregarded. Memories fail, events grow, and truth diminishes in proportion to age. Yet it would be naive to say that this paper is completely true and unbiased, although truth and objectivity have been the goals, for I have crept into the pages and words. I have tried to keep "I" out and not prove any preconceived notion or formulate any postulates.

Some people talk about the "feel of history." I believe I have been exposed to the feel and "smell" of history. Dusty, dank, moulded, crumbling original orderbooks, letters, diaries, and journals left me with an unforgettable memory of the "smell of history" which connotes in my memory something of the mystique and allure of the truths that lurk on yel lowed pages.

Research continued over a period of seven months, October - April, 1960-1961, in which the resources of the printed and inscribed word of five libraries were utilized. The research started at the library of the University of Richmond which contains a small number of printed sources on the topic. The Virginia Historical Society Library was consulted next. The Society contains a rich treasure of American archives, especially various Revolutionary
orderbooks, letters of the soldiers, and muster rolls, as well as various family archives. The Virginia State Library contains another treasure for Revolutionary researchers -- a wealth of printed journals, diaries, and orderbooks. The manuscript collection of the Virginia State Library, pertaining to the common soldier, is small; yet, the vast number of available printed resources is adequate. The Library of Congress is like a mine with all the known minerals. A researcher can mine deeply into his topic here. The Library of Congress contains a wealth of manuscripts, journals, diaries, printed letters, and secondary sources. Emory University Library contains an adequate number of Revolutionary sources -- printed journals, diaries, letters, and secondary supporting sources. Altogether, there exists a staggering amount of material concerning this topic in these institutions, not to consider other various state libraries, private libraries, historical societies, and private collections not consulted in this thesis. When the bulk of the primary research was finished, secondary sources were investigated to check and correlate the now-gained ideas, beliefs, and postulates. Some controversies arose and more still exist. A researcher could well say that there is food for research and thought for ten theses, perhaps many more. A seven month study of a topic this vast merely opens the door and acquaints one with the time. After the primary and secondary research, the task of compiling and correlating the material in a presentable, and
Somewhat logical text was undertaken. The text begins with an investigation into the individual soldier and the question of his background and heritage. The second chapter deals with the knotty problem of organization in the Army. Arms and accoutrements are considered in the third chapter with a comment upon the dress of the soldier. What did the soldier eat is the question of the fourth segment; and where did he quarter, the object of the fifth chapter. At this point the researcher felt as if he had attempted too large a task, but he continued. The sixth chapter concerns discipline, and the subject of the seventh chapter is the diversions of the Revolutionary soldier. The eighth chapter investigates the sick and wounded, and confirms the revelation that ignorance produces fear. The ninth chapter concerns the chaplaincy -- those good and bad souls who cared for good and bad souls. In the tenth chapter Yankee Doodle speaks for himself and what a man he was. He left a legacy yet unrealized.

I have tried to piece together the story of Yankee Doodle, the American Revolutionary soldier. The result is like a patchwork quilt. I believe it has many colors, designs, and thought-provoking forms. The work is, perhaps, uneven in merit, and any errors or faults must be mine. I am personally fascinated by the subject. I would like to pursue it further.

Robert Edward Hanie
April 11, 1961
Decatur, Georgia
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III. ARMS AND ACCOUTREMENTS
   "The soldiers are positively forbid throwing Tomahaws at the apple Trees -- the offenders will be severely punished."

IV. FOOD
   "Their shall be issued a pound and a half flour and one pound of beef or salt pork and a certain quantity of spirits."

V. QUARTERS
   "Our Tent living is not yet pleasant. Many heavy Showers to day, and every Shower wets us . . ."

VI. DISCIPLINE
   "One Shankling, tried by a Regimental Court Martial, for Stealing a Tea Pot, found Guilty, and was Sentenced to receive 100 lashes on the bare Back . . ."

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CHAPTER I
WHAT MANNER OF MEN

The American Revolutionary soldier sprang from varied national and racial backgrounds. The "Continental" most commonly descended or immigrated from English, Scotch, and Irish predecessors and quite often from German, French, Dutch, Swedish national areas. "Yankee Doodle" was joined by French and Canadian national contingents and by German, Polish, French, and Russian adventurers, emigres, and soldiers of fortune. Although predominantly of the Anglo-Saxon Caucasian racial background, the American Indian and the African Negro served in the ranks of the Continental line. "Yankee Doodle", a nebulous term, well described this heterogeneous assemblage of humanity.

Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Irishmen represented all the colony-states. The Germans were represented, predominantly, by Pennsylvanias regiments with muster-rolls bearing the names of Foulk, Hindman, Hans, Hoofman, Hirkie, Jost, Kuntsman, Kuns, Kautsman, Phass, Cowfman, Kunsler, O'ttendorff, Strabine, Siders, Hess, Helsell, Dytch, Gyger, and Schmyster.2

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1 Revolutionary Muster Rolls (New York: The New York Historical Society, 1916), XXXVII and XXXVIII.

2 Ibid., XXXVIII, pp. 516-570.
The French were predominantly represented by South Carolina regiments with muster-rolls bearing the inscriptions of Richnev, St. Marie de Lavashe, Chaves, Garmond, Oliver, Scurry, Windsor, and Chancelay. The Dutch were represented predominantly by New York regiments with muster-rolls bearing the names of Broeck, Ryckman, VanDer Worker, Kronkhite, Van Dyke, Van Atter, Skein, Stagg, Rees, Burk, Tom Broeck, Van Ness, Hankee, Van Salisbury, Von Vorst, Von Netton, Von Denburgh, Warder, and Zeager. The Swedes were represented in the Delaware regiments. At least one Canadian regiment fought under the Continental flag, and French national contingents eventually numbered around 8,000, exclusive of sailors. Baron Von Steuben, a German volunteer of noble descent, Count Pulaski, a Polish emigre, Marquis de Lafayette, a French volunteer of nobility and heir of vast fortune, Baron De Rosenthal, a Russian soldier-of-fortune, and Tadeusz Kosciusko, a Polish adventurer, represented their nationalities as men in quest of freedom.

The American Indian served both as a regular soldier and a scout. At the siege of Boston in the summer of 1775 the American besiegers greeted the reading of the Declaration of Independence with "...three cheers, the firing of a cannon, and a war-whoop by the Indians."
Later in the siege, in August 1775, there was a skirmish in which

"...Our sentries [American] riflemen and Indians, killed and wounded
a number of the enemy today." 9 Frequent instances of Indians serving
in the ranks as regulars are found in the various Revolutionary muster-
rolls.10 [See enfolded Vermont muster-roll]. Ethan Allen in a graphic
letter encouraged the Indians of Canada to join the Americans:

I want to have your warriors come and see me and help
me fight the King's Regular Troops. You know they stand
all close together, rank and file, and my men fight so as
Indians do, and I want your warriors to join with me and
my warriors, like brothers, and ambush the Regulars: if
you will, I will give you money, blankets, tomahawks, knives,
paint, and any thing that there is in the army, just like
brothers; and I will go with you into the woods to scout;
and my men and your men will sleep together, and eat and
drink together, and fight Regulars, because they first
killed our brothers.11

Washington was formally empowered by Congress in 1778 to raise"...a
body of four hundred Indians,...Divesting them of their savage customs
exercised in their wars against each other, I think they may be made of
excellent use as Scouts and light Troops, mixed with our own parties."12

The African Negro, both the free and the slave, served as regulars
in the Continental line. The Negro in the service provoked a running
controversy throughout the war between the Congress, the Southern repre-
sentatives, and the generals. Alternately permitted and prohibited to

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9 Ibid., p. 19.

10 John F. Goodrich (editor), Vermont Revolutionary Rolls (Rutland:
The Tuttle Company, 1904), p. 647.

11 Peter Force (editor), American Archives (Washington: U. S. Govern-
ment, 1840), 4th Series, II, p. 714.

12 W. C. Ford (editor), Writings of George Washington (New York:
G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1889), VI, p. 420.
enlist in the army by acts of Congress, the Negro served continually throughout the war. The number of Negroes in service varied greatly at any one time. A muster-roll of Washington's Army entitled: "A Return of Negroes in Washington's Army, August 24, 1778", enumerated 586 Negroes reporting for duty.\textsuperscript{13} Baron Von Clausenberg, a German soldier-of-fortune serving in Washington's army at White Plains, New York, at approximately the same time in 1778, perhaps overestimated the number of Negroes in the Continental line at one-quarter of the total present.\textsuperscript{14} The African Negro served as a soldier, not as a servant; and he served well. Numerous instances of meritorious service of Negro soldiers on the field of battle are recorded in the dusty annals of the war.\textsuperscript{15}

The American Revolutionary soldier sprang from varied national and racial stock. The Anglo-Saxon played a great part in the winning of the victory — but his cohorts and comrades, who together with him, fought, and endured battles, marches, winter hardships, and extreme deprivations, as well as joyous victories, were a heterogeneous and variegated assemblage of nationalities and races. "Yankee Doodle" represented mankind in the quest of freedom.

To verbally sketch a composite Continental soldier and to say that he represents the average man who fought in the Continental line is somewhat absurd. The heterogeneous origin of the soldier has been referred

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\textsuperscript{15}Williams, op. cit., pp. 1-50.
The divergent physical description and occupational status of the soldier reveals more of his character. Finally, all these things contributed to his variegated individuality. A select sampling of 387 American Revolutionary soldiers representing regiments from Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York, and Virginia has been analyzed according to age, height, physical description, birthplace, and occupation. The results are not to be interpreted as a final summation, but rather as a good index. These 387 soldiers possessed an average age of 23.2 years with the youngest, 13 and the eldest, 56. A chronological distribution reveals the frequency rate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>29</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>51</td>
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<td>52</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>53</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>54</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>24</td>
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<td>40</td>
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<td>57</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>58</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the soldiers were of the age of young manhood -- from 16-25 with the majority at the age of 19 years. The average height of the 387 men examined, of which 251 entries included this information, was found to be 5 feet 6 inches. The men varied greatly in physical makeup as is evidenced by the enfolded examples of "Captain Samuel

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Paine's Muster Roll 1777 of Vermont troops and the "Size Roll of Capt. Nathaniel Welch's Company 2d Virga" troops [See enfolded muster rolls]. The place of nativity usually occurred near the place of mustering-in [See enfolded muster rolls].

The Revolutionary muster-rolls of the sampling from Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York, and Virginia revealed another facet to the character of the American Revolutionary soldier. The following vocations were inscribed upon the records:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Occurrence</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Occurrence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yeoman</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Saddler</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weaver</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cutler</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coppersmith</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barber</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freeman</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Butcher</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turner</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Planter</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chandler</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sailor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cordwainer</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Joiner</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborer</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Potter</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Blacksmith</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoemaker</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Millwright</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mason</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Schoolmaster</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooper</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Gunsmith</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuller</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Turner</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Stonemason</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the men examined were farmers whose hands tilled the rocky gumbotil of New England and the "planters" whose hands tilled the red clay and dank leaf mold of the South. The other more common occupa-

17 Goodrich, op. cit., p. 647.
18 Size Roll of Capt. Nathaniel Welch's Company 2d Virga. September 1, 1779 - December 5, 1780.
19 Revolutionary Muster Rolls, XXXVII, pp. 263-265; 301-303; 322-323; XXXVIII, pp. 392-395; 594-599; 601-618.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Payment</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isaac Osborn, Sergt</td>
<td>Litchfield</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Light Complexion Eyes &amp; Hair 5 feet 9 inches</td>
<td>five dollars</td>
<td>17th day of April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>medium</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Braughton</td>
<td>Lyme</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Light Complexion Eyes &amp; Hair 5 feet 9 inches</td>
<td>five dollars</td>
<td>20th day April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>thick set</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Stockbridge</td>
<td>Stockbridge</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Indian 6 feet Slim build</td>
<td>five dollars</td>
<td>20th day April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benjan Chase</td>
<td>Hanover</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>dark complexion Eyes and Hair 5 feet 6 inches</td>
<td>five dollars</td>
<td>17th day of April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>very slim</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eben Bliss</td>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Light Complexion 6 feet - large</td>
<td>five dollars</td>
<td>21st day of April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meech Closson</td>
<td>Hartford</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>light Complexion 6 feet - large</td>
<td>ten dollars</td>
<td>21st day of April</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 feet 7 inches</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Israel Moredock</td>
<td>Norwich</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Light Complexion 5 feet 7 inches</td>
<td>seven Dollars</td>
<td>22nd day of April</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Orduny</td>
<td>Hanover</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>dark complexion gray Hair Slim 5 feet 9 inches</td>
<td>ten Dollars</td>
<td>25th day of April</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elijah Hazmond</td>
<td>Hanover</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>light Complexion 5 feet 4 inches</td>
<td>five dollars</td>
<td>22nd day of April</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Brown</td>
<td>Hanover</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>very light Complexion 5 feet 4 inches</td>
<td>five dollars</td>
<td>28th day of April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeremiah Trescott</td>
<td>Royalton</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Light Complexion Eyes and hair 5 feet 9 inches</td>
<td>five dollars</td>
<td>28th day of April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>thick set</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silas Goodell, Corp</td>
<td>Lyme</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Light Complexion 5 feet 9 inches</td>
<td>ten Dollars</td>
<td>1st day of May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>thick set</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Tilden 1st Sergt</td>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>dark complexion 5 feet 10 inches well Built</td>
<td>ten Dollars</td>
<td>19th day of April</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Joel Tilden, Fifer</td>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>dark complexion 5 feet 7 inches high slim Built</td>
<td>five Dollars</td>
<td>18th day of April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Names</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Size Feet</td>
<td>Size Inches</td>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>State or County</td>
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<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Campbell</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7-1/2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Virga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Guthrie</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Diddake</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>do</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sud C. Fleming</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>do</td>
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<td>Ire Major</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>do</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark Hall</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>7-1/2</td>
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<td>do</td>
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<td>Francis Alfriend</td>
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<td>John Guthrie</td>
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<td>do</td>
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<tr>
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<td>21</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10-1/2</td>
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<td>Richard Bird</td>
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<td>10</td>
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tions listed were: laborer, carpenter, tailor, barber, and shoemaker. Two things are apparent here: the first, the Continental soldier bought a variety of needed skills into the army where they were employed in producing the sinews of war; the second, the Continental soldier most often worked with his hands. This breed of men is usually physically healthy, and mentally strong. This was the man who most readily endured the hardships of war; the man whose life was without enigma and considerably simple.

This plain man spoke and wrote in simple terms. From the reading of approximately 250 letters and over 50 diaries, journals, and order books the researcher found neither semantical nor syntactical difficulties. "Yankee Doodle" expressed himself simply and wrote with a minimum of verbage. The scribe laboriously ciphered to his people spelling a word as it sounded when spoken or heard. Often a word was misspelled in consecutive entries. One can imagine the patriot sitting before a fire with a scratching pen and paper ciphering a letter to his wife or brother speaking the words aloud and writing them in his epistle to the faithful who tried to decipher the flowering and flowing and embellished words. The penman fought a verbal battle and slaughtered the English language spelling the words as they sounded to him, and as he had heard them pronounced in his sphere. Their spelling gives a clue as to how the common patriot-soldier spoke.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{20}H. B. Dawson (editor), \textit{Diary of David Hoy} (Morisania: no printer, 1865); Elijah Fisher's Diary (Augusta: Hodger and Manley, 1880); Abra- ham Tomlinson, \textit{The Military Journals of Two Private Soldiers} (Fough- keepsea: no printer, 1855). See the contents of these three diaries for the typical spellings and mispellings of the day.
muse - news
kittles - kettles
anithing - anything
prity - pretty
hovl - whole
tagea - tedious
dyed - died
jine - join
hier - here
officer - officer
sholgers - soldiers
Gorja - Georgia
shipt - whipped
sifering - ciphering
seal - deal
lye - lie
git - get
stopf - stopped
fatages, fa teag, teag - fatigues
grum - grew
freakent - frequent
inocculated - immoculated
Rhode Island - Rhode Island
injen - Indian
collom - column
there - there
Lite Draghons - light dragoons
granadears - grenadiers
chirch - church
tryed - tried
minets - minutes
cloot - close
farst - first
robung - robbing
Jarseys - New Jersey
pitcht - pitched
exercisesing - exercising
cooking - cooking
barreks - barracks
sines - signs
envaleads - invalids
hospetel, hospetal - hospital
trouses - trousers
mayor - major
privieteuer, private Tear, privite-
testers, priviteeturs - privateer
bruxfast - breakfast
splet - split
cateridges - cartridges
uprore - uproar
a right smart - to express quantity
let fly - to about
seas - leafy vegetables
a nuff - enough
a Monday; a Tuesday, etc. - Monday
a gin - again
a croft - across
a cutereiments - accoutrements

The patriot spoke in monosyllable and duo syllable words using a few ad-
jectives, and usually prefixed any verb with "'a". "'Yankee Doodle'" was not "'simple" in mentality; but he was simple in scope, sphere of
life, and outlook. Life was basically simple in content and could be
described best by simple terms.

'Yankee Doodle' suffered few educational pangs, having been ex-
posed to only the rudiments of education. From examining the mass of
muster-rolls, it is clear that many could write; yet there was a con-
siderable number who mustered-in with two sweeps of a quill forming an
'X'. Whether the name-writing ability signifies further writing and
reading ability has not been ascertained. The common man had few educational opportunities; most often the officers, who usually came from the aristocracy or upper class, possessed more than the rudiments of an education. The aristocracy could afford to attend the private tutors or schools, and many of the officers possessed college degrees — many with B.A.'s and M.A.'s from Dartmouth, Harvard, and Yale.21

"Yankee Doodle" arose from heterogeneous national and racial origins, represented the young adult from 16-25 years old, represented a wide divergence of occupations involving manual labor, most commonly farming, was basically a plain man living a simple life with the rudiments of education who spoke and wrote in simple terms. From the above description one must surmise he was something of an individualist. The disciplinary records bear this out; the order books of companies and regiments, and brigades provide a continuing narrative of disciplinary failure. Yankee Doodle's background produced an irreconcilable void between a command and the fulfillment. He was not a sycophant, nor would he tolerate martinets. Inwardly and outwardly Yankee Doodle defied regimentation and authoritativenss. Basically, he fought the war against regimentation and authoritativenss symbolized by redcoats and Union Jacks. He fought for freedom and self-rule; and even in his own army, discipline, rubbed him against the grain. Yankee Doodle was something of an individualist.

We the Subscribers do hereby severally enlist ourselves in the Service of the United States of America in the Company under the Command of Captain John House, to continue in that Service three Years from the Date of our Entrance, unless sooner discharged, and each of us do engage to furnish to and carry with us into the Army a good effective Fire-arm, with a Bayonet fixed thereto, a Cartouch Box, Knapsack and Blanket, and do hereby promise Obedience to the Officers set over us, and to be subject in every Respect to all Rules and Regulations, that are or may be appointed for the Army of the aforesaid States.¹

Patriots repeated similar oaths throughout the 13 colonies, shoul-dered their "fire-locks", and marched away to war. The terms of enlistment in all the "colony-states" were similar to the above New Hampshire oath. Usually the affirmation contained three basic avowals: one, to serve for an appointed length of time -- days or years; two, to pro vide the necessary arms and accoutrements to wage warfare and; three, to obey the orders of their elected or appointed officers. In Albemarle County, Virginia, where Thomas Jefferson served as Colonel of the local militia, volunteers swore allegiance to the following oath in 1775:

We the subscribers volunteers in the Independent Companies for the county of Albemarle, do most solemnly bind ourselves, by the sacred ties of virtue, Honor and love to our Country, to be at all times ready to execute the command of the committee, in defence of the rights of America (unless incapacitated) agreeable to the underwritten resolves.

1st We resolve should we fail or fly back on being called into service to be held as unworthy the rights of freemen and a \[\sqrt{a}\] inimical to the cause of America.

2 That each man elected to the office of Captain, Lieutenant, Ensign, and refusing to accept the same oblige himself to pay 25 $ for the first 15 $ for the second, 10 $ for the latter to be disposed of by the Committee for the use of the company.

3 We oblige ourselves to obey the commands of the officers by ourselves elected from the Inlisted Volunteers, to Muster four times in the year or oftener if necessary. To provide gun, Shotpouch, powder horn and to appear on duty in a hunting shirt.\(^2\)

The above oath was typical of Revolutionary militia oaths and was marked by patriotic avowals of service to America, with struggling frowned upon with scorn, and refusal to serve in an elected post tantamount to disgrace. The county militia or minutemen mustered quarterly, or more often if called out, with the men providing the necessary armaments and electing their own junior officers. The senior officers were usually appointed by the governor of the respective state. This force-in-being formed the backbone of the newly inaugurated Continental Army and continued to provide troops throughout the war to the regular service. A more complete oath of enlistment was sworn to by Massachusetts volunteers:

We the subscribers do hereby severally inlist ourselves into the Service of the United American Colonies, until the first Day of January next, if the Service should require it; and each of us do engage to furnish and carry with us into the Service aforesaid, a good effective Fire arm and Blanket;

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\(^2\)Dr. George Gilmer, Diary and Revolutionary Memoranda (unpublished MSS., Virginia Historical Society).
(also, a good Bayonet, Cartridge Pouch, and a Hatchet, or Tomahawk, or Cutting-Sword, if possible;) and we severally consent to be formed by such Person or Persons as the General Court shall appoint, into a Company of Ninety Men, including one Captain, two Lieutenants, one Ensign, four Sergeants, four Corporals, one Drum, and one Fife, to be elected by the Company and commissioned by the Council, and when formed, we engage to March into Canada, with the utmost Expedition, and to be under such Field Officers as the General Court have appointed, or shall appoint; and we further agree, during the Time aforesaid, to be subject to such Generals, or superior Officers, as are or shall be appointed; and to be under such Regulations in every Respect, as are provided for the Army aforesaid. Dated the _____ of _____ A.D. 1776.3

Not only did the Massachusetts volunteers agree to serve for an agreed length of time, to provide arms and accoutrements, including a "tomahawk" or "cutting sword," to obey their elected officers; but they also agreed to serve in a specific campaign in the service of the "United American Colonies" under field officers appointed by the general court of Massachusetts.

At the eruption of the Revolutionary armed conflict -- the visible manifestation of a shrouded traumatic conflict which began at the inception of America -- the militia and regular units were flooded with volunteers eager to send the "lobsters" back home to Britain. As the war dragged out from one year, to two, to three, and finally to six years of arduous warfare, volunteer recruits became "exceedingly rare." Bounties, patriotic handbills, and enlistment campaigns were common methods of raising the county or state quota handed down by the Continental Congress. Other inducements included uniforms, land grants,

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and a bonus to be received at the advent of victory. Regardless of these gilt-encrusted snare, enlistment remained almost non-existent as the war continued. Finally the Congress resorted to drafts on a large scale to raise the necessary manpower; and at least one muster-roll contained an entry followed by the epithet: enlisted "by sentence."

Bounties ranged from 5 dollars\(^4\), early in the war, to 1500 dollars\(^5\), due to the galloping inflation, near the end of the war. Usually the bounty ranged around 25 dollars. In Massachusetts in December of 1776 the House of Representatives issued the following enlistment broadside:

That Twenty Dollars be given as a Bounty to each Non-Commissioned Officer and Private Soldier who shall Enlist to serve for the Term of Three Years.

That each Non-Commissioned Officer and private Soldier shall annually receive a Suit of Cloaths; to consist for the present Year, of Two Linen Hunting Shirts, Two Pair of Overalls, a Leathern or Woolen Waistcoat with Sleeves, One Pair of Breeches, a Hat or Leather Cap, Two Shirts, Two Pair of Hose, and Two Pair of Shoes, amounting in the whole to the Value of Twenty Dollars, or that Sum to be paid to each Soldier who shall procure those Articles for himself, and produces a Certificate thereof from the Captain of the Company to which he belongs, to the Pay-Master of the Regiment.

That each Non-Commissioned Officer and private soldier who shall Enlist and engage to continue in the Service to the Close of the War, or until discharged by Congress, shall receive in Addition to the above Encouragement, ONE HUNDRED ACRES OF LAND, and if any are Slain by the Enemy, the Representatives of such Soldiers shall be intitled to the aforesaid Hundred Acres of Land.

The above Massachusetts enlistment broadside added one final lure:

\(^4\) Goodrich, op. cit., p. 647.

\(^5\) Bolton, op. cit., p. 61.
That each Non-Commissioned Officer and private Soldier who shall enlist into the Continental Army, either during the War, or for the Term of Three Years as Part of the Quota of Men assigned this State, the sum of Twenty Pounds on his passing Muster, the said Twenty Pounds to be paid in Treasurer's Notes of Ten Pounds each, payable to the Possessor in Four Years, with Interest to be paid annually, at the rate of Six per Cent. 6

Quite often officers were detached from duty 'at the front' and dispatched home to recruit and convalesce, usually more convalescing was done than recruiting. 7 As the lure of money, land, and glory proved ineffectual, the draft provided an expedient method of raising recruits. Congress issued periodic state quotas which were '... required forthwith to fill up by drafts from their militia or in any other way that shall be effectual their respective battalions of Continental troops ...' 8 On the state level Joseph Jones, Continental Congressman from Virginia, wrote from Williamsburg on January 27, 1778, to George Washington, hard pressed for men during the winter sojourn at Valley Forge: 'Two thousand men [from Virginia] are ordered to be drafted to fill up our battalions, and five thousand volunteers raised to join you, and serve for six months; ...' 9 Upon the muster-rods of Lieutenant Alexander Ewing's Company of the 10th Regiment of

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6 Ibid., p. 66.
7 The Keith of Woodburn Papers (Unpublished MSS., Virginia Historical Society).
the Virginia line can be found the name of Randolph West of Isle of Wight County, Virginia, who was enlisted for 8 months "by sentence," perhaps providing the extreme solution to the problem of raising recruits.

Substitutions were purchased by those seeking to avoid or evade service as regular soldiers. In Powhatan County, Virginia, 104 men agreed to the following proposal:

We the subscribers do hereby oblige ourselves to pay on demand, to the commander of the militia of the county of Powhatan the several sums of money set against our names respectively, to be by him equally distributed amongst such able bodied men as will engage to serve in one of the Virginia regiments on Continental establishment, for one year, in order to prevent a draught of the militia for completing the 2d regiment provided that not more than 200 dollars besides the public bounty, be paid to any one person so enlisting . . .

The enlistments varied as to length of time and nature of enlistment. A recruit was formally inducted into a militia or regular unit. Length of service varied greatly throughout the war. Generally the length of enlistment was shorter at the inception of the war; enlistments lengthened in proportion to the length of the war with terms stretching out to 2 and 3 years and "for the duration of the conflict" as the war became protracted:

a. Captain Benjamin Ballad's Company of the Massachusetts Continental Regiments enlisted for 99 days in August of 1775.

b. Captain Cornelius T. Jansen's Company of the 3rd Regiment of

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10Revolutionary Muster Rolls, op. cit., XXXVIII, p. 611.
11Subscription from Powhatan County to Pay Soldiers (unprinted MS., Virginia Historical Society)
12Revolutionary Muster Rolls, op. cit., XXXVII, p. 163.
New York line enlisted for 3 years or "during war" on January, 1779.  

C. Captain Nathan Reid's Company of the Virginia line was enlisted on December 7, 1780; for either the war, if the enlistee volunteered, or for 1 year and 6 months; if the enlistee was drafted.

When terms of enlistments ran out, the "summer soldier and sunshine patriot" lost no time in advancing to the rear, often in the face of battle. When in dire need of manpower, sometimes facing imminent battle, the command resorted to appealing to the patriotism of the patriot, the pocketbook of the materialist, and to the dry tongue of the inebriate in order to secure reenlistments or extensions of duty.

In the Afternoon our brigade was sent for into the field where we Paraded Before the General who was present with all the field Officers and after making many fair promises to them he Begged them to tareye one month Longer in the Service and Almost Every man Consented to stay Longer who Received 10 Doles Bounty as soon as Signd their names then the Genll with the soldiers gave three Huzzas and was with slaping of hands for Joy amongst the Specttators and as soon as that was over the Genell ordred us to heave a gill of Run pr man and set out to trenton to acquaint Genll Washington with his Good success as he lermed it to Meak his heart Glad Once More we was Dismissd to Goe to our Quarters with great Applause the inhabitants and others saying we had Done honour to our Country. . .

The new recruit, called the "long-faced people" by Private

\[13^{\text{bid.}, \text{XXXVIII}, \text{p. 441.}}\]
\[14^{\text{bid.}, \text{p. 613.}}\]
\[15^{\text{Louise Rau (editor), "Sergeant John Smith's Diary of 1776" \text{The Mississippi Valley Historical Review Vol XX, No 2, (September, 1953)}, \text{pp. 267-270.}}\]
\[16^{\text{Elijah Fisher's Diary, pp. 5-29.}}\]
Elijah Fisher, was not subjected to any formal training in the school of warfare other than that boundless wealth of education -- the first battle. The novitiates training was confined to dilatory marching across the "grand parade," the local drill field, most often a pasture or courthouse square; and in some isolated instances he practiced musketry. While most of the recruits knew the ways of a musket and the feel of a tomahawk, they were alien to the movements of masses of men in orderly columns and to disciplined firing and reloading the musket by the manual of arms. Washington recognized the weakness and deficiency inherent in the untrained, raw recruits, and the resulting handicaps when such men were committed into battle. Washington wrote to Brigadier General McDougall in 1778:

"I have it in contemplation very soon to digest and establish a regular system of discipline, manoeuvres, evolutions, and regulations for guards, to be observed throughout the army. In the mean time, I should be glad if you would introduce uniformity among those under your command; and I would recommend to you to be particularly attentive to having them instructed in the proper use of their feet, so as to enable them to perform the necessary movements in marching and forming, with ease, order, agility, and expedition." "Good consequences would undoubtedly result from accustoming the men to the noise of firing, and to the habit of taking aim at an object." 18

Probably the nearest thing to training was Baron Von Steuben's attempts at Valley Forge during the winter of 1777-1778. Valley Forge was the crucible in which the American Army was subjected to intense trial. The patriots emerged as a different army. Baron Von Steuben did not transform the army; the army felt his influence; no one could escape

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18 Ford, Writings of George Washington, p. 378.
his German vocabulary, interspersed with colorful Anglo-Saxon terms which went well with the backwoodsmen.

There was no formal training for officers. Commissioned men above the company rank usually came from the upper class of society and were generally appointed rather than elected. Coming from the upper class did not in itself indicate leadership ability, it usually did indicate the ability to read and write. Early in the conflict Virginia gentlemen and prospective officers, were labeled "Gentlemen Cadets", and were admonished" . . . to attend the parade constantly . . ." in order to gain as much knowledge as possible of drill and discipline.

The basic organizational unit of the Continental Army to the men who fought in the ranks was the company -- raised and recruited from the counties and militia districts of the "colony-states." The company varied greatly as to number of men and officers:

a. Captain John Trotter's Company of the 5th Massachusetts Regiment upon the muster-roll of March, 1783, was comprised of 51 privates of the rank and file, a captain, a lieutenant, an ensign, 5 sergeants, 4 corporals, a drummer, and a fifesman.20

b. Captain Thaddeus Weed's Company of the 5th Connecticut Regiment upon the muster-roll of October, 1779, was comprised of 31 privates


20 Revolutionary Muster Rolls, XXXVII, p. 235.
of the rank and file, a captain, a lieutenant, 3 sergeants, 2 corporals, 1 drummer, and 1 fifesman.21

c. The First Company of the First Battalion of Maryland Troops of the Southern Army upon the muster-roll of October, 1780, was comprised of 87 privates of the rank and file, a captain, a lieutenant, an ensign, 9 sergeants, 5 corporals, 7 drummers, and 2 fifers.22

d. Captain Abraham Smith's company of the 6th Pennsylvania Battalion upon the muster-roll of November, 1776, was comprised of 77 privates of the rank and file, a captain, 2 first lieutenants, 2 second lieutenants, 2 ensigns, 5 sergeants, 7 corporals, a drummer, and a fifer.23

e. Captain Thomas Dunbar's Company of the 2nd Regiment of South Carolina line on the pay-roll of August 1st-November 1st, 1779 was comprised of 48 privates of the rank and file, a captain, 2 first lieutenants, 2 second lieutenants, a sergeant, major, a quartermaster sergeant, 3 sergeants, 3 corporals, a drummer, and a fifer.24

In the above sampling of five companies chosen at random, the number of privates vary from 31 - 87; each company contains a captain, from 1 - 2 first lieutenants, 0 - 2 second lieutenants, from 0 - 2 ensigns, from 3 - 9 sergeants, and from 1 - 2 fifers. The company was the basic organizational unit to the men; and therefrom they drew their unity, strength, and camaraderie, often being neighbors back home. The company

21 Ibid., p. 75.
22 Ibid., p. 234.
23 Ibid., XXXVIII, p. 538.
24 Ibid., p. 580.
officers were elected from the rank and file by the men. This gave the company a strictly sectionalistic flavor, and often this neighborliness and spirit of camaraderie contributed a weakening effect upon military discipline. Officially, fraternizing between officers and men was forbidden; and offenders were punished. Positively speaking, the sectionalistic flavor gave the units a spirit of regional pride; and those individuals, who fell short of the mark of his fellows around the campfire and upon the battlefield, had first-hand witnesses to spread glory or infamy upon his name to the folks back home. Both factors contributed in part to a company clan which made some regional companies and regiments outstanding fighting units such as the Green Mountain Boys of New Hampshire and Hellsell’s Maryland troops. This clan produced a certain amount of rivalry between state troops. Lieutenant George Johnson wrote to Colonel Leven Powell of Loudoun County, Virginia, that: "There is the greatest emulation between the N. Englnd and Virginia troops. Indeed they perform amazingly but we keep ahead." 25

The regiment was the basic organizational unit to the generals. The size of regiments, in number of companies and men, varied greatly, as indicated in the following examples:

a. Colonel James Livingston’s 1st Canadian Regiment of Continental forces was comprised of 5 companies upon the muster-roll of April, 1780. 26

b. Colonel Edmund Phinney’s Battalion [also called the 18th Regiment of Massachusetts Continental Infantry] was comprised of 8 com-


26 Revolutionary Muster Rolls, XXXVII, pp. 44-45.
panies upon the muster-roll of December, 1776.27

c. Colonel Rufus Putnam's 5th Massachusetts Regiment was com-
prised of 9 companies upon the muster-roll of December, 1782.28

d. The 1st Regiment of the New Jersey line was comprised of 9
companies upon the muster-roll of April, 1783.29

e. Colonel Philip Cortlandt's 2nd Regiment of New York Line was
comprised of 5 companies upon the muster-roll of September, 1780.30

The number of companies in a regiment varied from 5 to 9. The
number of men per company has already been seen to vary greatly; there-
fore, the regimental strength varied in proportion. The continental
regiments were usually composed of companies from the same state; i.e.,
the 18th Regiment of Massachusetts Continental Infantry was composed
of 8 companies of Massachusetts troops.31 The regiment was the funda-
mental organizational unit in the Revolutionary army. There was no
military unit larger than a regiment in the American army at the siege
of Yorktown.32 The basic unit of the regiment, the company, had al-
ready demonstrated to be somewhat sectionalistic and self-sufficient,
comprised the regiments, themselves fiercely sectionalistic and somewhat

27Ibid., pp. 178-179.
28Ibid., pp. 232-233.
29Ibid., XXXVIII, pp. 323-324.
30Ibid., p. 425.
31Ibid., XXXVII, pp. 179-182.
32Gaspard De Gallatin, Journal of the Siege of Yorktown (Washington:
self-sufficient, containing each within itself many of the prerequisites for waging war. The regiment can be divided into two distinct entities: officers, and the rank and file. The rank and file have been discussed previously. The officers were classified as regimental officers, company officers, field officers, and staff officers. The regimental commander was a colonel or lieutenant colonel usually appointed by the governor of his native state, from the upper class, not a trained soldier, but often a man of magnanimity, personal wealth, and political stature. The company officers were usually elected from the ranks bearing the rank of captain and represented the men as a leader among equals, which had positive and negative effects already referred to. The field officers were elected from the ranks and commanded the elements of the company bearing the rank of 1st lieutenant, 2nd lieutenant, and ensign. The regimental command, the company officers, and the field officers commanded the men in camp and battle. The staff officers provided the auxiliary but necessary services of the surgeon, the chaplaincy, the adjutancy, the quartermaster's department, and the band conductor. Some regiments also list a cornet and a rough rider. The functions of the surgeon, the chaplaincy, and the quartermaster's department will be considered in detail in subsequent chapters.

The adjutant performed the duties of liaison between the regimental

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35 Gilmer, op. cit., Diary and Revolutionary Memoranda.
command, the company officers, field officers, and the rank and file. The place of the adjutant in camp or battle was at the side of the command broadcasting the orders. The conductor served in a communications position. Drummers and fifers marched in each company. They did not play reels and polkas and rounds for the aesthetic pleasure of the men gathered under the moonlight around glowing campfires. The drum's roll and the fife's piercing note provided martial music for marching and related the verbal commands to the masses of the rank and file through the thunder of cannon, the cracking of muskets, the yelling of the living, and the quietness of the dead upon the battlefield where verbal perception was negated. The commands were related by drum which rolled the commands of flank movements, column movements, control of musketry and bayonets, to regulate the pace of march, to proclaim reveille, to call the men to battle, and retreat. The Order Book of Colonel Samuel Elbert's Georgia troops includes the following drum rolls:

Face to the right - one single stroke and flam;
To the left - two single strokes and flam;
To the Right about face - three single strokes and flam;
To the Left about - four single strokes and flam;
Wheel to the Right - Roll, one single stroke and flam;
Wheel to the Right - Roll, one single stroke and flam;
Wheel to the Left - ditto, two single strokes and flam.
Wheel to the Right about - Roll, three single strokes and flam.
Wheel to the Left about - Roll, four single strokes and flam.
Front - Strong double flam.
Make ready - Preparative
To cease firing - the General
Slow march - a March
Quarter pace - Quick march.
To Charge Bayonettes - Point of War
To form Battalion - To arms
To Ease arms - Ton-ron-don
To Secure arms - first part of Tat-too
To shoulder - last part of Tat-too
To call the Adjutant - first part of the Troop.
To call the Sergeant and Corporal of each company - three Rolls and six flams.
Assemble the pioneers - pioneers march.
Assemble pioneers and fifers - drummers.36

The cornet seems to be the Revolutionary descendent of the medieval color bearer. The cornet had the highly honored and highly dangerous position of bearing the regimental colors on the march, parade, and through skirmish and battle. The colors not only identified the company or regiment but served the more utilitarian function of providing a rallying place during the din and confusion of battle. The soldiers were usually widely separated from their units during an attack or retreat soon yielding a disorganized rabble; when the battle lulled the drums rolled "To Arms!" and the men sought out and fell in the ranks on his company or regimental flag showing above the battle smoke. There were usually several couriers or rough-riders. The rough-rider was attached to the regimental command and disseminated the verbal and written commands of the regimental command to the company and the field officers.

Something of the relative status of officers and men is provided by the following revolutionary pay scale of the 1st New Hampshire Regiment:37

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Command</th>
<th>Lieutenant Colonel, commandant at $75.00 per month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Majors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company officers</td>
<td>Captains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Field officers  Lieutenants  $26.2/3 per month  
Ensigns  20.00  

Staff  
Surgeon  65.00  
Surgeon's mate  45.00  
Pay Master  30.00  

Rank and file  
Sergeant Major or Q.M. Sergeant  10.00  
Drum major or fife major  9.00  
Sergeants  10.00  
Corporals  7.1/3  
Drummers and fifers  7.1/3  
Privates  6.2/3  

A similar pay scale of a Virginia cavalry regiment under the command of Colonel Thomas M. Bland lists additional officers complementing the above listings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commanding</th>
<th>Major, commanding</th>
<th>Shillings</th>
<th>Pence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Company officers</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field officers</td>
<td>Lieutenant</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Cornet</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chaplain</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Surgeon</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adjutant</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rough-Rider</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank and file</td>
<td>Drummer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corporal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rank and file</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus the regiment seems to be the basic command unit of the American Revolutionary army. Indeed, Washington's army rarely contained a military unit larger than a regiment. The regiment was therefore seen to be comprised of various sectionalistic and self-sufficient components evolving a somewhat independent unit containing many of the vital prerequisites for waging warfare within itself.

Military organization above the regiment was somewhat nebulous. Several regiments comprised a brigade or battalion [sometimes used interchangeably during the Revolutionary War]. The number of regiments comprising a brigade or battalion varied, as shown by the following examples:


b. The "General Orders of the Fourth New York Regiment on August 1, 1780", listed several brigades comprised of eight companies.40

Thus the battalion or brigade usually varied in size from 2 to 3 regiments of a quite varied number of men. The brigade or battalion was designed to be commanded by a brigadier general usually appointed by Congress. In time of battle the various regiments or brigades or battalions were divided into left and right divisions or wings as they were interchangeably called. The nomenclature of "divisions" and "wings" was attached to the various segments of the army only in the time of battle. The left and right wings were commanded by a major-general appointed by Congress.41 Usually, a series of lieutenant-generals jointly commanded the two divisions or wings, and a third line or reserve. A lieutenant general, appointed and designated by Congress

39Revolutionary Muster Rolls, XXXVIII, p. 513.


41Ibid. p. 432, p. 867.
commanded the army. The various organization units of the American Revolutionary army could perhaps be summarized thus (based upon Washington's proposed army reorganization of January 28, 1778): 43

Yankee Doodle-- a heterogeneous, diverse, and individual man.

The Company-- commanded by a captain, was comprised of 30 to 90 Yankee Doodles.

The Regiment-- commanded by a colonel, was comprised of 3 to 9 companies.

The Brigade or Battalion-- commanded by a brigadier general or major general, was comprised of 2 - 3 regiments.

The Division or Wing-- commanded by a lieutenant general, was comprised of approximately 1/3 the total available forces; 1/3 for the left, 1/3 for the right, and 1/3 in a reserve or a third line.

The Army-- commanded by a lieutenant general, was comprised of 3 divisions or wings.

Auxiliary units, exclusive of the regular infantry or the "line," the cavalry or the "light dragoons" and the artillery, were the "Light Corps" or Corps de Elite, Washington's Life Guard, the riflemen, and the sappers. The Light Corps, organized in August, 1777, by Washington's order, was composed of 108 men and 9 officers. Light Companies were to be organized in each battalion "to be of the best men, the most hearty and active marksmen, commanded by good partisan officers." 44 The corps de elite was marked by fierce pride and esprit de corps with each man wearing black and red feathers stuck in his hat as the badge of distinction. Marquis de Lafayette writes of the light corps: "the . . . light

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\[43\] Ibid. pp. 300-351.

infantry, that is to say the picked corps of the American Army ... are formed at the beginning of the campaign. This troop ... were better clothed than the rest of the army: the uniforms both of the officers and soldiers were smart and military, and each soldier wore a helmet made of hard leather with a crest of horsehair.45 These corps de elite were assigned the post of honor, the right front of the line, at Yorktown and were chosen to make the central assault upon the British lines attacking successfully with unloaded muskets and fixed bayonets. Their conduct at Yorktown and at Stony Point, New York, was marked by unusual valour in cold steel attacks with the bayonet.46

The commanding general was protected by a life guard. On March 19, 1778, Elijah Fisher, a private soldier in Washington's Army, ciphered: "There was orders that there should be three Men sent from each Reg't to jine his Excelences Gen. Washington's life gard...47 He added on March 3, 1778: "I jined the Life guard and like being there much better than being in the Ridgetment..."48

There was an engineering and topographical corps. Its organization and scale was small: "Officers who are desirous of Taking Commissions in the Company of Sappers under the command of Brigadier Gen'l Portait and possessed with the Necessary qualifications Such as

46 Ibid., p. 456.
48 Ibid., p. 7.
the knowledge of practical geometry and drawing will give in their
Names at the Adj. Genl's office.''

Daniel Morgan's corps of riflemen, exclusive of common foot soldiers, bearing a musket, was organized in June, 1777, from picked men and equipped with "Kentucky rifles;" a long slender 50 caliber weapon in which the ball had to be forced down the barrel, tightly filling the rifling thereby enabling the missile to travel over extreme distances accurately. The regiment served as light troops placed in a position upon the battlefield where marksmanship could count effectively. The rifle regiments met both harsh criticism and lavish praise.

Divergence describes the organization of the Continental Army -- diversely organized due to expedient circumstances. Organization and discipline, two prerequisites for an efficient and successful army, were lacking in the Continental forces. Yankee Doodle camped, marched, and fought as an individual trifled by discipline and organization, never yoked to their regimenting effects.


CHAPTER III

ARMS AND ACCOUTREMENTS.

"The soldiers are positively forbid throwing Tomahaws at the apple Trees --the offenders will be severely punished."

This order was issued at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, on June 15, 1778, after the Continental troops had severely damaged a nearby apple orchard practicing with their tomahawks. "Tomahaws", useful in camp and battle, were considered standard equipment by the frontier-soldier who learned the value and effect of the weapon from the Indian. George Rogers Clark in command of the American forces besieging Fort Vincennes wrote how his men reacted upon discovering an Indian war party returning with American scalps to the American besieged British fort: "... my people were so enraged they immediately intercepted the party which consisted of 8 Indians and a french man... they [Clark's troops] killed three on the spot and brought 4 in who were tomahawked in the street opposite the Fort Gate and thrown in the river--".

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The "firelock" or musket, a knife, and bayonet comprised the other essential weapons of the American Revolutionary soldier. There was not a "standard" musket in service in the Continental army. When the militia or regulars were mustered in, they were expected to provide their own weapons. On July 18, 1775, the Continental Congress recommended the following equipment for the militia of the various colonies:

That each soldier be furnished with a good musket, that will carry an ounce ball, with a bayonet, steel ram-rod, worm, priming wire and brush fitted thereto, a cutting sword or tomahawk, a cartridge box, that will contain 23 rounds of cartridges, twelve flints and a knapsack.3

The more common firelocks or muskets were:

a. "The Brown Bess" was so called because the weapon tended to corrode excessively presenting a dull brown appearance. The Brown Bess ranged from 36-1/2 to 42 inches in barrel length with a 3/4 inch or 75 caliber bore, a heavy stock and butt-plate, and a lock stamped with the British crown and tower. The Brown Bess was probably the most popular musket on either side during the war.4

b. "The Committee of Safety Flintlock" was produced under contract with the Continental Government by over 200 gunsmiths in America. These muskets varied greatly as to length and bore. One good example of the Committee of Safety Flintlock was produced at Williamsburg, Virginia, in 1778 and issued to the 20th Virginia Line. The "CP" Continental Property flintlock, as it was sometimes marked, ranged around 58 inches long, with a 42 inch barrel, and was designed to be fitted


with a 12 inch British spade bayonet giving the weapon an overall length of circa 5 feet, 10 inches. Generally, these muskets ranged from 72 to 80 calibers, or around 3/4 inch smooth bore and weighed around 10 pounds. The "CP's" were manufactured principally in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.5

c. "The French, 1763, Charleville Flintlock" produced at the Charleville arsenal in France, was purchased by the Continental government throughout the Revolutionary war, and served as the model for subsequent military firearms produced in the United States. The Charleville ranged from 39 1/2 to 57 1/2 inches overall length with 25 to 41 inch barrels, a 5/8 inch bore, a heavy stock and butt plate, two brass bands, and a lock stamped "Charleville," or "Muse. Imp. de Versailles." The Charleville shot a ball weighing 1/15 of a pound and could bear a bayonet.6

d. "The Kentucky Rifle" was first produced by German and Swiss gunsmiths in Pennsylvania around 1725. Extremely popular with the pioneers, the "Kentuck" was the most accurate weapon of its day. The "Kentuck" ranged up to 61 inches overall length with barrels around 43 to 45 inches long and with a 3/8 to 1/2 inch bore. The weapon was very heavy with the long octagonal rifled-barrel which yielded accurate aimed shots. The "Kentuck" contained no bands, swivels, nor stings, could not bear a bayonet; and presented a sleek profile. "She" spoke


eloquently and over a long distance.7

Less commonly used were these firearms:

c. The "Blunderbuss" was issued to several companies of Washington's troops. The Blunderbuss generally ranged around 30 inches overall length with barrels from 13 - 16 inches long. The bore ranged from 1-3/8 to 1-3/4 inches across the bell mouthed muzzle designed to scatter the shot and was designed for close range "scatter gun" firing. "He" spoke a mouthful of shots, balls, and assorted metals.
The Blunderbuss was usually equipped with a spring-type bayonet around 13 to 14 inches long which folded over or under the "big mouth."8

d. "The Flintlock Rifled Wall Gun" was a considerable rarity during the Revolutionary War weighing around 50 pounds. The "Wall Gun" was designed to be fired from a rest over an extremely long distance. This weapon was originally produced in Switzerland; an example possessed a 50-1/2 inch octagonal barrel, a 1-1/8 inch bore or 150 caliber, with the total length of 3 feet and 6 inches.9

c. A variety of weapons the men brought with them to battle, but were less commonly used: The British Tower Flintlock Musket, the English Fowling Piece, 1775, the Double Barrel Flintlock Sporting Rifle, and the Queen Anne English Blunderbuss Flintlock, all were produced in England during or before the Revolution and certainly were

7Ibid., p. 28.
8Ibid., p. 21.
imported into Colonial America.\footnote{Bannerman Military Catalogue (New York: no printer, 1927), pp. 19-31.}

The most common firearm was the smooth bore, large caliber, low velocity, flint-lock musket. The "Brown Bess" would perhaps best represent a typical weapon chosen from a multitude of different makes and origins. The Brown Bess was around 4 feet 9 inches long without the 12 inch bayonet (affixed 67 inches), had a 3/4 inch or 75 caliber bore (1 inch = 100 calibers), and fired a 3/4 inch ball weighing 11 to the pound or 1.4545 ounces each. The total weight of the musket was around 11 pounds unloaded.\footnote{Wright, "The Rifle in the American Revolution", pp. 293-299.} The Brown Bess was inaccurate in skillful hands at distances over 100 yards; in the average soldier's hands the weapon was inaccurate at 50 yards. This factor, plus the scourge of battle smoke obscuring the target, provided the cause for the epithet -- "don't fire 'til you see the whites of their eyes." The heavy spherical ball was soon pulled to the earth's surface due to its large surfical mass and the gravitational exertion; and unless a man waited until his target was within 50-100 yards, and unless he made allowances for elevation, he simply could not hit the target. Under the best conditions a man rarely hit a target more than 40% of the shots at 100 yards.\footnote{Tbid., p. 294.} The heavy ball, made of soft lead, not only traveled a short distance but traveled at a slow rate of velocity and upon impact tended to splatter and penetrate, producing wounds of untold horror and agony. Appendages and other members of the body were often carried away by the large lead
ball, usually $3/4$ of an inch in diameter and weighing over an ounce; otherwise the impact produced a gaping cavity filled with scattered fragments of lead and mangled shattered bones -- war is hell. As if the effect was not bad enough, men often chewed or split the musket-ball with a knife causing it to further disintegrate upon impact. The men even drove nails through the balls and fired these sadistic missiles. Both British and American soldiers engaged in these barbaric practices. The most common charge in a musket was the spherical lead ball; sometimes several buckshot were also placed in the charge. Henry Dearborn, an officer in the Quebec Campaign of 1775-6, tells in a succinct style how he fired his "piece": "I clapt up my Piece which was Charged with a ball and Ten Buck Shott Certainly to give him his due, But to my great mortification my Gun did not go off ..." In addition to the inaccuracy of the "piece", quite often it did not "report", due to dampness of powder, or fouled vents, or other malfunction of the archaic flint-ignited weapon. If the piece misfired, the soldier had to laboriously eject the tight fitting ball, sometimes, requiring a worm-equipped ramrod before the piece could be recharged. In time of battle malfunction was tantamount to disaster, and the weapon was discarded for the first one that came to hand. The men used both prepared cartridges and loose charges which they prepared as they fired. Timothy Pickering in An Easy Plan


of Discipline for a Militia, Salem, 1775, described the prevalent method of preparing cartridges:

The best method of making cartridges seems to be that used in the [British] army. It is this -- take the soft brown paper called wainish brown, or wrapping paper, and cut it into pieces of the form represented in Plate I, Figure 2, which is of these dimensions; the side a b measures about six inches, b c about five inches and a half, and c d about two inches. A piece of wood about six inches long is to be made round so as to fit exactly the size of the ball; this is called a former: make one end of it hollow to receive a part of the ball; lay the former upon the straight edge b c (as represented by the dotted lines) with its hollow end about an inch from the side a b: roll the paper around the former; then with the ball press in the corner of the paper so as to cover the hollow end of the former, and keeping fast the ball roll on till the paper is all wrapped round the former; having before taken a piece of twine and fastened it to end to something that will not easily be moved, and so far apart as to leave it slack, you are now to take both the twine a single turn around the paper, below the ball; then running in the end of your fore finger till it touches the ball, pull upon the string that it may girt the paper, and by turning round the former with one hand you will presently form a neck below the ball; which being afterwards tied with a piece of coarse thread will secure the ball from slipping out: then withdrawing the former, the cartridge is ready to be charged with powder; in doing which you put in the more because part of it is to be taken for priming; having properly filled the cartridge, twist the top, and the work is done.\(^{15}\)

\(^{15}\)Peterson, op. cit., pp. 225-229.
The men were encouraged to fire in unison at a given command. Attention was given to the place of a man in the firing line according to his size: "... Men are ever to be drawn up, and when formed in two ranks, the shortest men are always to be placed in the front, by which means the firing will be rendered [easier] and the Effect more certain." Baron Von Steuben attempted to instill the rudiments of disciplined marching and firing into the men at Valley Forge. George Ewing, a private soldier, demonstrates

the influences of the German drill-master:

This forenoon the Brigade went thro the Manouvers under the direction of Baron Stubun the step is about half way between Slow and Quick time an easy and natural step and I think much better than the former the Manual also is altered by his direction time are but ten words of command which are as follows: 1. Police Firelock, 2. Shoulder Firelock, 3. Present Arms, 4. Fix Bayonet, 5. Unfix Bayonet, 6. Load Firelock, 7. Make Ready, 8. Present, 9. Fire, 10. Order Firelock.17

Few of these last 5 firing commands were heard and obeyed in unison upon the battle field. There the men usually loaded and fired the muskets as they pleased after the battle was joined.

In the Revolutionary War the soldiers either fired a musket or a rifle. The rifle, labeled the "Kaintuck" or Swiss rifle, by its contemporaries, differed from the Brown Bass musket by having a longer profile, around 60 sleek inches, a heavier octagonal barrel, a smaller bore, around 50 calibers, and firing a smaller ball, weighing 36 to the pound or .3055 ounces.18

The most distinguishing characteristic was the sleek profile and the rifled bore which provided a circular-spiraling effect to the ball as it left the barrel enabling the missile to travel over great distances at a higher rate of velocity and with a more remarkable accuracy than previous weapons. This weapon had four handicaps:19

a. The ball fitted very snugly into the barrel in order to

19 Ibid.
take the rifling. Sometimes a mallet or hammer was used to drive
the ball down the barrel (this was the exception). More often
the ball was wrapped in a greased "patch" enabling it to fit
snugly and to thereby prevent loss of gas or explosive power.
The necessity of a close-fitting bullet often contributed to
fouling and thereby silencing the telling effects of the weapon
until the ball could be withdrawn.

b. The rifle was not designed to take a bayonet.

c. The smoke of battle often obscured long-range targets
negating the most valuable asset of the rifle -- its accuracy over
extreme distance.

d. If the rifle was exposed to dampness or moisture while
loaded, the charge, and the piece, were rendered useless.

For the above four reasons the rifle was less popular in
the army than was expected. Yet pioneers contended with all
these problems in the wilderness where natural conditions were
severe, and the "Kentuck" was regarded as their best friend.
General Anthony Wayne severely criticized the rifle: "I don't
like rifles -- I would almost as soon face an Enemy with a good
Musket and Bayonet without ammunition -- as with ammunition with-
out a Bayonet; for altho there are not many instances of bloody
bayonets yet I am Confident that one bayonet keeps off an other . . . 20

A hunting knife was considered standard equipment by the Con-
tinental soldier; useful in camp and battlefield, the most unorthodox

20 Ibid.
use of the knife was for scalping. American soldiers did scalp their enemies, yet scalping seems to be the exception rather than the practice; and the barbaric practice seemed to be confined to the taking of Indian scalps. During the Quebec Campaign in 1775-1776, Henry Dearborn records in his Journal that "... an Indian Scalp was Brought in to Day By a Party of our men which is a Rarety with us ...".21

The bayonet was unpopular with the frontier-soldier who placed faith in his "Tomahawk". Baron Von Steuben lamented the soldiers' attitude of indifference for the bayonet, and prevailed upon General Washington to issue an order requiring that the bayonet be kept constantly affixed to the muskets and that the bayonet scabbards and belts be returned to the quartermaster.22 An attack with the cold steel of the bayonet was and is a most awesome and fear inspiring sight on any battlefield of any war. The popularity of the bayonet seemed to grow through the war. The final attack at Yorktown was made by the American "Corps de Elite" with unloaded muskets and bayonets affixed resulting in a complete victory for the American forces.23 Cornwallis surrendered soon thereafter.

Other arms used by Yankee Doodle included the broad sword, the pike, hand grenades, and pistols. Swords were most often carried by

21Brown, op. cit., p. 100.
officers as weapons and as symbols of rank. During the cold winter at Valley Forge the commanding general requested pikes for the men on picket duty: "The Genl Orders Every one of them [pickets] to provide themselves with a half-pike or Spear as soon as possible." Ammunition and men became very scarce that winter. Col. Benedict Arnold's besieging force was detained in front of Quebec in 1775 until the men were "... provided with bayonets, spears, hatchets, and hand grenades." Flint-lock pistols were common weapons to the officers and were occasionally carried by the foot-soldier.

As like as not the pockets of a Revolutionary soldier when turned inside out would yield: a jackknife, some leaf tobacco, a compass, a pair of dice, some loose cartridges, extra flints, a pipe, and, perhaps, a few coins or bills of money. Upon his back he shouldered a Brown Bess with a bayonet affixed. Over one shoulder was slung a powder horn, sometimes two, one containing coarse-grained powder for the charge, the other containing a fine-grained powder for the flashpan of the musket. Over the other shoulder was slung a bullet pouch containing either loose balls or prepared cartridges. Sometimes the bullet pouch contained the 40 rounds of ammunition which was the standard issue. Some soldiers carried knapsacks of a water repellant nature containing a few items, usually a ration of flour or meal and salt beef or pork; others simply rolled these articles in their "homemade" blankets, and slung them over their shoulders.

24 Order Book, Captain James Meriwether's Company 1777-1778.

Many carried a wooden or metal canteen; more carried drinking cups affixed to their belts. Yankee Doodle's dress varied from a green, brown, or blue militia uniform of European make to a home-manufactured outfit. Many wore the frontiersman's deerskin suit, and usually some type of hat covered his head. As like as not it was a tri-cockade, a felt hat, or a beaverkin hat. On his feet were either boots, buckled shoes, or moccasins. Stuck through his belt was a knife and a tomahawk. Personal cleanliness and neatness were the exception rather than the rule. Though lice "skimished" upon his person, his hair was powdered white on parades and marches; and although he presented a rag-tag, unkempt personal appearance, his musket and bayonet usually abode.

The above composite description of the arms, accoutrements, and clothing of a Revolutionary Soldier was drawn from many sources.\(^26\) One of the most valuable sources was the claims of the soldiers captured during the war and presented to the various state governments after the war. These captured weapons and accoutrements were originally the property of the soldiers. The affidavits of captured personal property are usually quite similar in content. Three Vermont soldiers claimed restitution for the following losses:

a. Nathum Powers:\(^27\)

To sundry articles taken from him by the Savage in the month of August, 1781, when he was taken prisoner from Capt. Nehemiah Lovewell's Company and Col. Wait's Regiment;

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\(^{27}\) Goodrich, op. cit., p. 731.
as follows, viz --

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To one Gun 72/ Powder Horn</td>
<td>6/</td>
<td>3.18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Straps and Bullet pouch</td>
<td>6/</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Beaver Hat</td>
<td>52/</td>
<td>3. 4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One pair Shoes</td>
<td>12/</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knapsack and Belt</td>
<td>6/</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Blanket</td>
<td>18/</td>
<td>9.13.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. Daniel Hovey:

This is to testify that Daniel Hovey, a soldier in my Company in the year 1781, was taken prisoner the 23 day of October. Returned home the 12 day of June following, which he has not got his pay for.

Taken from him a good firelock, prized at 4. 0.0

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One Blanket</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cartridge Box</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tomahawk</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>5. 4.1</td>
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</table>

c. Zeruh Horton:

To twelve months and eighteen days service while in captivity from the 17th of October 1781 to the 17th of November 1782 - at 40/ pr. month £ 23.4.0.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To one gun taken by the enemy - valued at</td>
<td>3. 0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To one Powder horn and Bullet Pouch</td>
<td>6. 0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To one Blanket apprized at 24/</td>
<td>1. 4.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To one Pocket-Compass</td>
<td>6.0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

£ 30.0.0

The preceding claims best represented the compliment of arms and

---

28Ibid., p. 753.

29Ibid., p. 760.
accoutrements of the average American Revolutionary soldier.

The clothing of the Continental was sometimes outlandish, always variegated. The various militia units reported for duty apparelled in vari-colored uniforms. One of the most famous of these early units was provided clothing by the State of Vermont.

Resolved that when the Green Mountain Boys are raised, each of them shall be furnished with a coat and that Mr. Peter T. Curtenius be requested to purchase coarse green Cloth for that purpose and red Cloth sufficient to face those Coats . . . and to have two hundred and twenty-five Coats of a large Size made . . . 30

At White Plains, New York, on July 9, 1781, Baron Ludwig Von Closen describes a review of the American Army:

On the 9th, all the American Army presented arms; General Washington invited our headquarters staff to come to see it. The whole effect was rather good. Their arms were in good condition; some regiments had white cotton uniforms. Their clothing consisted of a coat, jacket, vest, and trousers of white cloth, buttoned from the bottom to the calves, like gaiters. Several battalions wore little black caps with white plumes. Only General Washington's mounted guard and Sheldon's legion wore large caps with bearskin fastenings as crests. Three-quarters of the Rhode Island Regiment consists of negroes, and that regiment is the most neatly dressed, the best under arms, and the most precise in its maneuvers. 31

The line of march of the Continental Army presented a moving mosaic of vari-colored spectrums. The various militia and regular units were clothed in their local uniforms of brown, and green, and blue. Early in the war brown and green predominated; gradually blue tended to emerge as the most popular dress, although blue was

30 Ibid., p. 760.

31 Acōmbly, op. cit., pp. 91-92.
by no means the standard color. In 1777 the Continental Congress specified that the imports of French uniforms be of green, brown, and blue.\textsuperscript{32} In October of 1779 Washington ordered that the coats of the infantry be of blue with white linings.\textsuperscript{33} Each state was assigned a different color trappings with blue as the basic color of the uniform.\textsuperscript{34} The above description of Baron Von Closen, and the above orders, plus the knowledge that the men improvised when necessary, and that issuance of orders does not imply compliance, or the reality, yields the conclusion that there never existed a uniform uniformed Continental Army.

Emblems and insignia, common to all armies in all times, were found in the American Revolutionary Army. The state trappings have been previously referred to. A black and white feather distinguished Washington's Corps de Elite.\textsuperscript{35} At times the troops were ordered to bedeck with native greenery to identify themselves in an attack: "We are ordered every man of us to wear a hemlock sprig in his hat, to distinguish us from the enemy in the attack upon Quebec."\textsuperscript{36} For meritorious conduct upon the field of battle Washington authorized the wearing of a "... purple heart of silk or cloth edged with lace or binding, to be worn on the facing

\textsuperscript{32} \textit{Journals of Continental Congress, op. cit.}, VII, p. 92.

\textsuperscript{33} Bolton, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 97.

\textsuperscript{34} Leuber, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 97.

\textsuperscript{35} Wright, "The Corps of Light Infantry in the Continental Army", pp. 454-461.

\textsuperscript{36} Brown, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 65.
over the left breast. **37

Officers constantly strived to institute uniformity of dress upon the rank and file of the army. Realities of supply and personal slothfulness prevented compliance on a large scale. At the headquarters of the Colonial troops stationed at Williamsburg, Virginia, the general orders of April 3rd, 1776, read in part:

It is recommended to the Colonals to make their men appear as uniform as possible in their dress, that their hatts shall be cut, all cocked in fashion, that their Hair be likewise at exactly the same length. When the Regiments are under Arms, the Officers to appear in their Hunting Shirts, the Officers as well as the men to die their Shirts in an uniform manner. These attentials may appear Trivial, but they are in fact of Considerable importance, as they tend to give what is call'd Esprit de Corps . . . .**38

Personal sanitation was another problem. Soldiers bathed only in summer and then in nearby creeks and rivers. Lack of personal hygiene brought about various itches, rashes, diseases, and sanitation problems. The most prevalent problem was that of lice. John Cilton, a private soldier, wrote to his "much loved and respected sister:"**

"The small seed they call Lice seed which if pounded and soaked in Rum or other Spirits will kill those vermin by anointing the hair in an hour Mitts and all - you'll laugh at me here and say I had better kept it for the Army where Lice are more prevalent." 39

Colonel Israel Angell described his Rhode Island Regiment as " . . . the Ragged, Lousy, Naked Regiment.**40 On the march the

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37Bolton, op. cit., p. 97.
38Campbell, op. cit., p. 13.
39The Keith of Woodburne Papers.
clothing was often disheveled and tattered, the accoutrements were
diverse and disordered, their personal hygiene was lacking; but
invariably, their muskets and bayonets were shining, and sometimes
their hair was powdered white: "We oblige our Soldiers . . . to
appear at all times when on the Parade in their Uniforms, their
Linen Clean, their Facings Vest and Overhalls neatly whitened and
their Hair powdered, etc." 41

Arms, accoutrements, and clothing were obtained from many
sources, not the least, being the British soldiers themselves.
British surrender at Fort Ticonderoga and Saratoga proved to be a
Godsend to the Continental artillery and quartermaster corps. At
Fort "Ti" 6 caissons, 8 mortars, 36 assorted cannon, and 2 howitzers
were captured in addition to other arms and accoutrements. 42 At
Saratoga Burgoyne surrendered 11 . . . 10250 men, and 47 Peices
of Brass Artillery Besides a vast Quantity of Stores Baggage,

The state and county stores provided the next most accessible
source. The Continental Congress assessed each state with a quota
of supplies. This system was almost completely deficient as is
illustrated by George Washington's letter to the Committee of Con-
gress, July 19, 1777:

Ought not each State to be called upon to draw
such supplies from the County Manufactories as can
be afforded? Particularly of shoes, stockings, shirts,

41 A Letter Lieut. Moore to His Father (Champlain: Moorsfield
42 Goodrich, op. cit., p. 834.
43 Brown, op. cit., p. 112.
and Blankets . . . It is a maxim, which needs no illustration, that nothing can be of more importance in an Army than the Clothing and feeding it well -- on these the health, comfort, and spirits of the Soldiers, essentially depend; and it is a melancholy fact, that the American Army are miserably defective in both these respects -- the distress most of them are in, for want of Clothing is painful to humanity, dispiriting to themselves, and discouraging to every Officer.44

When this quota system broke down completely Washington resorted to impressment during the bleak winter at Valley Forge:

Painful as it is to me to order and as it will be to you to execute the measure, I am compelled to desire you immediately to proceed to Philadelphia, and there procure from the inhabitants contributions of blankets and clothing, . . . This you will do with as much delicacy and discretion, as the nature of the business demands; and I trust the necessity will justify the proceeding in the eyes of every person well affected to the American cause . . . I do not wish your exertions to be solely directed to obtaining Shoes and Blankets -- extend them to every other article you know to be material for the army . . . 45

France proved to be a cornucopia to needy Revolutionary America. The imported supplies of powder, uniforms, and weapons from France were vast. Each shipload was the signal for rejoicing and bolstered morale in the Continental forces:

On the 18th Inst arrived at Portsmouth an armed vessel of 14 Guns from France her cargo Consisting of 12,000 stand of Arms, 1000 Barrels of Powder, flints, Guns . . . My God! My God! thou hast not forsaken us. let lazy Morrison see this perhaps it may move him.46

Regardless of these sources, the need for food, clothing, powder, and weapons always exceeded the supply: The problem

44 Ford, The Writings of George Washington, VI, pp. 496-497.
45 Ibid., VI, p. 78.
46 George and Samuel Johnson Papers (unpublished MSS, Virginia Historical Society)
seems to have reached its greatest proportions while the army was at Valley Forge during the winter of 1777-78. Washington wrote to his brother:

... although they [Congressional Committee] seem to have little feeling for the naked and distressed soldiers, I feel superabundantly for them, and, from my soul, I pity those miseries, which it is neither in my power to relieve or prevent. 47

The most eloquent statement of the wretched suffering of the soldiers at Valley Forge was provided by another letter of General Washington:

To see men, without clothes to cover their nakedness, without blankets to lie on, without shoes, by which their marches might be traced by the blood from their feet, and almost as often without provisions as with them, marching through the frost and snow, and at Christmas taking up their winter-quarters within a day's march of the enemy, without a house or hut to cover them, till they could be built, and submitting to it without a murmur, is a proof of patience and obedience, which in my opinion can scarce by paralleled. 48

48 Ibid., p. 487.
CHAPTER IV

FOOD

"... Their shall be Issued a pound and a half flour and one pound beef or salt pork and a certain quantity of spirits. "1 This was a typical ration2 issued to the Continental soldiers when the supply of food was at hand. Often these rations were cut in half or quarters, and often there was no ration to be divided.

At the beginning of the war the various state congresses proscribed a more bountiful ration for the troops. The Provincial Congress Committee of Safety in New York, stated that: "... a ration consist of the following kinds and quantities of provisions .list:"

1 lb. of Beef or 3/4 lb. of Pork or 1 lb. of Salt fish per day.
1 lb. of Bread or Flour per day.
3 pints of peas or beans per week, or vegetables equivalent, one dollar p Bushel for peas or beans.
1 pint of milk p man p day or at the rate of 1/72 part of a dollar.

1Order Book, Captain James Meriwether's Company 1777-1778.

2Patton Family Papers (unpublished MSS., Virginia Historical Society); Meigs, op. cit., p. 15. These sources give approximately the same ration in widely scattered areas and dates.
1 Quart of Spruce Beer or Cider P man P day or 9 Gallons of Molasses p 100 men P week.
1/2 pint of Rice or 1 pint of Indian Meal p man P week.
3 lb. of candles too 100 P week for Guards.
24 lbs. of Soft or 8 lbs. hard soap for 110 men P week.
Men in Barracks to be provided with crocus and straw for bedding, firewood and Iron pots.3

This is the ideal, not very often the reality; and few Revolutionary soldiers were supplied with this menu. Throughout the war the typical ration consisted of a portion of flour or meal and a portion of salt beef or pork. The officers usually received a better fare and a larger share of the rations in proportion to their rank. On the "Acct of Small Stores Recd By Capt. James Tysdal Compy in the 3d Mассachusetts Regiment from Jan'y 1st 1780 to Dec. 21st 1781"4 Captain Tysdal received 3 rations, Lieutenant Cheney received 2 rations, and John Blanchard, private, received 1 ration of the sugar, chocolate, coffee, ginger, and tea on hand.

Throughout the six years of war what did the men eat? Besides the ration, when issued, the common soldier hunted, fished, gardened, stole, and foraged food of every kind and description. The common soldier ate from a varied cuisine. A select random menu5 chosen from the soldiers' accounts with entries ranging from fine wines to dog flesh would read like this:

rattlesnake meat strawberries cockles
green corn shad, bass, pike, trout rum
turkey a fine buck pickled beef

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4Revolutionary Muster Rolls, XXXVII, p. 226.
5This random selection of foods was taken from the researcher's notes on this subject. Their origins and places of consumption are explained throughout the remainder of this chapter.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>some fowles</td>
<td>several wild deer &amp; turkeys</td>
<td>bacon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raw pork</td>
<td>Quohogs</td>
<td>flower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fat geese</td>
<td>cisters</td>
<td>salt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good potatoes</td>
<td>horse flesh</td>
<td>prty poor beef</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sauce from the Geese</td>
<td>pheasants</td>
<td>vinegar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>milk</td>
<td>hind quarter of a dog</td>
<td>fire cakes (meal cakes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>squirrels</td>
<td>syder</td>
<td>eight hams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>turnips</td>
<td>gin</td>
<td>rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sugar</td>
<td>wine</td>
<td>eggs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chocolate</td>
<td>greens</td>
<td>salt beef</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coffee</td>
<td>butter</td>
<td>sss (leafy vegetables)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ginger</td>
<td>mutton</td>
<td>pork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tea</td>
<td>whiskey</td>
<td>pease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>greens</td>
<td>salt</td>
<td>brandy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The lack of food was one of the greatest problems in the Revolutionary Army. The production of food was not the problem. The land produced bountifully: "... those in camp [are] wanting breeches, shoes, stockings, blankets, and by accounts ... were in want of flour, yet being in the land of plenty; our farmers having their barns and barracks full of grain; hundreds of barrels of flour lying on the banks of the Susquehannah perishing for want of care in securing it from the weather ... fifty wagon loads of cloths and ready made clothes for the soldier in the Clothier General’s Store in Lancaster ...."\(^6\) The problem seems to have been in the collection, transportation, and distribution of the supplies. The quartermaster department is usually the most accursed branch of an army. The Revolutionary War was no exception. Washington replaced his quartermaster at least one time with the remark that perhaps the new man would give better service.\(^7\)

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\(^7\) Patton Family Papers.
The existing system seems to have operated thus: the quartermaster's department issued quotas to the several governors who were not at that time under the heel of the enemy. The governor in turn assessed each county commissioner with a quota. The quota was then obtained from the varied farms in the county and neighboring communities, and was paid for with notes (tobacco notes in Virginia). If the farmer was unwilling to sell, the assessment was seized.

Thomas Jefferson, while serving as wartime governor of Virginia, wrote to the Commissioners of Albemarle County, Virginia:

The proportion of beef and salt which will be called for from your county will be as equal as circumstances, and a knowledge of its resources will permit. These articles are to be procured voluntarily, if possible; but if the quantity required cannot be procured in that way, it is then to be taken.

He then generously added that "... no barren cows, or draught oxen are to be taken, unless very old ... and a reasonable subsistence for the family is to be left." The provisions were collected by the commissioner, and were carried to an assigned camp or military post in impressed wagons or sleds during severe winters. Droves of cattle and oxen were driven directly to camps.

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8 Order Book, Captain James Morivether's Company 1777-1778, "The Governor of the State of Pennsylvania having appointed Commissioners in each County to collect blankets and Clothing for the army . . . ."

9 Patton Family Papers.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid. "You will observe by Hart's second letter that he proposes to deliver two droves at General Parsons at County Line Creek . . . ."
This state quota system, while the most expedient way, was, nevertheless, unsatisfactory. George Washington revealed the lack-advisical incompetence of the system:

... unless congress speak [s] in a more decisive tone, unless they [Congress] are vested with powers by the several States competent to the great purposes of war, ... and they and the States respectively act with more energy than they have hitherto done, ... our case is lost. We can no longer drudge in the old way ... One State will comply with a requisition of Congress; another neglects to do it; a third executes it by halves; and all differ either in the manner, the matter, or so much in point of time, that we are always working up hill; ... 12

Jefferson urged the County Commissioners of Virginia to make all possible exertions to collect their quota and admonished: "The calamitous consequences which would follow the dissolution of our army, for want of subsistence, while that of our enemy is present, to take an advantage of such an event, will feelingly impress you with the necessity of neither losing time, or Sparing exertions ..." 13

Although quotas were established for the states by Congress, and quotas were established for the counties by the governor, and efforts were made to collect the subsistence, the fact is that the goods simply were not delivered 14 -- if it were not for extra legal methods of obtaining food, the army would have disbanded. "I am now convinced beyond a doubt!", wrote Washington, "that, unless

12 Ford, Letters of Joseph Jones, p. 11.
13 Patton Family Papers.
14 Ford, Writings of George Washington, V, pp. 495-496. "With respect to Food, considering we are in such an extensive and abundant Country, no army was ever worse supplied than ours ..."
some great change suddenly takes place in that line, this army must be reduced to one of three things; starve, dissolve, or disperse.\textsuperscript{15} In the wake of this calamity and with starvation stalking the army, Washington resorted to impressment and confiscation, the latter applying to traitorous loyalists. At Valley Forge, December, 1777, when all the fortunes of the Continental forces were low, the following call was issued by Washington:

> By the Virtue of the Power and Direction to Me especially given; I hereby enjoin and require all Persons residing within seventy miles of my Head-Quarters to thresh one Half of their Grain by the 1st Day of February, and the other Half by the 1st Day of March, next ensuing, on Pain, in Case of Failure of having all that shall remain in Sheaves after the Period above mentioned, seized by the Commissaries and Quarter-Masters of the Army and paid for as Straw.\textsuperscript{16}

The loyalists made a handsome profit supplying Royal troops. Labelled as collaborators and traitors, they were subjected to impressment, harassment, and punishment by the Continentals. At a general court martial, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, on February 8, 1778, 9 cases were tried for collaborating and supplying the enemy. Punishment ranged from 250 lashes to 100 £ fine plus impressment of goods:

> At a genl Court Martial whereof Col. Widerworth was presidt held Feby 7 Philip Kirk tryed for supplying the Enemy with cattle found guilty and Sentenced to be Confined in Som Goal in Pennsylvania during the

\textsuperscript{15}\textit{Ibid.}, VI, 257-258.

\textsuperscript{16}Bolton, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 64; Charles Danney Papers (unpublished MSS., Virginia Historical Society).
Enemies staying, and both his rail and personal
Estate to be taken from him for the Use of
the United States of America . . . 17

The truth of the whole matter is that the Quartermaster's
department in all the various Continental armies was completely
deficient, and the men were not supplied with their daily needs
of food. To supplement the issue of rations, or in many cases to
continue existence, auxiliary sources were tapped.

Perhaps the easiest and most popular auxiliary source was
foraging. Sergeant John Smith of the Rhode Island line subtly
describes the inability of edible objects to give the counter-
sign:

This Evening (on) our Visiting Rounds went
cut on a Patrole again and took Up a Sheep and two
Large fat turkeys not Being able to give the Counter-
sign and Brought to our Castel where they was Tryd
By fire and Executed By the whole Division of the
free Boters than whilst the feast was Getting Ready
two of our Party went out and found a Boat and Crossed
over the River to the other Side and found a Boat
a float Loaded with Distrees out of which they took
about two Bushels of her freight . . . 18

On another night he tells how he was awakened about midnight:

. . . By Something puling me and a Voice Crying
turn out Den you Look here see and Behold I Looked
and saw five fat Geese Some was fit for the Cook
the others was a Dressing By the fire side and some
Good Potatoes for sauce for Goos that Came to our
Loging after the Counter sign was Put out and I
Eat a hearty meal Asking no Questions with the
Rest of my Brother Soldiers who Eead hearty in

17Order Book, Captain James Mariwether's Company 1777-1778.
18Sup., op. cit., p. 252.
the Cause of Liberty of taking what Camos in the way first to their hand...

Often cattle and swine were "rescued" from the ravenous enemy. At the Battle of Long Island, New York, Lieutenant Jabez Fitch records in his diary on 24 August 1776: "... we Drove in to Camp Six or Seven Cattle which we Broat off from near the Enemy; we soon Drew some provision, and the men went to Cooking, they also by some means or other, had Green Corn in great Plenty... we had little Else to do, the Remainder of this Day, than to Cook and Eat... We had Watermillions also..." 20 Strawberries were also "rescued" from the hand of the enemy. "We got a great plenty of Strawberries on our way there" 21 William Weeks described the movements of the Continental army as an engulfing horde of hungry humanity, or a gigantic eating machine: "There is a good Crop in these Parts, but soon comes Desolation, wherever we march we Keep our Horses in the Fields among Corn and Oats, So that the Enemy if they gain the Ground may have poor fare..." 22

Men on picket duty had unusual opportunity for foraging.

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19Ibid., pp. 251–252.


John Chilton writes in a letter to his brother during the New York Campaign on 29 June, 1777:

Our station [picket] is a pretty agreeable one only 2 mile from Camp where we can at any time run for any necessary we want from that quarter. Then we have the advantage of getting Milk Butter and Greens which are scarce articles in camp . . . He closes by quoting the current inflated prices of food-stuffs and drink in that area . . . Butter 1/2 dollr pr lb. Mutton 10 s 1/4 lb. Whiskey a dollr p Qt.; Rum 12/ the last of which two articles I must have, I am like Mr. Bowman with his Case bottle, my Canteen is all the comfort I have in this place.

Sometimes the foraging was hazardous and the plunderers risked a charge of shot fired at them when in full retreat. Sergeant John Smith described how he:

... took 29 fowles that had not Got the Countersign and Brought them here where they were Secur'd after that Two more went of again to see what they Could see and in their way they Kill'd a turkey and hid it then went towads the house where a Gun went of at them and a white man on a white horse chased them a Grat way But By turning and twisting about Got Clear from him . . .

The virgin streams and forest provided another auxiliary source of food. The receding frontier gradually revealed a virgin land teeming with game and fish in lush hardwood forests of oak, hickory, cedar, alder, and chestnut trees. General Sullivan's expedition against the Indians of the Pennsylvania frontier in 1779 was described by Henry Dearborn on 23 June, 1779, as a journey through a wilderness cornucopia: "We are now encamp'd on the bank of

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23 The Keith of Woodburne Papers.
24 Rau, op. cit., p. 258.
Susquehannah River this river is at this place about 50 rods wide and abounds with fish of various kinds . . . shad, bass, pike, trout, ect, ect -"" Later, 1 July, 1779, he describes how "" . . . a number of us discover'd a fine buck to day on an Island which we surrounded and kill'd -" On the 4th of July he adds that "" . . . several deer and wild turkeys have been kill'd within a day or two with which this Country abounds -- "" 25 The Sullivan expedition of 1779 destroyed the corn granaries of the Indian tribes of the Wyoming Valley. The soldiers of the Sullivan expedition had plenty of fresh vegetables yet Rev. William Rogers, who accompanied the expedition as a chaplain, recorded this graphic entry in his journal: ""The artillery soldiers killed two or three rattlesnakes and made, as I understand, a good meal of them."" 26

""I got a fine dinner of Quohogs and Oisters to Day --"" 27 wrote Henry Dearborn from White Plains, New York, August 9, 1779, later on the 23rd of August he added: ""I have a fine Dinner of Quohogs ect, ect, ect, ect, ect, to Day."" 28 Obviously he liked Quohogs immensely. He didn't like them enough to describe them so the reader will never know just what he ate so much of. At

25Brown, op. cit., p. 159.
27Brown, op. cit., p. 133.
28Ibid.
Morris Heights, New Jersey, John Chilton laments the regularity of the diet: "We have plenty of good Beef, but no variety of other food, and tho we are between two Rivers we get no fish and very few Oysters and Clams or Cockles. The Oysters here are good... We sometimes get pork and peas..." John Barr mentioned in his diary of fruitless forays upon nature: "Thursday 18th went a fishing to Day but caught nothing... Thursday 29th went a hunting... killed only one Squirrel..." It is hoped that all the men had better luck than Barr.

In isolated instances the soldiers, while situated in one area for a prolonged length of time, prepared the ground and planted gardens. At Peekskill, New York, on August 25, 1777, S. B. Webb recorded the order that: "... the Commanding officer of Each Regt. are Directed to Cause an acre of ground to be fixed for Turnips the Seed the general has Sent after and well be hear Soon -- which Turnips will be for the use of the respective regiments." The men arbitrarily divided themselves into masses where all the rations and the fruits of foraging were pooled. Each man was usually assigned a task in the preparing of the food. "... I was chose cook for our room consisting of 12 men and a hard game

29 The Keith of Woodburne Papers.


too ...32 The cook took the "delicacies" in hand and prepared the meal in any way possible. The farmers rail fences were consumed in many a cheerful campfire. "... Our Colo[nel] gave Leave to Burn the fences to make us fire to Keep us from the frost."

Orders were officially published forbidding the "... burning of the farmer's Fences"33 by the commanding general. But this was never completely eliminated until the fences disappeared; and fences usually slowly melted away in the event of an encamping army. The most common cooking utensil was a large camp kettle.35 These kettles were distributed by companies and were used in a community basis. Sometimes a frying pan was found in the soldiers' mess.

At Valley Forge Henry Dearborn mentions in his Journal that on December 18, 1777: "... we had for thanksgiving breakfast some Exceeding Poor beef which has been boil'd and how warm'd in an old Short handled frying Pan in which we were Obliged to Eat it haveing No other Platter ..."36 Elijah Fisher, a private soldier in Washington's Army at Valley Forge, perhaps best sums up the situation of the Continental soldier when his stomach growled for food: "... we


33Raw, op. cit., p. 254.

34Order Book, Captain James Meriwether's Company 1777-1778.

35Slate Rolls of Capt. Nathaniel Welch's Company 2d Virga September 1, 1779.

36Brown, op. cit., p. 118.
had no tents nor anything to cook our Provisions in and that was
Pitty Poor for beef was very lean and no salt no any way to Cook it
but to throw it on the Coles and brile it and the warter we had to
Drink and to mix our flower with was out of a brook that run along
by the Camps and So many a dippin and washin in which made it very
Dirty and muddy.**37 The usual rations of meat and flour most
often were roasted or boiled in a stew over the fire -- probably
on a stick or ramrod. When the army was in winter camp, iron ovens
were provided or private baking facilities were used; if they were
at hand. In the general orders of the Continental Army at Valley
Forge, 1777-1778, the brigade commanders were informed that "such
brigades as choose to have their flower baked into good Bread, may
have it done by sending two bakers from their Brigades respective-
illy ... ***38

Water was the most common drink, spirituous liquids came next.
Spirits were issued frequently -- more often during winter. At
Valley Forge quite often the daily orders included the following
entry: "The Commissary will issue a Gill of rum per Man to the
... troops to morrow".39 These rations merely supplemented the
soldiers own private supply. According to the court-martial re-
cords there was "no small amount" of drinking. In an effort to

**illsah Fisher's Diary, p. 7.
38 Order Book, Captain James Moriwether's Company 1777-1778.
39 Ibid.
somewhat control the flow of alcoholic beverages in the army at Valley Forge... a board of General Officers have recommended that a sutler be appointed in each brigade whose liquors sold under such restrictions as shall be thought reasonable. The liquors were to be sold at the following prices and under the following regulations:

- Peach Brandy by the Quart 7/6 by the pint 2/ by the Gill 1/3
- Apple Brandy by the Qt 6/ by the pint 3/ by the Gill 1/d
- Cyder per qt. 1/3 d
- Strong Beer 2/ per gr.
- Common Beer p q 2
- Vinegar p q 1/2

The regulations added that the sutler is also at liberty to sell leaf Tobo a 4/ per lb and hard soap at 2/ per lb...

From reading the letters, diaries, order books, and journals of Revolutionary War sources, it seems that hunger was more prevalent than thirst.

In spite of the efforts of the Quartermaster's department, impressments, confiscations, and foreign supply, foraging, nature's cornucopia, gardens, sutlers, and thievery, the soldiers too often went hungry. The letters, journals, and diaries make particular mention of food deprivation and starvation. Two graphic examples were revealed on Arnold's march through the North Eastern wilderness to Quebec, and by Washington's forces at Valley Forge. Lieutenant George Jones records in his journal:

"en route Quebec, Nov. 1st Wed, Set out weak and faint, having nothing at all to eat: and ground..."

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40 Ibid.
41 Ibid.

covered with snow; traveled fifteen miles and encamped.
Set part of the hind quarters of a dog for supper; we
are in a pitiful condition."\(^2\)

The winter of 1777-1778 spent at Valley Forge was an ordeal
of deprivation, cold, and disease: Henry Dearborn records in his
_\textit{Journal}_ on 18 December, 1777 that ""... this being the third Day
we have been without flower or bread - and we are living on a
high uncultivated hill, in huts and tents Laying on the Cold
Ground...."\(^3\) Surgeon A. Waldo in his journal describes a walk
through the camp at Valley Forge on 21 December, 1777, he passed
through the company streets and asked:

"'What have you for your dinners, boys?'"
"'Nothing but fire-cakes and water, sir.'" At night, "'gentlemen, the supper is ready'"
"'What is your supper, Lads?'"
"'Firecake and water, sir.'"\(^4\)

He further graphically describes the depressing scene that met
his eye as he walked through the camp. "'A general cry went through
the camp this evening among the soldiers; 'No Meat! No Meat!'"\(^5\)
Surgeon Waldo adds the cryptic story about a butcher who brought a
quarter of beef into camp. A ribald continental commented "'There,
there, Tom, is some more of your fat beef but my soul I can see the
butcher's breeches' buttons through it.'"\(^6\) On the Quebec Expedition

\(^2\) Withington, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 47.
\(^3\) \textit{Ibid.}, p. 118.
\(^4\) "'The Diary of Albignace Waldo'' in American Rebels, Richard
\(^5\) \textit{Ibid.}
\(^6\) \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 213-214.
Return J. Meigs describes how "One of our men came in from the woods, who had been left behind, who says, that himself, with one more, killed a horse, and lived on his flesh several days." Sometimes when meat arrived in camp, after prolonged deficiency the famished men killed the beevos and ate them raw. "A cow was immediately killed and cut open in great haste; a small calf being found in her, it was divided up and eaten without further ceremony. I get a little piece of the flesh which I eat raw . . . and thought I feasted sumptuously." 43

The arrival of food was the signal for rejoicing in the Continental Army. Lieut. William Weeks in a letter to his father describes the exultant feelings of the men at Valley Forge with a Biblical parody:

This moment arrived a Quantity of Beef which seem'd to give Joy to every distressing Soul. As soon as the Brigade Commissary reciv'd it, he cries out to the Soldiers -- come unto me ye that are a hungry and I will give you to eat and behold they flock'd around him as thick as bees, and when they had all eat, they gave him Thanks; and of the Fragments that remain'd I am sure would not have fill'd one Haskitt -- Joy seems to be seen in every Countenance since the reverse of Fortune G-d g-t it may continue to --49
CHAPTER V
QUARTERS

The life of a Revolutionary soldier was divided into two seasons. The spring, summer and fall provided the fighting season. The winter was, for the most part, the season of recuperation, refitting, drilling, and picket duty. Washington did attack Trenton, New Jersey, during deepest winter; but this was the exception rather than the rule. Roads, such as they were, would not permit grand-scale campaigns such as the fighting season witnessed.

On the field of battle and while on a march the troops were sometimes quartered in tents; usually they slept in the open or provided makeshift arrangements. The general orders issued to Washington's army on the March to Valley Forge contained the following entry: "the troops are to . . . set about making the best arrangements they can for wood and huts for the night."1 "The best arrangements they can" was often to sleep in the open

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1 Order Book, Captain James Mariwether's Company 1777-1778.
without shelter. Often the men made makeshift lean-to's. Philip Vickers Fithian describes how he made a lean-to during the New York Campaign, September 17, 1776: "Rainy in the Night, but our Men along the Lines had made Tents of Boughs wh. keep off a Shower well." If there were any tents, they were carried on the march in the baggage train, if there was a baggage train.

Winter quarters was a different story. The men were quartered in tents, when the supply permitted; and in log huts otherwise. The tents were not always completely satisfactory. Philip Vickers Fithian describes his quarters in the Quebec Campaign, September 8, 1776: "Our Tent living is not yet pleasant. Many heavy Showers to day, and every Shower wets us;" again, on the 9th of September he writes: "Last Night we found our Tent and other Covering much to thin to keep us warm - we all slept very cold." When tents were not sufficient in supply or in ability to protect the men from the elements, makeshift huts were built. At Valley Forge "Hutts" were the subject of a general order issued on December 17, 1777:

The soldiers Hutts are to be made of the following Dimensions Viz. - 14 by 16 Each Side end and roof made with Logs and the Roof made Light with Clay -- Fire places with wood and secured with clay, the Inside 18 Inches thick The Fire places in the Rear of the Hutt, the door to be in the End next the Street to be of split (. . .) Slabbs unless Boards can be procured, Side walls to be 6-1/2 feet high. The officers hutts to be in a line in the rear of the troops. One Hutt to be allowed to Every Gen'l Officer, one to the Staff of each Division, one to

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3. Ibid., p. 227.
the Staff of each Regt. One to the Commissioned Officers of Two Companies, and one to every Twelve Non-commissioned Officers and soldiers. ¹⁴

A more succinct and graphic description of the winter camp at Valley Forge is provided by Lieutenant Thomas Blake in his Journal, Dec. 3, 1777: "The ground was staked out for the army to build huts to winter in at this place . . . the army in general moved into their huts, which were built with round logs, and most of them covered with straw and earthy, and lay in two lines which extended from the Schuylkill about one and a half miles." ⁵

Quantities of straw were used for thatched roofs and for sleeping.⁶ Tent flies and slabs were used in addition to straw for cooking, which must have presented an extreme fire hazard. Pails were issued "... that Every hut may have one . . ." ⁷ obviously for fire protection. Necessaries were constructed to provide a measure of sanitation. Sanitation was the object of multiple orders in camps and field: "the hot season Ap Procting all Possabel attention to be Paid to the cleanness in the Entener and [... ] of Camp. Sinks are to be Dug with out Delay Every fair Day the windos and Doors of all the Huts should be kept open the

¹⁴Order Book, Captain James Marivether's Company 1777-1778.


⁶Order Book, Captain James Marivether's Company 1777-1778, op. cit. "... The Q.M. General is to delay no time but to use his utmost Exertions to Procure Large Quantities of straw Either for covering the huttts . . . or for beds for the Soldiers . . ."

⁷Ibid.
Great Part of the Day and the Beding Straw and Bunks frequently...

A similar order was issued at Valley Forge in June of 1778:

Necessaries for the Officers and others for the Soldiers are to be erected 80 Yards in the Rear of the officers Tents. The Streets are to be Cleaned 20 Yards in Front of the Tents every day and all putrid matter buried... All Cooking must be Carried on 30 or 40 Yards in Rear of the officers Tents and no where else - The Cocks are every day to throw their nasty water and bones in holes dug for that purpose and cover it over.

An overall view of camp life written in a very cynical and caustic vein is provided in the Journal of Albignance Waldo... Dr. Waldo, seeming to be in a very depressed state, described Valley Forge in a series of cynical comments:

First, there is plenty of wood and water. Secondly, there are but few families for the soldiery to steal from -- though far be it from a soldier to steal. Fourthly, there are warm sides of hills to erect huts on. Fifthly, they will be heavenly minded men like Jonah when in the belly of a great fish. Sixthly, they will not become homesick as is sometimes the case when men live in the open world -- since the reflections which will naturally arise from their present habitation will lead them to the more noble thoughts of employing their leisure hours in filling their knapsacks with such materials as may be necessary on the journey to another home.

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9 *U. S. Continental Army, Order Book, June 4–July 4, 1778.*

10 *The Diary of Albignance Waldo*, p. 217.
CHAPTER VI

DISCIPLINE

"One Shankling, tried by a Regimental Court Martial, for Stealing a Tea Pot, found Guilty, and was sentenced to receive 100 lashes on the bare back . . . "\(^1\) The rugged individuality of the common Revolutionary foot soldier precluded rigid discipline. The two pre-requisites of an efficient army, militant discipline and regimentation, were not completely compatible with the character and background of the Revolutionary soldier. "Yankee Doodle" never truly accepted either; and consequently, according to the records of order books and the courts-martial, discipline was fragmentary, and often non-existent. The best progress seems to have been made when discipline and regimentation were tempered with humor and tact. The recorded instances of indiscipline, records of the courts-martial, make up the majority of the text of the order books. The case of "Shankling"

\(^1\) "John Barr's Diary", p. 813.
would perhaps represent the basic disciplinary failure of the Continental Army that discipline was weak, punishment was dispensed arbitrarily, not always fitting the crime; and, finally, there existed a double code of justice for officers and men. These three factors yielded a code of "Do as you please as long as you can get away with it." The results were disastrous. Orders were likely not to be obeyed, officers were profaned, thievery was rampant, drinking and drunkenness was common; and the soldiers quite often ran away from the enemy on the battlefield.

At Valley Forge during the long and severe winter of 1777-1778 the Order Book of Captain James Marivether contained the following entry: "... Wm. McIntosh wagoner, a Soldier in the 7th Pennsylvania Regiment tried for robbing a wagon load of wheat from Col. Spencers Wagoners found guilty... and sentenced to receive thirty lashes on his bare back." These similar cases, Shankling and McIntosh, seem to be an injustice to the soldiers, 100 lashes for stealing a teapot, 50 lashes for stealing a wagon load of wheat. The punishment seems grossly overstated in the first case according to the magnitude of the theft. The arbitrariness of the punishment is perhaps most forcibly illustrated by the case of John Armstrong tried at Valley Forge on June 16, 1778: "John Armstrong Charged with deserting, reenlisting and taking bounty in the Virginia Artillery. The court do not think the Prisoner Guilty of the first Charge but find him Guilty of

2 Order Book, James Marivether's Company 1777-1778.
the Second and Sentence him to Receive 50 Lashes on his bare back and that he be Returned to the German Regiment. 3 This case represents the startling arbitrariness of the punishment — one man receiving 100 lashes for theft, another receiving 50 lashes for what appeared to be desertion and what was bounty-jumping. The injustice of the crime and punishment was apparent. There existed a written military code which described article by article the law but failed to prescribe adequately the punishment. The Continental Army did not have a Provost Marshall until half way through the war. Therefore, all offenses, minor and major, were tried by a convened court-martial which was both time-consuming and impractical. A Provost Marshal could have dealt with a large percentage of the cases. Washington recognized this basic failure and proposed a Provost Marshal in the army reorganization of 1783. 4 Previous to this time the military punishment did not seem to be tailored to fit the crime, rather determined at the arbitrary whims of the court; and quite often this method yielded the seemingly startling injustices of "Shankling," "William McIntosh," and "John Armstrong." 5

The double code of justice, one standard for officers, and another for the men, was certainly unjust and contributed to indiscipline. Yet this double code was in context with the existing

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3U. S. Continental Army, Order Book, June 4—July 4, 1778.

4Ford, Writings of George Washington, VI, pp. 300-351.
principle of separating the officers and men poles apart and pro-
viding a chasm or void to separate the two. The high command seemed
to foster the idea that familiarity breeds contempt and took meas-
sures to keep the officers and men, especially officers of the
regimental command, distinctly separate and aloof from the men.
Three revealing examples of this "double standard of justice"
were found in the order book of Captain James Morivether's 5th
Virginia Infantry Company:

a. Feby 6, 1778 (Valley Forge)
   At a General Court Martial whereof L. Col. Clark
was president Jan 27Lt. Wm. Williams of the 13th Virga
regt tried for repeatedly behaving in the Carracter
unbecoming the Officer and Gentleman first in buying
a pair of Continental shoes from a soldier and thereby
rendering the Soldier unfit for service. Secondly
for Messing and frequently keeping company with the
soldiers taking there bread and not returning it by
which the Soldier Suffered with hunger; acquitted of
the Charge of taking the Soldiers bread and not
returning it by which they suffered with hunger but
found Guilty of behaving un becoming the character
of the Officer and Gentleman in buying a pair of Con-
tinental Shoes from a Soldier and in messing and fre-
quently Sleeping with the Soldiers being a breach of the
24th article of the 14 articles of war and Sentenced
to be discharged from the Service. The Commander in
chief approves the sentence and orders it to take
place immediately.

b. Feby 8, 1778 (Valley Forge)
   At a General Court Martial whereof Col. Proctor
was prisdit Feby. the 5th 78 Lt Gny of Col Lamb's Re-
giment of Artillery tried for absenting himself from Camp
without leave being guilty of Theft and other behaviour
unbecoming the Crracter of a Gentle man and officer.
Found guilty of Urgent Man and un Officerlike behaviour
in Absenting himself from Camp without leave Associating
with Soldiers Robbery and infamously Stealing, Unanimously
sentenced to have his sword broke over his head on the
Grand Parade at guard Mounting that he be Discharged
from the Regist and Rendered Incapable of serving any
more as an officer in the Army and that it be esteemed
a crime of the blackest Dye in officer or even soldier
to Associate with him.
c. Feb 12, 1778 (Valley Forge)

At a genl Court Martial whereof Col. Wiglesworth
was president February 6th Capt. Team tried upon appeal
to Genl Court Martial for acting in a cowardly manner
when Sent on a scouting party the 12th Dec. last in
ordering his Men to Retreat when he had Considerable
advantage over the Enemy, again found Guilty of the
Charge being a breach of the 13th Article of the 13th
Section of Articles of War and Sentenced to be discharged
from the Service.5

These three cases, embracing the crimes of fraternizing with
the men, theft, absence without leave, robbery, and cowardice,
ranged through the gamut of possible offenses. Yet the sentence
was invariably the same for officers -- dismissal from the ser-
vice. Similar offenses would have brought multiple lashes upon
the private's back; and those of the more serious nature, de-
sertion and cowardice, usually were punished by execution. This
seemed to be a gross miscarriage of justice.

Discipline seemed to grow as a tree throughout the war --
weak at first, stronger in the latter part of the conflict.
Punishment followed the same progression -- exceedingly trivial
early in the war, harsh and galling as the war progressed. Near
the inception of the war the Militia of Albemarle County, Virginia,
sanctioned to the following disciplinary measures:

At a meeting of the officers held July 18, 75,
Resolved that has arisen among the Volunteers render
it absolutely necessary that the Discipline may bekept up for the better accomplishment of which [?]end.

Resolved that officers of detachments of volunteers
do strictly obey the orders of the commander in chief
on pain of the censure of the whole corps.

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5Order Book, Captain James Meriwether's Company 1777-1778.
Resolved that every commanding officer make a return of his at 3 o'clock in the morning of each day under the like penalty.

Resolved that every private attend at the camp at beating the retreat or any other time commanding officer may appoint calling the roll.

Resolved that any private who may refuse when commanded on duty or when there misbehave his post, go to sleep or absent himself if without leave of his officer shall be punished as follows, for the first offense he shall receive a reprimand from his own officer for the Second [this?] of the Commander in chief before the whole battalion for the third expulsion.

Resolved that any person who shall fire a gun without [leave?] from the Commanding officer shall be taken into custody by the officer of the guard and there kept two hours with out Victuals or drink ordered that these resolves shall be read to each Company at least three times.

During the winter of 1777-1778 at Valley Forge offenses occurred similar to those mentioned in the above militia agreement, and punishment was exceedingly harsh. Disobedience was met with force. The order books record the case of Lieutenant Teagler "...charged with striking and Wounding Inhumanly with his sword James Quin a soldier Belonging to the 7th Pennsylvania Regiment of which wound he died Lt. Teagler Confirmed the fact but Justified it by being in the line of his duty, the Court having Considered the evidence are of the Opinion that Lt. Teagler Justification is sufficient and do Acquit him of the Charges ..."7 Neglect of duty and absence without leave were offenses not with increased severity. The proceedings of the court-martial of Martenius Sipple

6Gilmer, op. cit.
7Order Book, Captain James Meriwether's Company, 1777-1778.
a soldier in Washington's Army have been preserved in facsimile:

Camp White Marsh, Novr 30th 1777

Proceedings of A Regimental Court Martial of the Del. Regt
Commanded by Col. David Hall and by his order.

Capt. John President

Lt. Rhodes        Lt. Brown
Ens. Berry        Ens. Campbell

The court having met according to order proceeded to
Business. When Martenius Sipple of Capt. Moore Compy
was brought before them Charged with abusing Sergt
Johnston when he ordered him on duty; prisoner pleads
Guilty; And says it was A private of the Same Compy
which he was abusing and not him, EVIDENCE -- Sergt
Johnston being duly sworn deposeth that in the morning
as usual he went to turn out the men for Picquet of
Capt. Moore Compy at which time the prisoner was sitting
at A fire at his tent door, he asked the prisoner why
he did not repair to the parade, and if he did not hear
the Sergt Majr calling for the Picquet, that the Prisoner
made no answer to this, that he called him again and Asked
him why he did not come along to which he Replied as the
Sergt pass'd him, Go along you yellow Son of A Bitch;
The Court asked the deponent if he firmely believed that
the prisoner intended the Abuse for him; Answr -- He
is Not Certain, but understood it so at that time.
EVIDENCE - Benjamin Medey Private of Capt. Moore Compy
being duly Sworn Deposeth that he heard the Prisoner
and Wa. Floughman of Si Compy disputing and that the
prisoner repeated the words, Yellow Son of A Bitch but
does not know whether he intended it for the Sergt or
Floughman. The Court having duly Considered the Crime
and evidence are of opinion that the abuse was meant
for Floughman and not for Sergt Johnston and are
farther of opinion that he is Guilty of A Breach of
the 1st Article of ye 7th Sect. of War, and do Sentence
him Agreeable to Si Article to ask pardon of the party
offended in presence of his Commanding officer. 8

The vivid case of soldier Sipple aptly illustrates the in-
volved consequences of an act of neglect of duty. Officers si-

8 Rev. Joseph Brown Turner (editor), The Journal and Order
Book of Captain Robert Kirkland (Wilmington: The Historical So-
miliarly accused of negligence and neglect of duty were cashiered:

"... Capt. Laird Charged with Neglect of his duty in suffering the Maj Genl of the day to surprise him at his picquit in the Night was Tried and found Guilty and Sentenced to be dismissed from the Service;"9 "Ensign Carpenter Charged with Absenting himself Without Leave from the Camp Knowing that the Regt was going Immediately to Action was Found Guilty and Sentenced to be cashiered..."10 Indiscipline, such as firing a musket, was no longer punished by confining "in the guard house two hours without victuals or drink!", but at Valley Forge "... Any soldier discharging his Musket without Leave and in an Irregular manner is to Receive Twenty lashes on the spot..."11 Discipline had considerably tightened from the Virginia Militia Resolutions of 1775 to Valley Forge, 1777-1778; and enforcement was sanguinary.

The records of the various courts-martial were written in resume or in totality in the orderbooks to be read to the men at roll-call with the orders of the day. These order books have preserved the multitude of courts-martial for posterity. The courts-martial convened as often as possible and necessary. When the various Continental forces were encamped at Valley Forge, the courts-martial convened daily or semi-daily. Discipline decayed and collapsed under the intense trial of Valley Forge. The majority

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9 Order Book, Captain James Meriwether's Company 1777-1778.
10 Ibid.
11 Ibid.
of the cases throughout the war and throughout the different armies
seemed to be for desertion and for minor violations of military
conduct, such as drunkenness, cursing a superior, and fighting.
The third most common offense appeared to be theft, followed by
neglect of duty and lastly, cowardice.

The percentage of men who deserted from the revolutionary
army has been estimated to range as high as 20% of the total number
in service. This is almost 1 for 4 and an amazingly large
number for patriot-soldiers. Yet the allurements or needs of home,
the lethargy of winter camp, the terror of battle, deprivation, and
starvation induced many to desert. Washington wrote of the deser-
tion lamenting: "Our army is shamefully reduced by desertion, and
except the people in the country can be forced to give information,
when deserters return to their old neighborhoods, we shall be
obliged to detach one half the army to bring back the other." At Valley Forge desertion was dwelt with harshly with stripes or
execution:

At a Genl Court Martial held in Genl Weedings
brigade, whereof Lt. Col. Simmon was Presidt John
Ryley a Soldier in the 2 Va Regimt Charged with
Desertion from his guard and taking with him 2
prisoners in Irons, was Tryed and found guilty with
the Crime whereof he Was Charged, and Sentenced
therefore to suffer death. 

A few days later this terse phrase was read to the men from the
orders:

13 Ford, Writings of George Washington, V, p. 221.
14 Order Book, Captain James Noriwether's Company 1777-1778.
A detachment from each brigade of a Captain and 40 men are to attend the execution of John Ryley on the grand parade at Ten O'clock to Morrow for Noon.

Similar cases found in the order books included:

Francis Murray a Soldier in the 1st Pennsylvania Regiment tried for repeated desertions was found Guilty and Unanimously sentenced to suffer death...15

Thomas Steed and Patrick Thornton Confin'd for Desertion, the court are of the Opinion that Thomas Steed for his Repeated offenses ought to receive Three hundred thirty three lashes on his bare back in the presents of his Brigade and that Patrick Thornton Receive One hundred lashes on his bare back in the Presence of his Brigade. Also the Genl thinks proper to Remit Thos Steed one hundred and thirty three Lashes out of the number allotted...16

Sometimes the orders of the courts-martial were executed forthwith: "This day one of our soldiers belonging to the fourth Reg't Penna, was taken deserting to the enemy. At 3 o'clock P.M. he was tried and sentenced to be shot, which soon he received in the evening at roll-call."17 Desertion was punished in a variety of other ways. Thomas Brown of the 2d New Jersey Regiment charged with desertion was reported "... to bee an old offender and in Repeated desertion [the court] do unanimously Sentence him to be Hanged by neck untill dead."18 Two privates and a corporal deserted, were vigilently pursued and promptly caught. The pursuers, wrathful for vengeance, made the deserters draw lots in order to

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15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
17 Feltman, op. cit., p. 5.
18 Lauber, op. cit., p. 5.
punish one on the spot. The corporal drew the unlucky lot; his head was cut off and carried through the camp on a pole, and finally placed over the camp gallows as a gruesome, medieval warning to all. John Barr laboriously wrote in his diary this gallows tale:

... Corporal Robards of the Dellenway Regt. was tried for desertion among the men and Declaring that he intend to Desert him Self the first fair opportunity and advise others to go of Withe him and Pled not Guilty the Court after Duly Considered the Charges a Guilty the prisoner With the Evidences ar of op [in] ion he is Guilty of a b [r] each of 3th Art 2 Secto of the Artiages of War and Do sentence him to suffer death... On several occasions the culprit was reprieved after the firing squad took aim: "To-Day Their was a man sentenced to be Shot for Deserting while in the Engagement the who Before But was reprieved after he knealed Down to Be shot". In spite of the punishment desertion continued to decimate the ranks of the Continental Army throughout the war.

Minor infractions of discipline included drunkenness, re-enlisting in another regiment, destroying government property, lying, cursing, fighting, gambling, aiding and abetting a riot, insubordination, and foraging. Two classic examples of drinking were

19Bolton, op. cit., p. 171.
20Lauber, op. cit., p. 302.
21Tomlinson, op. cit., p. 302.
22Revolutionary Master Rolls, XXXVII and XXXVIII.
recorded in the order book of Captain James Meriwether at Valley Forge:

The court martial of Brigadier General Maxwell ""... on the following charges that he was once during the time he commanded the Light Troops Disguised with Liquor ... and that once or twice his Spirits were a little elevated with Liquor ...""\(^{23}\) He was acquitted. ""Ensign Benjamin Arnold of Col. Angels Regiment, charged with getting Drunk and behaving in an unsoldier like manner in the camp on 6th Dec with Refusing to retire to his quarters when Ordered by his Colo sending for answer that he would go when he pleased and not before and also Refusing to do his duty, when regularly Warned and threatening to leave the service ... was tryd and judged guilty ... sentenced ... to be Cashiered ...""\(^{24}\)

John Pillar a soldier of Col. Broadshead's Regiment was tried for ""... reenlisting himself in the 13th Virginia Regt, ... the Court further sentences him to recieve 50 lashes on his bare back ...""\(^{25}\) which was altogether suspended on account of previous good behaviour.

On the 29th on November, 1779, Edward Collins, a Soldier in the 4th New York regiment, was confined ""... for breaking open our Door with an Ax in a contemptuous manner"" On the 30th

\(^{23}\) Order Book, Captain James Meriwether's Company 1777-1778.

\(^{24}\) Ibid.

\(^{25}\) Ibid.
of November Collins was tried and ** . . adjudged to receive 100 lashes.**26

**"Adj't Ealston of the 1st Fensa charged with making a false return with ungentlemanlike behaviour with disobedience of orders, and leaving his arrest, he was by the Unanimous opinion of the Court found guilty of making a false Return and Sentenced to be cashiered."**27

John Duggans and Michael Miller were fined 20 dollars on February 23, 1778, for selling their liquor at excessive prices.23

**" . . . Ensign Cox of the 1st Va Regiment Charged with denying upon Oath, that he formerly and has since said, he knew Respect- ing Capt. Crumps behaviour thereby acting Inconsistently with truth and honor was tried and found Guilty . . . and sentenced to be discharged From the service."**29

Cursing was a common vice in the American Revolutionary Army. Lewis Beebe, a surgeon on the Quebec Expedition, said of the army: **"Tis enough to make humane nature shudder only to bear the army in General Hesphome the Holy name of God**.30 A Rhode Island

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26 *John Barr's Diary*, p. 843.
27 Order Book, Captain James Merivether's Company 1777-1778.
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid.
chaplain lamented over the mouths of his flock during the siege of Boston, 1775-1776: "There is nothing that dispirits me so much as the wickedness of our land -- the Prophanety of our Camps is very great ..."31 Washington issued his famous order deploring profanity, but a large part of Yankee Doodle's vocabulary consisted of raw Anglo-Saxon adjectives as evidenced by the letters, journals, diaries, and the courts-martial testimony:

Edward Murray A Soldier in the 7th M. Regt...
deposed, that when the prisoner was in Confinement and going to the guard house he Dam'd the Off. th(st) Confined him for A son of a Bitch and Said if he was at Liberty, he Could knock fifty Such down the hill,32

He was adjudged guilty and received 100 lashes well laid on his bare back.

Gambling, fighting, and drinking usually went to the court-room together. At Valley Forge Lieutenant John Rust of the 10th Virginia Regiment was tried accordingly on February 18, 1778:

The Brigade Court Martial whereof Lt. Col. Blueford was presint Feb 16 1778 - Lt. John Rust of the 10th Virginia Regimt tried at:the request of Lieut Charles Broadwater for abusively aggravating him the Said Broadwater to Strike him for getting Drunk Playing Cards and beating Capt Lard on the Sabbath Day whilst the Said Capt Lard was under Arrest and found guilty of a breach of the 21st Article 14th Section of the Articles of War as a breach of Genl orders and Sentenced to be dischargd from the Service, but as Lt. Rust has formerly bore the Character of a good officer the Court are pleas'd to recommend him to the Consideration of his Ex cellency to have


32 Turner, op. cit., p. 92.
him reinstated in the Rank the Commander in Chief approves the Sentence is Concern'd he Cannot Reinstated Lieut Rust in Compliance with the Recommendation of the court founded in his former good Character as an officer his behaviour in the several Instances alleged were so flagrantly Scandalous, that the gen'l thinks his Continence in the service would be Disagreeable and as one part of his Charge against him was gaming that alone would Exclude him from all Indulgence a Vice of so pernicious a nature that it never will Escape the severest punishment with his approbation —

A mighty man was "Maj. Howard". He single-handedly created havoc during a riot at Valley Forge:

Maj. Howard appeared before the Court -- charg'd with first wounding Capt. Duffery with his Sword [secondly?] by abetting a Riot in the Camps and 3d, in front of his men at his Regt assembled attempted the life of Capt. Duffery with a Loaded Pistol and fixed Bayonet [being?] utterly [subversive?] to good order and Discipline.34

"Maj. Howard" for all the above, was reprimanded.

Foraging was considered more of a skillful sport than a crime. Yet Washington and other generals strictly forbade foraging and punished offenders severely, sometimes by execution. Lieutenant William Feltman in his Journal describes how he and some companions "... took a walk to the country (about four miles) where we found a number of Carolina soldiers straggling ... We heard a musket fired, we pursued three of said soldiers and caught two of them who had shot one of the poor negroes' hogs. We guarded them to camp and had them confined."35 It is to be assured that

33 Order Book, Captain James Mariwether's Company 1777-1778.
34 Ibid.
35 Feltman, op. cit., p. 37.
myriads of soldiers forged, and few were caught, but the case of
John Hornas seemed among the most forlorn:

At a Regt. Court martial held this Morning . . . John
Hornas, a privet Soldier belonging late Harvings
Company for Stealing fowls, from the barn of the
widow young . . . Found guilty and Sentenced to Receive
a Hundred Lashes on his bare back . . . .

Theft was extremely common, and any mobile item was subject
to pillage. At one time or another Yankee Doodle pilfered such
items as a five dollar bill, a horse, Col. White's cash and
trunk, a surgeon's chest, a hat, a tea pot, a shirt, a calf, regi-
mental and brigade funds, and a wagon load of wheat. Generally
theft was punished with lashes as was the case of William Powers
convicted of stealing 5 dollars. Powers was sentenced " . . . to
Receive 500 Lashes well laid on and pay Sergt M Cain 5 dollars." 37
300 of these lashes were remitted. The two thieves who stole the
Colonel's trunk were caught and promptly marched a short distance
out of town to be hanged " . . . but upon the Colonel's Lady's
intercession, it's said, they were pardoned from death, but received
two or three hundred lashes each, well laid on their backs and
buttocks." 38

Thievery by an officer was considered an affront to the rest
of the officers in addition to being a heinous crime. Duncan Ford,
commissary in General Green's division, was charged with theft.
Found guilty he was sentenced " . . . to pay Mr. Spencer and Halloway

36 Lauber, op. cit., p. 37.
37 Turner, op. cit., p. 217.
two hundred dollars and that after that he shall Procure a Cer-
tificate from the Ais. Gent Men of the payment of the above sum
before he be brought from the provost guard Mounted on horse,
back foremost without a Saddle his coat turned rong side Out his
hands, tied behind him and be drum'm'd out of the Army Never More
to return with all the drums of the division be Belong to, and
that the above sentence be published in the News Papers . . . . .
A unique case is that of William Dunbar who was charged with steal-
ing a calf and of plotting to induce several others to desert
with him. He was sentenced to run the " . . . gantloop three
times through the Regiment, with a file with fixed bayonets at
his breast." (In reality he walked backwards through the com-
plete length of the regiment formed in two lines three times.
The bayonets insured him of going backwards through the gantlet.
The slow backward movement insured him of receiving a terrible
beating.)

Neglect of duty was a quite common offense, sometimes due
to indifference and occasionally due to ignorance. Caleb Haskell
recorded the following entry in his diary on August 9, 1775, dur-
ing the siege of Boston: " . . . one rode the wooden horse for
abuse to his officers." Mr. Edward Bennett, employed as a

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39 Order Book, Captain James McRivether's Company.

40 Louder, op. cit., p. 587.

41 Withington, op. cit., p. 12.
foragemaster in Lafayette's division, was "... tried for repeated Neglect of duty in suffering the horses of the division, to remain three days at one time without forrage ... Neglecting to draw hay when to be got, and trusting to others what he himself should perform, by which means many of the horses in the Division have perished ... sentence him to be dismissed from his employment." 42 George Castor, a soldier at Valley Forge, was tried by court-martial for "... having suffered a prisoner to escape from the provost ..." 43 Because of penitence he was never sentenced, but his trial was incorporated in the general orders and read to the men. Sargeant John Smith records in his diary how "... the Coll [colonel] Confind 9 Drumers and fifers for not attending their Duty Better and Released them again in the morn after that they Promised to Doe Better for the futur." 44

"Run the gantlet for Coward dice" is the terse notation beside David Blood's name on "A Memorandum of Oficers and Shlders in Duitts Company." 45 The mentioning of outright cowardice occurred, but occurred rarely, in the various letters,

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42 Order Book, Captain Meriwether's Company 1777-1778.
43 Ibid.
44 Ibid.
45 A Memorandum of Oficers and Shlders in Duitts Company (unpublished MSS., Virginia Historical Society)
Journals, and diaries examined by the researcher. The Revolutionary soldiers sometimes turned their backs and ran from the enemy, yet they were not the cowards. John Chilton describes cowardice in a letter to his brother as behaviour "... in a manner undecoming an American in an action ...". Chilton served on the court-martial of a Colonel Buckner who was cashiered and "... rendered unfit for any military Post in the Continental army forever." 46 Chilton added: "... you will see an account of it [court-martial] in Parries Papers more at large. There was but a single circumstance saved him from being shot ... Great in the scandal the Virginians Sustained by this unmanly conduct of his ..." 47 Personal valor and the outward display of bravery were not only demanded but expected of every man. Officers, especially, were expected to lead the men. Their place in battle was "out front" exposed to the foremost and focal fire.

Indiscipline was great in the Continental Army accentuated by arbitrary and sometimes unjust punishment and a double standard of justice. Discipline grew in severity throughout the war, yet so did the number of offenders. Desertion and minor disciplinary breaches appear to be the most common violations of the Articles of War followed by thievary and neglect of duty. Cowardice was rare.

46 Charles Dabney Papers.

47 Ibid.
CHAPTER VII

DIVERSIONS

"After dinner we smoked our pipes, sang a song, and got damnably drunk.\(^1\) Not all the nights during the Revolutionary War were spent with the apparent ardor and reckless abandon of that Lieutenant William Feltman experienced on March 18, 1782 at "Mr. Williamson's House" on a campaign in South Carolina. The life of the American Revolutionary soldier was filled with duties -- marching, parades, fatigue duty, picket duty, in addition to fighting; yet when the duty was gone and the battles were over, the men turned to solace in "sitting and sifering", "fire-boats", a "very good collection of books", plays, fishing and hunting, "games" a high use of drinking" festivities, trading and smoking.

The daily routine of "Yankee Doodle" varied with place and

\(^1\)Feltman, op. cit., p. 42.
circumstance. The established camps had a prescribed daily routine. During the winter ordeal at Valley Forge, the following daily routine was published: *In future the Revili will beat at day break the Troop roll call and publishing the orders* at 8 o clock in the morning. *The forenoon and afternoon were consumed in either fatigue or drill*. Retreat *parade and roll call* at Sun set. Tattoo at 9 o clock in the evening.2 Daily duties included drill, which the Continental never got enough of; and picket details and fatigue parties of which he got too much.

A parade and a review with disastrous consequences was recorded by a Continental private:

This day our regiment paraded and went through manual exercises, then we grounded our firelocks and every man set down by their arms and one abial Potty axedently discharged his piece and Shot two Balls through the Body of one sea Cheaney through his left side and rite rist he Lived about 2½ hours and then expired...3

These parades were usually held daily. On June 10, 1776, the 5th Virginia Regiment, at Norfolk, Virginia, received the following order: ''The long Role to beat at 5 o clock this Evening for a General parade.'''4 Usually the men, arms, and accoutrements were inspected at the general parade. David How, a private soldier records in his diary on December 30, 1775: ''This Day we Paraded and had our guns took from By the Major to pris...''

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2Order Book, Captain James Meriwether's Company 1777-1778.

3Tomlinson, op. cit., p. 59.

Picket duty and fatigue details were looked upon with mixed emotions. Picket duty usually was cold and lonely but gave the soldier an opportunity to rescue "fowles", cattle, and swine from the "dastardly" enemy, and salvage the proceeds for the often lean mess. Fatigue parties offered few culinary benefits. In addition to building fortifications, producing arms and accoutrements, and cleaning up the camp, the soldier had his own personal fatigue -- preparing his mess, cleaning his weapons and attending to personal hygiene. During time of siege or defense the men prepared the fortifications. Samuel Talmadge related how he fatigued on October 12, 1781, at Yorktown, Virginia:

"Genl Lincoln's Division mounted the trenches to which our Regt is next we were employed in Compleating our second parrellel lines . . . ."

The various armies produced a great deal of the needed arms and accoutrements. Shoes, powder horns, cartridges, powder, saltpetre, soap, and other necessary martial items were manufactured by the men while in camp. A cow was completely consumed in this manufacturing process. The hides were used to make shoes: ""the Commissary Genl of Issues is to Keep exact accounts of the

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Number of Cattle delivered to the Army, that the number of hides may be Ascertained...[7] The horns were used for powderhorns: "All Issuing Commissaries are carefully to Save all the horns of the Cattle...[8] Even the fat was saved: The brigade commissaries were responsible for "...employing proper persons to boil the oil out of the foot of the Bullocks and preserve it for the use of the Army."[9] Another common labor was manufacturing powder and making cartridges. These sinews of war were actually made by the men themselves. At Valley Forge the men were kept busy making cartridges: "Every regiment is to go on Making Cartridges, every day when the weather Will permit."[10] Solomon Nash, a Continental footsoldier during the battles around Long Island, wrote: "Fryday May ye 31th this day pleasant - Bigger part of our Rigerment Employd in making Cartridge."[11] Nash spent the previous 2 weeks and 1 week after "May ye 31th" making "Cartridge". Another common fatigue duty was policing the camp: "A Fatigue is to be Ordered from each Brigade for the purpose of cleaning the Old incampment filling up the Pitts and burning all kind Garbage & Carron that

7 Order Book, Captain James Mariwether's Company 1777-1778.
8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid.
When evening descended or when spare time was at hand, the soldiers hands and minds turned to diversions. Writing was a popular diversion, for those who could "rite" and "sifer". Elijah Fisher, a private Soldier in Washington's Army, wrote in his journal: "I stays there and follows my Riting and Sifering the same as I had dun the Evenings before (for Every Evening from Six of the Clock till Nine I used to follow my study and Mr. Wallais was as Desirus of my learning as myself and used to show me) ..."¹² Paper was sometimes issued to the men by the quartermaster: "Please to Deliver fourteen [Rim?] of Paper for the use of the Left wing of The army."¹³ The finished epistle was enfolded and formed into an envelope, one side having been left blank, and addressed to the recipient, then entrusted to some transient for delivery. George Johnston wrote in his letter of May 12, 1777, to Colonel Leven Powell, Loudoun County, Virginia: "Our old friend Ben will do me the favour to deliver this; He has taken it into his head that he wants to visit Virginia ..."¹⁴

A pipe of tobacco and a game of cards or chance presented a very popular form of diversionary activity to the men and was

¹²U. S. Continental Order Book, June 4-July 4, 1778.
¹⁵George and Samuel Johnston Papers.
the subject of a general order at Valley Forge: "The Commander in Chief is Informed that gaming is Again Creeping into the Army . . . He Therefore in the Most solemn terms declares that this Vice in Either Officer or Soldier, shall not when detected escape exemplary Punishment . . . Cards and dice on any pretense are prohibited." Early in the war, May 23, 1776, at head quarters of the Virginia Continental troops at Williamsburg the following admonition was issued to the Officers reminding them of their obligations to the youths under their command:

The Officers are desired to examine strictly into their respective Companies that no gaming be carried on of any kind whatsoever. When there is any leisure time from their duties of the Camp every one will be improving himself in the Military service and not pass over in idleness on business of a worse tendency the peaceable and precious hours now on hand. The officers will in every respect attend to the morals of their men, and in endeavor to train the Youths under their particular care as well in a moral as military way of life.

When books were available, reading provided a beneficial form of recreation -- for those who could read. Henry Dearborn, an imprisoned officer on the Quebec Campaign, wrote how he passed many hours: "We had a very good Collection of Books sent us by several friends in Town, in the perusal of which, we pass many of our dull hours --" The general orders of February 19, 1778, at Valley Forge contained the notice that:

16 "Order Book, Captain James Meriwether's Company 1777-1778.
17 Campbell, op. cit., p. 4.
18 Brown, op. cit., p. 73.
"A large collection of books upon History, physic and divinity, a number of novels, plays act to be Vended at the labotary, Next Monday at 3 o'clock P.M."\(^{19}\)

All men invariably turn to women for love and companionship. George Jones of Virginia turned to those ravishing creatures of the fairer sex for love, companionship, and money. He wrote with verve and ardor from Morristown, New Jersey, to a friend in Virginia on February 23, 1777:

...I am alive in good health and spirits almost in love with a damnable great fortune, who looks up to me as a man of Consequence, the order good personally resulting from my present post -- I've proceeded so far already with my West Indian as to make verses upon her -- In Short, I can possess fortune and all if I please: ... Those Rascallic redcoats may rouse me from her embraces perhaps for those of a colder object: if she will wait til peace crowns our Efforts, I'm her man.\(^{20}\)

Many of the soldiers turned to those other ravishing creatures of the fair sex known to the Revolutionary Soldier as "fire-ships" or "women of bad reputation". ... Their was two fire ships drumed out of the rhodiland compy,\(^{21}\) wrote Private Samuel Hove on June 11, 1775. Prostitutes were usually drumed out of camp when discovered. Captain Robert Kirkland at "Camp at Clove between 2 mountains New York" related in his Journal on July 12, 1777, how two "fire-ships" were placed in the water: "This Day there was a Woman duct [\(\text{\textregistered}\) and Drum'd out of our Encampment; Forgiving the men the Venereal Disorder."\(^{22}\) At Valley Forge

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\(^{19}\)Order Book, Captain James Meriwether's Company 1777-1778.

\(^{20}\)George and Samuel Johnston Papers.

\(^{21}\)Tomlinson, op. cit., p. 57.

\(^{22}\)The Journal and Order Book of Captain Robert Kirkland, p. 105.
on June 13, 1778, the order books published the court martial of
Colonel Nangle "... of the 10 Pennsylvania Regiment Tried for
associating with a Sergeant in Company with Women of bad reputa-
tion in the sergeants butt the court are unanimously of opinion
that Colonel Nangle is not Guilty of the Charge and do acquit
him.""23 Samuel Hows left a lesson in penitence for posterity
in his journal: "This morning early their was several Ladies
come down from wrenthan and they went to cambridg and the rest
of their acts are they not writen in the Lamentations of Samuel
Hows, finis""24

The play was not often the thing during the Revolutionary
War. Yet when thespians performed, they played to a full house:
""this afternoon I received a ticket for the Play to be acted
this evening at the BAKEHOUSE in the evening went down but the
house was so full that I could not get in ... ""25

The vast panorama of nature proved perhaps to be the most
healthful sphere of recreation: ""I went a Chesnutting with a
number of respectable gentlemen that belonged to the army and
we had a rifle frolick [Shooting contest] and came hame about
10 O clock.""25 A type of ball game called both vicket or cricket

23 U. S. Continental Army Order Book, June 4, July 4, 1778.
24 Tomlinson, op. cit.
25 Ewing, op. cit., p. 36.
26 Tomlinson, op. cit., p. 77.
was popular with the men. George Ewing, a soldier at Valley Forge, wrote in his journal on May 2, 1776: "... in the afternoon played a game at Wicket with a number of Gent of the Arty --."27 "This day I was very much fatigued playing cricket,"28 wrote Lieutenant William Feltman on February 16, 1782, while campaigning in South Carolina. The lure of fish and game drew many men into the often virgin streams and forest described by the soldiers as a land flowing with milk and honey, fish and game. "Lt. David Marshall of our battalion shot a very fine deer this afternoon, within one mile of our encampment,"29 wrote Lieutenant William Feltman from "near Roanoke River," Virginia, on November 26, 1781. On August 6th, 1781, Lieutenant Feltman wrote "in the afternoon went a fishing across James River [Virginia]; waded across, and was almost cast away, the water running very rapid. Caught no fish."30 Henry Dearborn on the Sullivan Expedition against the Indians in the Wyoming Valley of the Pennsylvania frontier wrote on "June 23d 1779: We are now incamp’d on the bank of Susquehannah river, this river is at this place about 50 rods wide, and abounds with fish of various kinds, such as Shad, Bass, pike, Trout, etc, etc."31

27Ewing, op. cit., p. 47.
28Feltman, op. cit., p. 39.
29Ibid., p. 23.
30Ibid., p. 8.
On July 1st he entered in his diary: "A number of us discover'd a fine buck to day on an Island which we surrounded and kill'd." Three days later, July 4th, he recorded: "Several dear and wild turkeys have been kill'd within a day or two, with which this Country abounds." The soldiers were awed by their journeys through the majestic cathedral of nature. Reverently, with a sense of foreboding, they stepped over the shimmering receding line separating civilization from the frontier. Vast sights and mystic sounds greeted the wanderer as he sojourned in nature's own land -- a land of crystal streams abounding with finned creatures, a land of tall virgin forest teeming with hooved creatures and clawed creatures and bearded creatures, a land of piercing rays of sunlight through tall hemlocks and pines whose roots ran deep in the dark, dark soil permeated with creeping, crawling, legged creatures and on down to the red clay, sandy loam, or rocky gumbotil. This majestic cathedral of nature beckoned the red-necked, the raw boned, the uncalled for hands to enter; but to tread lightly, for nature would not bestow her blessings upon the slothful: "This day we marched through the Great Swamp and Bear Swamp. The Great Swamp, which is eleven or twelve miles through, contains what is called in our maps the 'shadows of death', by reason of its darkness; both swamps contain trees of amazing height,

32 Ibid., p. 158.
33 Ibid., p. 159.
Alcohol gave water close competition for first place in the men's stomachs. The various court-martial cases, the letters, journals, and diaries provide a continuing narrative of drinking in high places and low. Drinking involved no social stigma during the Revolutionary epoch and was regarded as a natural, healthy drink. A gill of rum per day was a standard ration to the men. Quite often the men were inebriated with more than sun and dew as was illustrated by the case of the "Massachusetts drinking banter" recorded by David Row in his diary: "This Day two men in Cambridge got a bantering who would Drink the most and they Drinkd So much That one of the Died In About one houre or two after." One excessive drinker evidently reached the state of alcoholism in which the mind was damaged (today called the D.T.'s). He wrote after an excessive drinking bout after a miserable night when his sleep was filled with weird beings and vaporous phantasmagorias:

Last night being disturb'd in my sleep
I got up very much frighten'd -- I fancied the tent was full of snakes as large as my leg -- and when McLane caught hold of my great Coat as I was running out of the tent, I thought one of them had hold of me, which

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34Egle, op. cit., p. 258.
35Order Book, Captain James Meriwether's Company, 1777-1778.
36Dawson, op. cit., p. 5.
made me pull so hard as to tear my coat very much -- running over Capt. Vose's Camp stools I hurt my two great toes . . . 37

The "morning after" was sometimes marked by remorse, penitence and always marked by feeling "not well:" "We turned out to the Larm post and it was very cold and we came home and there was a high go of drinking Brandy and several of the company were taken not well pretty soon after . . . 38

The camp evidently continually resembled a great market place with the soldiers trading and bartering all manner of objects. David Bow, a private soldier, obviously possessed gypsy-blood: "I went to the Hospital to SEE STEPHAN BARKER he is Sick of a feever -- We have sold Nuts and Cyder Every Day This weak." 39

On the following day January 31, 1776, he recorded in his diary:

"I Bought 4 Bushels of Apples . . . 40 His salesmanship reached a peak on February 26 when he recorded that [in a camp of soldiers]: "I Sold my Catteridge box For 4/6 Lawfull money . . ." 41 His final feat of salesmanship, which surely placed him in a class of his own, occurred on March 16, 1776: "I sold my gun to TIMOTHY JOHNSON for Three pound Lawfull money 42 An adequate description

37 Unidentified author, diary, April 21-September 25, 1780, op.cit.
38 Tomlinson, op. cit., pp. 78-79.
39 Dawson, op. cit., p. 4.
40 Ibid.
41 Ibid., p. 7.
42 Ibid., p. 10.
of this aspect of soldier life was described by the comment:

"Nothing comical this day only their was considerable of trade-
ing carry'd on." 43

Festive days were signals for grand celebrations. The 4th
of July, anniversaries of great victories such as the surrender
of Bourgoyne, "Crispus," and the 1st of May were days of jollity
and festivity. The day of independence was celebrated in all the
armies. Henry Dearborn describes the festivities on Monday, July
the 5th, 1779 (the fourth occurred on Sunday):

Genl. Poor made an Entertainment to day for
all the Officers of his Brigade, to celebrate the
Anniversary of the declaration of American Indepen-
dence. 67 Gentlemen were present at dinner, after
which the 13 following Patriotick Toasts were
drank --
1st 4th of July 76, the ever Memorable Bora of
American Independence.
2d the United States --
3d the Grand Council of America
4th Gen'l Washington and the Army --
5th the King & Queen of France --
6th Gen'l Lincoln and the Southern Army --
7th Gen'l Sullivan and the Western Army --
8th May the counsellors of America be wise, and
her Soldiers Invincible --
9th A Successful and decisive Campaign --
10th Civilization or death to all American Savages --
11th the immortal Memory of those heroes that have
fallen in defense of American Liberty. --
12th May this New World be the last Asylum for freedom
and the Arts --
13th May the Husbandman's house be bless'd with peace,
and his fields with plenty -- 44

In many of the armies the 4th was celebrated by firing a feu
de joie: in which all the men in a regiment were formed in two parallel

43Tsalinson, op. cit., p. 84.
44Brown, op. cit., pp. 159-160.
lines and then discharged blank charges skyward in an unbroken succession of musketry. **... afterwards the troops was drew up in a Circle by columns on a little hill when Parson Grant preached us a sermon suitable to the occasion from the 4 Chapters of Exodus and 12 Verse, afterwards ... Col. Rignier ... gave an invitation to all the officers to come and drink Grog with him.* The 1st of May was sometimes celebrated in the armies as May Day in honor of "King Tamany":

May 1st Last Evening May poles were Erected in every Regt in the Camp and at the Reveille I was swore by three cheers in honor of King Tamany. The day was spent in mirth and Jollity the soldiers parading marching with fife and Drum and Huzzaing as they passed the poles their hats adorned with white blossoms. The following was the procession of the 3d J Regt on the aforesaid day first, one sergeant drest in an Indian habit represent King Tamany. Second Thirteen Sergeants drest in white each with a bow in his left hand and thirteen arrows in his right. Thirdly thirteen Drums and fifes. Fourthly the privates in thirteen Platoons thirteen men each -- The Non Commissioned Officers and Soldiers being drawn up in the aforesaid manner on the Regimental Parade give cheers at their own Pole and then march'd of to Head Quarters to do Honor to his Excellency but just as they were descending the hill to the house and Aid met them and informed them that the Soul was Indisposed and desir'd them to retire which they did with the greatest decency and regularity.**

The American Revolutionary soldier turned to a variety of diversionary activities when duties were over. He recreated himself physically and spiritually after severe battle and

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45 Egle, op. cit., p. 227.
46 Ewing, op. cit., p. 44.
toilsome duty. The diversions were usually simple; sometimes boisterous, and many diversions involved physical activity.
CHAPTER VIII

THE SICK AND WOUNDED

Last evening one died of the smallpox and early this morning one of the colic, at 10 A.M. one of the Nervous fever, here in the hospital, is to be seen at the same time some dead, some dying, others at the point of death, some whistling, some singing and many cursing and swearing... Visited many of the Sick in the hospital -- was moved with a compassionate feeling for poor Distressed Soldiers, when they are taken sick, are thrown into this dirty, stinking place, and left to take care of themselves. No attendance no provision made, but what must be loathed and abhorred by all both well and sick.¹

Surgeon Lewis Beebee adequately describes the care of the sick and wounded during the Revolutionary War in this pitiful description of a hospital at Montreal, Canada, on May 7, 1776. Ignorance, slothfulness, and dirt allied with death during the Revolution. Far more men were killed by disease than by British

¹Kirkland, op. cit., p. 9.
bullets. Medical ignorance was vast and transcended into the sphere of superstition. Hospitals were makeshift; sanitation and care of the sick and wounded was almost non-existent. Yet many of the doctors and surgeons possessed the most advanced medical knowledge of the day; some held A.M.'s from Harvard and Dartmouth. Far too many "surgeons" were quacks who treated by guesswork. The sad truth was that the most advanced medical knowledge was completely insufficient and diabolically opposed to curing the sick and healing the wounded. It would have taken a truly calloused and soulless man not to sympathize with the indescribable scenes of suffering and death that were found on the floors and beds of the hospitals. Disease ran rampant through the poorly clothed and ill-fed Continental Army. The majority of the cases in the hospitals of the various garrisons and camps were not caused by weapons of hate; rather disease. The most common diseases seemed to be: smallpox, various intestinal disorders, the itch, and the common cold. "A Return of the sick in the Garrison of Fort Schuyler, March 1st, 1779" bore these diseases beside the name of the sufferer:2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Condition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rheumatism</td>
<td>Convulsive Asthma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veneral</td>
<td>Itch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflamy Fever</td>
<td>Weak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lame</td>
<td>Ulcerous Leg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debility</td>
<td>Astme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hemophoe</td>
<td>Remitting Fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pleuritic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2Revolutionary Master Rolls, XXXVII, p. 331.
"A Return of the Patients now in the Gen'l Hospital at Albany,
November 7th, 1781" was enscribed with these cases:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Convalescent</th>
<th>Sore Foot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wounded</td>
<td>Rupture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putrid Fever</td>
<td>Scrofula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schirous Liver</td>
<td>Diarrhea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ascites</td>
<td>Ulcerated Testicles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabes</td>
<td>Cachexy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hemoptysis</td>
<td>Fever and Itch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nervous Fever</td>
<td>Vertigo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermittent Fever</td>
<td>Ulcerated Tow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scabies Firing</td>
<td>Fractured Tibia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the above roll only one patient was suffering from a wound presumably received in battle. Other prevalent diseases were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colic</th>
<th>Disentary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jaundice</td>
<td>Bilious fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quick step</td>
<td>Toothache</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worms</td>
<td>Aque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflammatory fever</td>
<td>Colds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sore throat</td>
<td>&quot;Gravels in the kitten&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Epidemics of these diseases raged through the armies due to ignorance, poor sanitation, poor clothing, and poor food. Dr. Lewis Beebee wrote while on the Quebec Campaign: "In the afternoon it made my heart ache, to visit the Hospital, to see the Dysentery rage, with unabated fury among many of them; when I had not one article, calculated for their assistance ..." Again Surgeon Beebee wrote: "Visited the sick in camp, found near one half the Regt. unfit for duty and many whose situation was truly dangerous the dysentery, jaundice, Putrid, intermitting, and Bilious fevers, were the principal diseases that attended the

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3Ibid., p. 489.

4Kirkland, op. cit., p. 9.
troops . . . 5 The common cold struck many of the usually poorly clad soldiers. Ebenezer Huntington wrote from *Roxbury Camp, February 22nd 1776* to Jabez Huntington, Esquire: "It is not so healthy in Camp as we wish, but the sick seem rather recruiting, tho' many are unfit for duty by reason of Violent Colds --" 6 An itch, probably due to poor personal hygiene, was quite prevalent among the Continental soldiers: "Our Officers and Men in general are destitute of Money and have the Itch very badly." 7 By far the most prevalent disease and the greatest killer was the smallpox. Epidemics raged through the armies scarring and killing those who were not inoculated. The smallpox epidemic during the Quebec campaign was typical of many: "The Reg't is in a most deplorable Situation, between 4 and 500 now in the height of the smallpox. Death is now become a daily visitant in the Camps. But as Little regarded as the singing of birds." 8 Early in the war, inoculation was still regarded suspiciously. During the Quebec Campaign General Arnold ordered the men to be inoculated. While the inoculating was in process, General Thomas arrived 9 . . . and gave Counterorders, that it should be death for any person to inoculate, and that every person inoculated should be sent immediately to Montreal. 9

5Ibid., p. 22.
7Bingham, op. cit., p. 20.
8Kirkland, op. cit., p. 13.
9Ibid., p. 4.
"Anockulation" gradually became the accepted preventative for smallpox after this initial conflict. Elijah Fisher described his inoculation thus: "We joined our Reg't and Company and I was anockulated for the Small pox and had it Prity favorable to what others had it."\textsuperscript{10} After the war more men carried scars of smallpox than from battle:

I thank you for your favor on the 6th Feb I had just got out of the Small pox for which I had been inoculated and had it favorably our Brother Joseph was not so lucky he had it pretty severly, the laurels that he was reaping when he received yours was weeds and car buncles on his nose and face ... I believe he want bring many home with him as they begin to dis appear fast, but this as it will be is very sullen occasioned by a weakness in one of his Eyes that was a little infected with the S. Fox tho not to injure it\textsuperscript{11}

Medical cures for contagious and infectious diseases other than smallpox were little more than guesswork. The administering of sulfur was considered a balm for all ills. Surgeon Beebee described how he treated 50 patients giving one medication to about one-half the sick and another "cure" to the rest, evidently, regardless of their sickness: "... visited about 50 patients, performed the operation of Phalebot [fetting blood] upon about one half, gave the rest either Tart Emet or Jalap /antimony and potassium tartrate/\textsuperscript{12}. In another instance Surgeon Beebee treated a regiment en masse with the same medication:

\textsuperscript{10}Elijah Fisher's Journal, p. 5.

\textsuperscript{11}The Keith of Woodburne Papers.

\textsuperscript{12}Kirkland, op. cit., p. 4.
Great numbers in the Regt. have lately been taken sick, their symptoms and complaints have been exactly the same and required nearly the same treatment. They were first taken with ague and chills; a violent pain in the head, back, and in every bone, and limb in the body; with a loss of appetite, nausea, and a considerable degree of weakness. These symptoms were succeeded, with an inflammatory fever. The method of treating the disorder was, first, to evacuate with Tart: emet: then give the common Febrifuge, Nit. tr. with camphor: to which was added a little Tart: emet: as a deobstruant. This soon performed a proper Crisis. A nourishing regimen was the only thing that remained necessary to effect a cure. This method is almost every instance proved successful.\(^{13}\)

Elijah Fisher was taken sick and confined to the "Hospitalable" at Newark. He was moved to the private home of Mr. D. Brown where he was treated "very well", yet he was... in such a rack of Pain that... "he could not sleep"... a Nights nor rest a Days.\(^{14}\)

Mr. Brown went to a Doctor of the Place (he being not at home) and was telling his wife in what a Condition a shoaler was at his house. She said that by what he said she thought it was the gravels in the kitteney and if you took a quart of gin and ten dish of mustard seed and a hand full of hornlish roots and steep them together and take a glass of that every morning she thought it would help me. I followed the Directions and found Benefit by it.\(^{15}\)

John Barr, a New York Continental, wrote at random in his diary "A cure for the Venereal Disorder":

Take the Roots of Upland Shuzato and Mullin each an handful, boil them in four Quarts of

\(^{13}\)Ibid., p. 34.

\(^{14}\)Elijah Fisher's Journal, p. 5.
Spring water, to one Quart, Strain it then bottle it adding an half Gill of Gun Powder, let it dissolve, dose, half a Gill of it three or four Times each Day.

He added an admonition to note well:

first prepare, by Taking of the sulfur of Brim-stone for three or four Mornings before the above dose is put in Practice if the Disorder Still keeps running use some of Spirits Terpentine last of all take one oz. of Sals to Clear off.15

Henry Dearborn was striken violently ill while on ship en-route to join the American troops at Quebec via the St. Lawrence River. He described the sickness as one in which he "... was seiz'd with a violent pain in my head, and soon afterwards, I was seiz'd with a sickness in my Stomach, after vomiting very heartily, I felt some relief at my stomach, but the pain in my head increas'd ..." He was visited by the surgeon of the ship who agreed that he "... was in a high fever ..." and urged Dearborn "... to take a puke." Dearborn related: this ... Operated very well upon me, after heaving up a large quantity of Bile, I found myself much better, and a tolerable nights rest." The next day he was still suffering with fever and weakness. "... I have had blood lost, after which I felt much better ..."16 During the ensuing winter of 1775-1776 Dearborn was again stricken with "... a Violent Fever, and was


16Brown, op.-cit., p. 90.
Delirious the Chief of the time . . ."" Dearborn, medicated himself: ""... I had nothing to assist Nature with, but a Tea of Pigpen plumb Roots, and Spruce, as there are no Doctors in these parts nor any Garden Herbs, my fever abated in some degree, but did not leave me, I had a violent Cough, and lost my flesh to that Degree, that I was almost Reduced to a perfect Skeleton . . .""17

Surgeon Lewis Beebee at the siege of Montreal was stricken with "dischrobes"; ""... this morn took a dose of Rhu and Collo-

mel feel some better this afternoon . . .""18 The surgeon also served as Tooth-extractor and counselor: ""Extracted one tooth a little after sunrise, which caused one hearty O'Dear --""19

Surgeon Beebee foresaw many decades of medicine when he observed that many medical cases had mental origins and that the power of the spoken word and suggestions were very great: ""Visited many of the sick, see many curious cases, find in General that I can effect greater cures by words than by medicine.""20

The sick and wounded were placed under the most convenient shelter: a ""yellow chinch", homes, nunneries, large barns, ""the cademy", tents, and ""flying hospital huts"" were among

17 Brown, op. cit., p. 61.
18 Kirkland, op. cit., p. 25.
19 Ibid., p. 10.
20 Ibid., p. 13.
Those shelters used to quarter those in pain. Here the men were
thrown together with all manner of diseases enabling those of a
contagious nature to work havoc among the already sick and weak-
med men. Caleb Haskell, a private soldier, was taken sick dur-
ing the Quebec Campaign. His sufferings and exposure to further
disease was recorded in his diary:

Dec. 18 Monday. Myself and four more of our company
were carried to the Hurnery hospital.

Dec. 19 Tuesday. Today three of those who came to
the hospital with me broke out with the small-
pox; I have the same symptoms.

Dec. 20 Wednesday. This morning my bedfellow, with
myself, were broke out with small-pox; we were
carried three miles out in the country out of
the camp; I am very ill.

Dec. 22 Friday. Poor attendance, no bed to lie on;
no medicine to take; troubled much with a
sore throat.21

During the Quebec Campaign the medical attendance of the sick
and wounded was almost non-existent. Surgeon Beebee writes of the
scene that greeted him as he landed upon the small island of Aux-
Naux of Quebec:

I . . . was struck with amazement upon my arrival,
to see the vast crowds of poor distressed Creatures.
Scarcely a tent upon this Isle but what contains one
or more in distress and continually groaning, and
calling for relief, but in vain! Request of this
nature are as little regarded, as the singing of
crickets in a Summers evening. The most shocking
of all Spectacles was to see a large barn Crowded
full of men in this disorder, many of which could
not See, Speak, or walk, -- one may two had large
maggots, an inch long, Crawl out of their ears,

21Withington, op. cit., p. 31.
were on almost every part of the body.  

The extent of disregard and indifference with which the sick and wounded were treated was illustrated by Surgeon Beechee who described a sudden "severe shower" falling upon a field hospital filling many of the tents "ancle" deep in water. Many men lay out in the open exposed to the storm and one unfortunate who had "... the small pox bad and unable to help himself, and being in a tent alone, which was on ground descending; the Current of water, came thro his Tent in such plenty, that it covered his head, by which means he drowned..."  

When time permitted "flying hospital hutts" were constructed. At Valley Forge these orders were issued: "The flying hospital Hutts are to be 15 foot Wide and 25 feet long in the..." The story at least 9 feet high to be covered with Boards or shingles only without any dirt, a window Made on each side and a chimney at one End, two such hospitals Are to be Made for Each Brigade."  

Attention was also given to the soldiers diet at Valley Forge: "The commissary general was ordered to... keep the Camp well supplied with rice, for the use of the sick, if rice Cannot be had Indian meal is to be provided, in its place,..."  

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22 Kirkland, op. cit., pp. 11-12.
23 Ibid., p. 20.
24 Order Book, Captain James Morivether's Company.
25 Ibid.
In spite of all the ignorant barbarities some of the sick recovered, yet all too many of the pitiful creatures died. A court of inquiry at Valley Forge perhaps provided the best summation for the high death rate of sick and wounded in the Revolutionary Army: ""... The court reported as follows, Viz, -- That the cause of the Mortality of the sick of the State Regiments is principally owing to their having had the small pox, their Nakedness for the want of Clothes, and the negligence and perhaps ignorance of the Surgeons Who Attend them ... .""25

The care and ""fellowship of those who bear the mark of pain"" was at times primitive, indifferent, and tender. Some general officers paid especial attention to the care of the sick and wounded. General Washington made great efforts to provide for their care and safety. The prescribed cures of the surgeons or doctors was arbitrary. Precious few medical truths and cures were asked from that great store of truth. The dark abyss of medical ignorance and superstition had not yet been crossed. Perhaps the fact that some of the doctors and laymen recognized their abyssal ignorance was the first step to progress. Then there was the disconcerted who blithely cut and dispensed the medication of ignorance. At any rate the general orders stating the specifications for the ""flying hospital huts"" at Valley Forge recognized the beneficial effects of light, ""no dirt"",

25 Ibid.
and a soothing diet. Surgeon Beebe was far ahead of his time when he recognized the mental nature of diseases and the power of suggestion: "I... find in general that I can effect greater cures by words than by medicine."27

27 Kirkland, op. cit., p. 25.
CHAPTER IX
THE CHAPLAINCY

"Oh how I do love to hear Ministers talk".¹

A skeletal disease-ridden, pain-racked Continental soldier spoke these words to Chaplain Ebenezer David at the military hospital at Fort Ticonderoga in August of 1776. Many of the chaplains labored with the surgeons in the halls of the hospitals filled with dirty, louse-ridden, emaciated, disease-stricken men -- some shouting, others cursing, whistling, or crying, many raising their hands in supplications, many making vocal motions; yet no sound came from others silent with eyes set in death. All were aware of the putrid revolting smells -- regur- gitation, maggot-infected flesh, body waste, and undressed wounds -- altogether yamming, crying, exorting, screaming heavenward for peace, solitude, quietness, and no more pain.

When I came to where the large sheds called Hospitals were erected I stood still and behold with Admiration and sympathetic anguish what neither Tungo nor Pen can describe. Here I Tarred two

days visited and prayed with the sick. /Chaplain Ebenezer David at Fort Ticonderoga Military Hospital, August 31, 1776/2

After evening prayers I walked to the Hospitals of three regiments; to ours, and the two New Eng and Battalions -- A Sigh that Forces Compassion -- An unfeeling Heart here is brutal. ... Many have putrid Fvers, Yet to such Places ... I must daily visit ... which has something peculiarly horrible in it always for me ... I am not discouraged, nor dispirited; I am willing to hazard and suffer equally with my Countryman since I have a firm Conviction that I am in my Duty. /Chaplain Philip Vickers Fithian before New York City, July 26, 1776/3

Rose early and visited the west hospital so far as I could stand it ... Never was such a portrait of human misery, as in those hospitals. Prayed several times. Concluded to preach ... on "Be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer" /Chaplain Ammi Robbins on the Quebec Campaign, July 21, 1776/4

Besides ministering to the sick and wounded the chaplain's duty included: preaching to the assembled regiments and brigades upon the sabbath, special holidays, and days of fasting and prayer, officiating at funerals, visiting the condemned and those in prison, and counseling with those troubled in mind and spirit. Among scenes of hell in the hospitals which provoked compassion and sympathy, the chaplain attended not only to the healing but the dying. Chaplain Philip Fithian described a

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2Ibid., pp. 26-27.

3Albion, op. cit., II, pp. 196-197.

tender scene in his journal:

I attended Prayers and visited the hospital as usual. One young Man lies at the Door of Death. Has we think but a few hours more. I prayed with him and recommended him to the Good and Kind Jesus. O what a blessed Priviledge have we that we may in all Troubles go to our common Father. 5

As the many young soldiers began their journey to the great beyond they sought from the Chaplain the key to the "Doors of Death".

After Evening Prayers I visited the Hospital. All are mending but one who I think will die. He is a Youth, the only Son of a Widow and he's been light and ungodly, by his own ready Acknowledgement, in past life; He seems now however, in the Later hours of Death, to have different Notions of present and future things, and is deeply, I hope properly impressed with a sense of Eternity. 6

Divine Services were regarded with mixed emotions by the men. A great deal of this feeling stemmed from the personal popularities of the chaplain. Surgeon Lewis Beebee wrote of the absence of his chaplain: "Our Chaplain does not yet return, the Regt. is extremely happy in his absence, as they can bear to hear Edwardseanism preached with the same degree of pleasure as a Living animal can bear not baring coals . . ." 7 Invariably, some of the chaplains were calloused men who were hiding behind

6 Ibid., p. 199.
7 Kirkland, op. cit., p. 32.
the cloth. The querulous Surgeon Beebee spoke of some of the Chaplains . . . "who are as destitute of employ in their way: as a person who is dismissed from his people, for the most Scandalous of Crimes." 8

The majority of the men looked forward to the "preaching", respected their chaplain, and anxiously awaited his message. The soldiers regularly recorded the sermon text in their diaries. David Bow, a hell-raiser, who quite often enjoyed high "goes" of drinking, attended preaching regularly and recorded in his diary: "Doc Langdon preached this fore part of the Day in Nica the fourth Chapter and Fifth Verse . . ." 9 Biblical texts urging faith in God, obedience to God, repentance and faith in Christ, were used by the chaplains as they recommended the men to the good and kind Jesus. Biblical segments pounded upon and expounded upon to the men included:

Psalms 32:16 - But he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about (July 4, 1779, Sullivan Indian expedition) 10

Exodus 4:12 - Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say. (July 4, 1779) 11

Isaiah 27:4-5 - Fury is not in me: who would set the briars and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them. I would bury them together. Or let him take hold of my strength, that he may

8Ibid., pp. 13-14.
9Davison, op. cit., p. 4.
10Acomb, op. cit., p. 46.
make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me. (April 14, 1776, Quebec Campaign, Reverend Ammi Robbins)\textsuperscript{12}

I John 5:14 - This is the victory that overcometh the world even our faith (June 2, 1776, Quebec Campaign, Reverend Ammi Robbins).\textsuperscript{13}

Isaiah 6:7-8 - And he laid it upon my mouth and said, lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Also I heard the voice of the Lord saying, whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. (July 14, 1776 Quebec Campaign, Reverend Ammi Robbins).\textsuperscript{14}

Matthew 15:16 - But whom say ye that I am.\textsuperscript{15}

Daniel 5:23 - But thou hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways; hast thou not glorified: (September 22, 1776, Quebec Campaign, Reverend Ammi Robbins)\textsuperscript{16}

Rev. 19:5 - And a voice came out of the thorne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and yet that fear him, both small and great. (a sermon preached to Private David Bow, 1776)\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., p. 28.
\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., p. 30.
\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., p. 40.
\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., p. 41.
\textsuperscript{17}Dawson, op. cit., p. 6.
Proverbs 22:1 - A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold. (A sermon preached to Private David How 1770)\textsuperscript{18}

Sermons were preached on holidays, days of victory, days of fasting and prayer, as well as on the Sabbath. The 4th of July was a day of festivity -- preaching usually followed by a feast of joy and drinking. Washington's congratulatory order issued after Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown closed with the statement:

Divine service is to be performed in the several Brigades of Divisions. The Commander in Chief earnestly recommends it that the troops not on duty should universally attend, with that seriousness of deportment and gratitude of heart which the recognition of such reiterated and astonishing interpositions of Providence demands of us.\textsuperscript{19}

The order book of the 3rd New York Regiment contained a notice of a day of prayer on April 6, 1780, throughout the army then situated at Morristown, New Jersey:

the honmaribol the Congress . . . apoint [\$] Monday the 26th Instant to be Set apart and to bee observed . . . /with/ Prayer for Sarting Purposes herein Mentioned and Recommended that these Shold Be Roy Labor Nor Recreation on that Day the Same is to Bee observed Accordingly through out the arm and the Different Chaplains are to Propair Discourses Sutibol to the Several Objects and injoined By the Same Proclamation.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{18}Ibid., p. 13.

\textsuperscript{19}The Journal of Lieutenant William Feltman 1781-2, op. cit., p. 23.

\textsuperscript{20}Leuber, op. cit., p. 308.
Sometimes these orders required that "all Officers and Men off Duty are to attend Divine Service the afternoon at four o Clock on the Grand Parade."21

Death was a subject avoided by the soldier. Funerals were solemn and sad occasions avoided by the masses of men for perhaps it vividly reminded them of the finality of life. This finality was apparent to a soldier who had marched through shot and ball and saw his comrades maimed and slaughtered by the iron fist of war. Diaries casually commented on subjects of horror: "Isaac Fowles had His head Shot off with A Cannon Ball this morning;"22 "... One of our men was Shot through the body with a grape shot ... "23 Perhaps the finality, and regularity, of death in the army provided the reason why Surgeon Lewis Beebee was able to write in his journal:

"One of our Regt. died this morning very suddenly, and was intered in the afternoon, without so much as a Coffin, and with little or no ceremony among hundreds of men it was difficult to procure 8 or 10 to bear the corps about 15 rods. Death is a Subject not to be attended by the Soldiers; Hell and Damnation is in almost every ones mouth ... the Stupidity of mankind in this situation is beyond all Description.24"

Chaplain Ammi Robbins described a funeral in which he was in attendance as a very solemn event; swords and arms were inverted

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21Ibid., p. 838.
22Dawson, op. cit., p. 28.
23Brown, op. cit., p. 64.
24Kirkland, op. cit., p. 8.
in the soldiers hands, those without weapons folded their arms across their breast, and all marched slowly to the beat of a muffled drum.25

Visiting the condemned and those other men in prisons was another duty of the chaplain. An unusual case happened to Chaplain William Rogers, a brigade chaplain on the Sullivan Indian expedition. Two men were condemned to death for conspiring to desert. Chaplain Rogers talked with the men and found them "ignorant and stupid" or without a knowledge of Christianity. He proceeded to explain to them "... the nature of man's soul, and the dreadful situation of those who died in a state of impenitency and unbelief." One of the men repented and the chaplain recommended him for clemency. Both men were led to the gallows. The impenitent man was hanged and only then was the penitent man pardoned.26

Chaplain Ammi Robbins seemed to go down to the depths of hell with the men; He visited the sick; "My heart is grieved as I visited the poor soldiers -- such distress and miserable accommodations." He tells of a youth near death who "... asked me to save him if possible; said he was not fit to die, says, "I cannot die, do, sir, pray for me, will you not send for my mother if she were here to nurse me I could get well;"

26 *Egle, op. cit.*, pp. 261-262.
O my mother how I wish I could see her . . .” 27 On another occasion he told of marching on foot with the men 12 miles and added that he was not greatly fatigued. 28 Chaplain Robbins attended the whipping of “ . . . three poor Pennsylvania Soldiers, who received thirty-nine lashes each.” 29 Chaplains, he quite often reproved those who fell for short of the mark: “ . . . talked and reproved Maj. B——v but to no purpose I fear. . . .” 30 A typical scene of Chaplain Robbins was provided when he preached to his brigade standing a platform of stacked drums: “ . . . occasionally they make a platform for me to stand upon and raise their drums a number of tier.” 31

28 Ibid., p. 6.
29 Ibid., p. 5.
30 Ibid., p. 39.
31 Ibid., pp. 36-37.
CHAPTER X

YANKEE DOODLE

Yankee Doodle was that manner of man who has spoken through
the preceding pages. He was a man of heterogeneous racial and
national origins, a young adult, most often in his late teens
who worked with his hands, a simple man who spoke and wrote
in simple terms, yet a man who thought deeply. He thought in
terms of untramelled freedom for all men. No yokes or bonds or
ties contained him. He possessed the rudiments of an education;
sometimes he signed his name with an "X". He marched away
to fight slavery of mind and body symbolized by King George III,
redcoats, and Union Jacks.

An assemblage of Yankee Doodles made up the Continental Army
which was vaguely organized but led by the inspiring George Wash-
ington who perhaps did more than any other man to confirm Ameri-
can independence -- independence that had already been won, yet
not claimed, nor confirmed in a quiescent, lethargic world from
a querulous Hanoverian. Washington truly deserves to be called
the father of the United States; singlehandedly he held the band of ragamuffins together at Valley Forge, the crucible in which the spiritual and moral aspects of the Revolution were tried. The bands of ragamuffins were concerned with their companies. The generals thought in terms of regiments, divisions, and grand strategy.

The common soldier was armed with a mass of different weapons -- most often a "Brown Bear" a bayonet, a tomahawk, a knife, and 20 or 30 rounds of cartridges with a cartridge box, and sometimes a powder horn made up his equipment. He dressed as a red-necked, raw-boned frontiersman or a New England farmer or an uncalloused aristocratic southern planter would dress.

He often ate from the pot of hunger -- sometimes this was a mealcake toasted upon hot coals. His rations, when issued, consisted of beef and flour sometimes pork or meal. He shut out the stars with tents or huts.

Discipline he cared for not at all. It pinched and galled him and rubbed him against his grain. He tolerated discipline outwardly, never inwardly; and he thought himself the equal of any officer. The court-martial and the guard house was filled with unyoked men. Basically, he fought against a yoke symbolized by Britain.

After duty was done, and sometimes before, he turned to diversions. Usually a pipe of tobacco, a hand of fives, and a whiff of brandy passed away the time. Writing and reading seemed to attract increased interest. Those who couldn't tried to learn.
Those who didn't try to learn listened or dictated. Survival left little time for games, and often to survive was the measure.

Hell on earth adequately describes the hospitals. Doctors were hampered by ignorance and superstition. Disease was rampant. Several epidemics raged through all the armies, and most of the men bore either scars of bullets or smallpox. Some contemporary cures actually aided the disease in many cases. Doctors dosed and dissected, but God and luck cured.

A profane tongue on Monday prayed on Sunday. Most men believed in God and attended the chaplains to hear them recommend the good and kind Jesus. Death was not discussed. The finality and regularity of death were everywhere apparent. Funerals were avoided, but hellfire and damnation were popular subjects upon the men's tongues. Moral standards were respected but not revered. Chaplains rebuked "prophanety" and consorting with women of "bad reputation"; the chaplain didn't wink at their existence; he spoke out against them. Usually he was too busy comforting the sick, burying the dead, and visiting those condemned and in prison to damn his fellows.

Yankee Doodle was both a knight and a knave, and this is human nature. What, perhaps, makes him appealing, was his ability to withstand six years of hot and cold warfare to the final victory. He stole, cursed, deserted, plundered, scalped and ran. Yet he withstood the sojourn at Valley Forge, the siege of Quebec, the defeat at Camden, and the victory at Yorktown. He fought for
freedom. For freedom, brother fought against brother, men
marched through snow without shoes, approached starvation and
nakedness, endured homesickness, stood up in battle, and sur-
vived scalping, grape-shot, and hospital halls. He bore a de-
rogatory name given him by the British who sneered and laughed
at "Yankee Doodle".

... Most of these unfortunate persons were
clad in small jackets of white cloth, dirty,
and ragged and a number of them almost bare-
foot. The English had given them the nick-
name of Yankee Doodle ... 1

They still sneered at him as they surrendered at Yorktown. This
victory started an endless chain of revolutions. The world has
never been the same since men dared to stand up and fight for
freedom.

1Acomb, op. cit., p. 153.
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